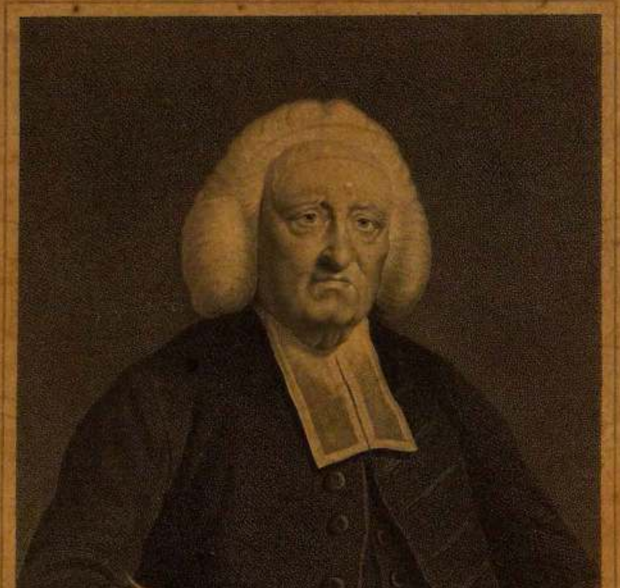

Chamberlin pinx. *Freeman Sculp.*

JOHN GILL, D.D.

London Published by Mathews Aug. 1809.

326

AN EXPOSITION

OF THE

New Testament

BY

John Gill D.D.

IN THREE VOLUMES

VOL. II

LONDON

Printed for Mathews & Leigh, Strand,

1809.

EXPOSITIO

OF

The New Testar

IN WHICH

THE SENSE OF THE SACRED TEXT IS GIVE

DOCTRINAL AND PRACTICAL TRUTHS ARE SET IN A PLAIN AND EASY LIGHT;

DIFFICULT PASSAGES EXPLAINED; SEEMING CONTRADICTIONS RECONCILED

AND WHATEVER IS MATERIAL IN

The various Readings and several Oriental Versions is observed.

THE WHOLE ILLUSTRATED WITH NOTES, TAKEN FROM

THE MOST ANCIENT JEWISH WRITINGS.

BY JOHN GILL, D. D.

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AN EXPOSI[TION]

OF

THE NEW TESTAM[ENT]

JA SERFOG...

THE GOSPEL,

ACCORDING TO ST. JOHN.

CHAP. IX.

Ver. 1. *AND as* Jesus *passed by,* &c.] The word *Jesus* is not in the Greek text, but is rightly supplied by us, as it is in the Vulgate Latin, and as the word *Christ* is in the Persic version; for of his passing from the temple, and by the multitude that were there, and on his way to the place he designed to make to, is this said, as appears from the close of the preceding chapter; though some think this is to be understood of his passing by at another time and place, since the preceding fact of the woman's being taken in adultery, and the discourse of our Lord with the Jews, were quickly after the feast of tabernacles; whereas the following ones, both in this, and the next chapter, seem to be at the feast of dedication, ch. x. 22. which was some months after: but it may be, that the parable of the sheep, though it runs in connexion with what is said in this chapter, might be delivered then; or what follows, ch. x. 22. might be said at the feast of dedication, when the parable, and what is related here, might be delivered before, seeing there is so very strict a connexion between this, and the preceding chapter; and the Ethiopic version is very express, rendering it, *and departing from thence;* that is, from the temple, at that time when the Jews took up stones to stone him: *he saw a man which was blind from his birth;* which man was an emblem of God's elect in a state of nature, who being conceived in sin, are transgressors from the womb, and so are alienated from the life of God through their ignorance and blindness: they are blind as to any true and spiritual knowledge of God in Christ; as to any true sight of sin, or sense of their own estate and condition; and with respect to Christ, and the way of peace, righteousness, [a]nd salvation by him; and as to the spirit, and the op[era]tions of his grace, and with regard to the Scrip[tures] and the doctrines of the Gospel: and as Chris[t saw] this man first, and not the man him, for he was b[lind], so Christ first looks upon his chosen ones with an [eye] of love and mercy, as he passes by them, and bot[h] enlightens and quickens them, Ezek. xvi. 6, 8. He saw Matthew the publican first, as he passed along, and called him from the receipt of custom to be a follower of him, Matt. ix. 10.

Ver. 2. *And his disciples asked him,* &c.] It may be that some of the twelve apostles, or others of his disciples, might put the following question to him on sight of this blind man, who by some means or another they knew was born blind: *saying, master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?* the first of these questions, whether the man himself had sinned before he was born, which might be the occasion of his blindness, proceeds not upon the doctrine of original sin, though the Jews then believed that; see the note on Rom. v. 12. since that was common to all men, and therefore could not admit of such a question; but either upon the notion of transmigration of souls into other bodies; and so the disciples might ask whether this man had sinned in a pre-existent state when in another body, which was the reason of this blindness, or of his being put into a blind body. This notion, Josephus says [a], was embraced by the Pharisees; though, according to him, it seems, that they only understood it of the souls of good men; and if so, this could lay no foundation for such a question,

[a] De Bello Jud. l. 2. c. 8. sect. 14.

...scrip...
...ansmigrat...
...by defects, ...
...proceeded up...
...infant not... ...as faulty
...and actually... ...; of which
...given us... ...the second ques-
...the methods which sometimes
...visiting the iniquities of
...or, as the above learned
...the Jews had, that a
...mother did whilst it
...er, which prevailed
...e neither merit nor
...siah; that is, that
...deeds of their parents,
...their children, neither the one to
...the other to their disadvantage:
...he the Messiah was come, they
...blindness should come to pass? what
...the reason of it?

...3. *Jesus answered, neither hath this man sinned,* ...*parents,* &c.] Not but that both were guilty ...ginal sin, and had committed actual transgres-... but Christ's answer is to be considered agree-... to the design of the question; and the sense is, ...it was not any sin that either of them had com-...itted, whilst he was in the womb, or previous to ...birth, that was the cause of this blindness, other-... all such irregularities and afflictions arise from ...and the fall of man, as does that spiritual blind-... with which all mankind are attended: *but that ...works of God should be manifest in him*: that is, ...Christ might have an opportunity of working a ...le in the cure of him, whereby it might appear ...he is truly and properly God, the son of God, and ...e Messiah; and so spiritual blindness, which has ...llowed the fall of man, takes place in the elect of God ...n common with others, that the power of divine grace ...ight be displayed in bringing them out of darkness ...into marvellous light.

Ver. 4. *I must work the works of him that sent me,* &c.] This shews, that the works of God, that were to be manifest, were to be done by Christ: many were the works which the father gave him to do, and which he undertook to perform: and therefore there was a necessity of doing them, as principally the work of redemption, by fulfilling the law, and satisfying justice: and besides this, there were the preaching of the Gospel, and doing of miracles, and among these was this of giving sight to the blind, see Isa. xxxv. 5. both in a natural and spiritual sense: and with a view to this he speaks of the works he must do, *while it is day*; while the day of life lasts, for in the grave there is no work nor device: *the night cometh when no man can work*; meaning the night of death, and of the grave, and suggesting his own death hereby, that he had but a little time to be in this world, and therefore ...use of it, to do the will and work ...of him that sent him; and which should be a ...pattern to us. This life is but short, it is but as the length of a day; a great deal of business is to be done; and death is hastening on, which will put a period to all working.

Ver. 5. *As long as I am in the world,* &c.] Which had been now two or three and thirty years; but was not to be much longer. *I am the light of the world*; see the note on ch. viii. 12. Though doubtless he said this with some view to the cure he was about to perform, it being agreeable to his character and work, while he was in the world.

Ver. 6. *And when he had thus spoken,* &c.] In answer to the disciples' question, and declaring his own work and office in the world, and the necessity he was under of performing it: *he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle*: the Misnic doctors speak [f] of טיט נרוק, *clay that is spitted, or spittle-clay*, which their commentators say [g] was a weak, thin clay, like spittle or water; but this here was properly spittle-clay, or clay made of spittle, for want of water; or it may be rather, through choice Christ spat upon the dust of the earth, and worked it together into a consistence, like clay: *and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay*; however, spittle, especially fasting-spittle, might be thought proper in some disorder of the eyes, to be used, as it was by the Jews; see the note on ver. 16. yet clay was a most unlikely means of restoring sight to a man that was born blind, which might be thought rather a means of making a man blind that could see. This may be an emblem of the word of God, the eye-salve of the Gospel; which is a very unlikely means in the opinion of a natural man, who counts it foolishness, of enlightening and saving sinners; and yet by this foolishness of preaching God does save those that believe.

Ver. 7. *And said unto him, go wash in the Pool of Siloam,* &c.] A fountain of this name is called Siloah, Isa. viii. 6. and according to the Jewish writers, sometimes Gihon [h]; and this, they say [i], was without Jerusalem, though near unto it: hither the Jews went at the feast of tabernacles [k], and drew water with great rejoicing, and brought it, and poured it on the altar; the waters thereof also the priests drank for digestion, when they had eaten too much flesh [l]; and this was likewise made use of to wash in, in case of uncleanness. It is said [m] of Benaiah, one of David's worthies, that "one day he set his foot upon a dead toad, and he "went down to Siloah, and broke the pieces of hail, "(or ice congealed together,) and dipped himself." This fountain was to the south-west of Jerusalem; and was, as Josephus says, sweet and large [n]; and from it were two water-courses, upper and lower, 2 Chron. xxxii. 30. which ran into two pools; the one was called the Pool of Siloam, which may be the same that Josephus [o] calls the Pool of Solomon, and is here meant, and which was situated on the south of the

[e] Salkut de Dio, c. 26.
[f] Misn. Mikvaot, c. 7. sect. 1.
[g] Jarchi, Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.
[h] Targum, Jarchi, Kimchi, & Solomon ben Melech in 1 Kings i. 33.
[i] Jarchi & Bartenora in Misn. Succa, c. 4. sect. 9.

[k] Misn. Succa, c. 4. sect. 9.
[l] Abot R. Nathan, c. 35. fol. 8. 2.
[m] Targum in 1 Chron. xi. 22.
[n] De Bello Jud. l. 5. c. 4. sect. 1.
[o] Ib. l. 6. c. 6. vel l. 5. c. 4. sect. 2.

wall of Sion, towards the east; and the one called the Pool of Shelah, and which, in Neh. iii. is called in our translation, and in some others, the Pool of Siloah. Now both the fountain, and the pool, were without the city; and yet we read of a Siloah in the midst of the city*. This blind man was sent, not to wash himself all over, but only his face or eyes; and so the Arabic and Persic versions read, *wash thy face;* the clay from it: this may be emblematical of the grace of the spirit, sometimes signified by water and washing, which accompanying the word, makes it effectual to the salvation of souls: *which is by interpretation sent.* This interpretation of the word *Siloam* does not determine which of the pools is meant, the upper or lower, *Siloah* or *Shelah*, since they both come from the word שלח, which signifies to *send;* but by the flexion of the word, the upper pool *Siloah* seems plainly intended, which was not so forenamed, as Nonus suggests, from the sending this man thither, but rather from the sending forth its waters, which flowed softly and gently for the supply of the city of Jerusalem. Some think Christ gave this interpretation of it with a view to himself, as the sent of God, the true Messiah: but the words seem not to be the words of Christ, but of the evangelist, who interprets this word; wherefore they are left out in the Syriac and Persic versions, where such an interpretation was needless. *He went his way therefore and washed, and came seeing:* he did as he was commanded; he was obedient to the directions and orders of Christ, though they seemed so unlikely to answer the end; and yet that was brought about through the divine power of Christ, which appeared the more in making use of such unlikely means.

Ver. 8. *The neighbours therefore, and they which before had seen him,* &c.] For it seems the blind man was not a stranger, one that came out of the country to the city to beg; but a native of Jerusalem, that had long lived in a certain neighbourhood in it, and was well known to be what he was; *that he was blind:* the Alexandrian copy, and one of Beza's exemplars, and the Vulgate Latin version read, *that he was a beggar;* to which agree the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions: wherefore they *said, is this not he that sat and begged?* they particularly remark his begging posture; he was not laid all along, as the lame man in Acts iii. 2. nor did he go from door to door, as others were used to do, but he sat in some certain place, as blind men generally did; see Matt. xx. 30.

Ver. 9. *Some said, this is he,* &c.] It is the same man that was blind, and begged: *others* said; in one of Beza's copies it is added *no*, and so read the Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions: though they owned and said, *he is like him.* This discourse of the neighbours concerning the blind man restored to sight, resembles the talk that generally is among relations, acquaintance, and neighbours, when any one belonging to them is called by grace, and converted, saying, what is come to such an one? is he mad or melancholy? he is not the man he was: he is scarcely the same; is it he, or another? what's the matter with

... put a
... rank ackn...
... he beggar they ...
knew as ... ghtened by the
of God, and ... by his grace
free and ready to ... what they
conversion, what poor, blind, and mis...
temptible creatures they were ...
to have been a publican; ...
blasphemer, a persecutor ...
and the chief of sinners ...

Ver. 10. *Therefore* ...
the case was clear, a...
was the man: *how w*...
see: they might well ...
thing was never known be...
ceived his sight; and as great a ...
and as great a mystery to a nat...
should be born again, or be spiritually ...

Ver. 11. *He answered and said, a man tha*...
Jesus, &c.] Whom he had as yet little know...
of, only by some means or another he had lea...
his name; *made clay and anointed mine eyes,* &c. ...
the notes on ver. 6, 7.

Ver. 12. *Then they said unto him, where is he?* ...
For Christ had withdrawn himself and was go...
whether on account of the Jews, who he knew woul...
be irritated by this miracle, or whether to avoid al...
popular applause and glory, which he sought not, ...
not certain; it may be on both accounts: this qu...
tion, however, was put, not out of good will to Chr...
but that they might apprehend him, and bring h...
before the sanhedrim, for doing work on the sabb...
day; and such enmity there is in carnal men, a...
conversion of sinners, their acquaintance, instea...
rejoicing at it: *he said I know not;* for when he ...
turned from the pool, Jesus was gone: and so it som...
times is, that when Christ has wrought a good wor...
of grace upon the heart, he withdraws himself for ...
while, and the converted sinner knows not where
he is.

Ver. 13. *They brought to the Pharisees,* &c.] That is, to the sanhedrim, which chiefly consisted of Pharisees; and so Nonnus calls them the priests and chief priests: *him that was aforetime blind:* to be examined by them. And something like this is the method used by carnal relations and friends, who when they have any belonging to them under a work of grace, have them to their learned doctors of a different religion, to talk to them, and dissuade them from the ways of truth and godliness.

Ver. 14. *And it was the sabbath-day when Jesus made the clay,* &c.] Which was reckoned a violation of the sabbath, ver. 16. and was one reason why they had the man to the Pharisees to be examined, and why they were desirous of knowing where Jesus was: *and opened his eyes;* by putting on the clay, and sending him to wash in the Pool of Siloam: nor did the miracle, nor the good done to the man, excuse with them, what they thought a breach of the sabbath.

Ver. 15. *Then again the Pharisees asked him,* &c.] Not that they had put any question of this kind

* T. Hieros. Chagigah, fol. 76. 1.

...they, the...
...required of hi...
whom, and by...
clay upon mi... *and so see*...
...nt agrees w... ...t, and with
... to his neig... ...he did not vary as
...the relation, but this is somewhat more
...d it is reasonable to suppose,
...d much with him before,
...to be more particular; for
...name of Jesus, nor of
...nner of it, nor of the
...o go there and wash:

...*of the Pharisees*, &c.]
...re not all of one mind, as ap-
...s: *this man is not of God*; mean-
...n, but Jesus; and their sense is,
...r God, he does not come from him to do
...nd work, nor does he seek his glory, nor is he
...s side, or for his interest; *because he keepeth not*
...*abbath-day*: this they concluded from his making
...of spittle, and spreading it on the blind man's
...g which was contrary to the traditions of their
...rs: one of whose rules and canons is*, that "it
...is forbidden to put fasting-spittle even on the eye-
...lid on a sabbath-day." An eye-salve, or a plaster
for the eye, if it was put on for pleasure, was lawful,
...ut not for healing*; but if it was put on, on the even-
...g of the sabbath, it might continue on the sabbath-
...y†. *Others said, how can a man that is a sinner*, or
...abbath-breaker, *do such miracles?* as curing a man
...blind, the like of which was never heard: those
...reasoned after this manner may be supposed to be
...odemus and Joseph of Arimathea. *And there*
...*s a division among them*: even in the sanhedrim, they
...ould not agree about the character of the person that
...ad done this miracle.

Ver. 17. *They say unto the blind man again*, &c.] After they had discoursed among themselves, and could not agree about the author of the miracle, they turn to him that had been blind, who is called the blind man, because he had been so, and ask him his sentiments of him: *what sayest thou of him, that he hath opened thine eyes?* the question seems, at first sight, as if it was, whether Jesus had opened his eyes or no; but by the answer it appears, that it required his thoughts of him, *who hath opened thine eyes*, as the Vulgate Latin and Persic versions read; or *seeing*, or *because he hath opened thine eyes*, as the Arabic and Ethiopic versions: *he said, he is a prophet*: the Syriac and Persic versions read, *I say he is a prophet*; or, *he is certainly a prophet*, as the Arabic version. The Jews were wont to conclude a man's being a prophet from miracles wrought by him; see ch. vi. 14. and vii. 31. though it does not appear that he believed him, as yet, to be that prophet, or the Messiah, that was to come; see ver. 38.

Ver. 18. *But the Jews did not believe concerning him*, &c.] Not Jesus, but the blind man; *that he had been blind, and received his sight*; they imagine there was ...n the case, that it was a juggle between Jesus ...d this man; that he was a man who had never been blind, but only had given out that he was, and pretended he had now received his sight from Jesus, on purpose to spread his fame, and induce people to believe he was the Messiah; and in this imagination they endeavoured to strengthen themselves and others: *until they called the parents of him that had received his sight*: they sent messengers to them, and summoned them before them, that they might examine them about this matter, hoping they might get something out of them, which might detect the supposed fraud, and bring Jesus under disgrace.

Ver. 19. *And they asked them, saying, is this your son*, &c.] The first question they put was, whether the man that stood before them, pointing to him, was their son or no: whether they knew him by any marks to be their son, and would own him as such: had they answered to this in the negative, they would have got an advantage against him, and would have convicted him of a lie, since he had given out that he was the son of such parents; and proving such a lie upon him, would at once have brought the whole affair into suspicion at least: they add, *who ye say was born blind*; this contains a second question, whether, if this was their son, he was born blind or no; and if he was not born blind, though he had been blind, it would have greatly lessened the miracle: and besides, they would have put other questions upon this, whether his blindness was real, and by what means it came. Next follows a third question, *how then doth he now see?* By what means has he received his sight? They might hope, that if he was their son, and was really born blind, that he had his sight some other way than by Jesus; or they might object this to his being born blind, as being a thing impossible, or at least not credible that he should ever see, was that the case.

Ver. 20. *His parents answered them, and said*, &c.] What follows, which contains distinct answers to the several questions: and to the first they reply very freely, and with great confidence, *we know that this is our son*: for though his receiving his sight made a considerable alteration in him, yet his features were the same; and there might be some marks in his body, which they were acquainted with, by which they knew assuredly he was their son: and if even the neighbours, though they disagreed about him, yet some of them knew him to be the same person that had been blind and begged, then much more his parents; and even those who said it was not he, yet they owned he was like him: and with respect to the second question they answer, *and that he was born blind*: this they were ready to attest, and did attest.

Ver. 21. *But by what means he now seeth we know not*, &c.] As to the third question they could say nothing to it, they were not present when the cure was wrought, and knew nothing of the matter, but what they had heard from their son, or from others, or both: *or who hath opened his eyes we know not*; they had heard it was Jesus, and their son had doubtless told them it

* T. Hieros. Sabbat, fol. 14. 4. & Avoda Zara, fol. 40. 4. & T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 108. 2. & Maimon. Hilchot Sabbat, c. 21. sect. [illegible]

* Pirke Tosaphot Sabbat, art. 87.
† T. Hieros. Sabbat, fol. 3, 4. Maimon. ib.

was he; b[illegible] since they could say [illegible] own [illegible]sonal knowledge, they choose not to say [illegible] of him: *he is of age*; at man's estate, as, with the Jews, one was, who was at the age of thirteen years, if he could produce the signs of puberty: and such an one was allowed a witness in any case, but not under this age; nor if he was arrived to it, if the above signs could not be produced[q]. This man very likely was much older, as may be thought from the whole of his conduct, his pertinent answers, and just reasoning: wherefore his parents direct the sanhedrim to him for an answer to their third question, *ask him, he shall speak for himself*; or *of himself*, as the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions render it: their sense is, he is capable of giving an account of himself in this matter, and he will do it, and let him do it; put the question to him, and a proper answer will be returned; and so they left the affair to be issued in this way.

Ver. 22. *These words spake his parents*, &c.] These were the answers they returned to the three questions put to them: and the reason why they answered in the manner they did to the third, was, *because they feared the Jews*: the Jewish sanhedrim, otherwise they were Jews themselves: *for the Jews had agreed already*: the sanhedrim had made a decree, either at this time, upon this account, or some time before, *that if any man did confess that he was Christ*; that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah, *he should be put out of the synagogue*; which was not that sort of excommunication which they called נדוי, *Niddui*, a separation from civil society for the space of four cubits, and which held but thirty days, if the person repented; if he did not, it was continued to sixty days; and after that, in case of non-repentance, to ninety days; and if no amendment, then they proceeded to another excommunication called [illegible], whereby such were anathematized, and cut off from the whole body of the Jewish church and people, called sometimes the synagogue and congregation of Israel[r]; and this struck great terror in the minds of the people; and this was what intimidated the parents of the blind man, being what is intended here. Though these are sometimes put one for another, and signify the same thing; and he that was under the former of these censures, is said to be מובדל מן ציבור, *separated from the congregation*[s], a phrase by which the word here used may be very well rendered: but in some things there was a difference between them; the one was without cursing, the other with; he that was under *Niddui*, might teach others the traditions, and they might teach him; he might hire workmen, and be hired himself: but he that was under *Cherem* might neither teach others, nor they teach him; but he might teach himself, that he might not forget his learning; and he might neither hire, nor be hired; and they did not trade with him, nor did they employ him in any business, unless in very little, just to keep him alive[t]; yea, the goods which he was

[illegible]rned
x. 8. wh[illegible]
[illegible]o that this [illegible]
[illegible] affairs of civil
and which [illegible] or I don't find
they were ob[illegible] from the [illegible]
temple-worship, or [illegible] synagogue
worship of it, and which is the m[illegible]
learned men: it is certain, [illegible]
of worship, though with [illegible]
for it is said[w], that "all [illegible]
"in, in the right hand [illegible]
"out in the left, exce[illegible]
"thing has befallen [illegible]
"left; (and when as[illegible]
"left? (he answers) b[illegible]
"whom it is replied) he that [illegible]
"comfort thee: (or) שאני מנודה [illegible]
"*communicated*; (to whom they sa[illegible]
"in this house put it into thy heart (that [illegible]
"hearken to the words of thy friends, as it [illegible]
"wards explained) and they may receive thee." [illegible]
it is elsewhere said[x], that "Solomon, when he b[illegible]
"the temple, made two gates, the one for bri[illegible]
"grooms, and the other for mourners and excom-
"municated persons; and the Israelites, when th[illegible]
"went in on sabbath-days, or feast-days, sat be-
"tween these two gates; and when a[illegible]
"in by the gate of the bridegrooms, [illegible]
"was a bridegroom, and said unto [illegible]
"dwells in this house make thee che[illegible]
"and daughters: and when any one c[illegible]
"gate of mourners, and his upper lip co[illegible]
"knew that he was a mourner, and sa[illegible]
"he that dwells in this house comfo[illegible]
"when any one came in at the gate [illegible]
"and his upper lip was not covered, they knew
"שהיה מנודה, *that he was excommunicated*; and said
"unto him, he that dwells in this house comfort
"thee, and put it into thy heart to hearken to thy
"friends." And it is afterwards also said in the same place, that when the temple was destroyed, it was decreed that such persons should come into synagogues and schools; but then they were not reckoned as members of the Jewish church, but as persons cut off from the people of Israel, and scarce allowed to be of their commonwealth. And it may be further observed, that excommunication with the Jews was not only on religious accounts, but on civil accounts; on account of money, or when a man would not pay his debts, according to the decree of the sanhedrim[y]. The twenty-four reasons of excommunication, given by Maimonides[z], chiefly respect contempt of the sanhedrim, and of the wise men, and breach of the traditions of the elders; sometimes they excommunicated for immorality, particularly the Essenes, as Josephus relates, who says[a], that such who are taken in grievous sins, they cast them out of their order:

[q] Maimon. Hilchot Edoth, c. 9. sect. 7.
[r] Vid. Maimon. Talmud Tora, c. 7. sect. 6. Buxtorf. Lex. Rab. col [illegible] Heb. Institut. p. 37.
[s] Maimon. Hilchot Talmud Tora, c. 7. sect. 4.
[t] Ib. sect. 5.
[u] T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 16. 1.

[w] Misn. Middot, c. 2. sect. 2.
[x] Pirke Eliezer, c. 17.
[y] T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 16. 1. & Gloss. in ib.
[z] Hilchot Talmud Tora, c. 6. sect. 14.
[a] De Bello Jud. l. 2. c. 8. sect. 8.

... for ... eating ... the ... same is report... ... excommunicated ... Epicurism, and such ... belief of Jesus ... as the ... on account of which ... made, and which continued with ... blind man was cast out of ... it, but our Lord tells ... would be so treated by the ... find it remained in ... hundreds of years after- ... a Jew, that lived in ... between Tyre and Sidon, ... found in his house by ... unknown to him; and this ... the chief priests and elders of ... him out of the synagogue. Some- ... sentence was pronounced by word of mouth, sometimes it was delivered in writing: the form ... is given us by Buxtorf[i], out of an ancient ... Hebrew manuscript; and a dreadful shocking one it ... and is as follows: "according to the word of the Lord of lords, let such an one, the son of such an one, be in *Cherem*, or anathematized, in both ... of judgment, of those above, and those ... with the anathema of the saints on ... the anathema of the *Seraphim* and ... with the anathema of the whole ... great and small; let great and real ... upon him, and many and violent dis- ... let his house be an habitation of dra- ... let his star be dark in the clouds; and ... indignation, wrath, and anger; and ... be for beasts and serpents; and let "those that rise up against him, and his enemies, "rejoice over him; and let his silver and his gold be "given to others; and let all his children be exposed "at the gate of his enemies, and at his day may "others be amazed; and let him be cursed from "the mouth of Addiriron and Actariel, (names of "angels, as are those that follow,) and from the "mouth of Sandalphon and Hadraniel, and from the "mouth of Ansisiel and Pathchiel, and from the "mouth of Seraphiel and Zaganzael, and from the "mouth of Michael and Gabriel, and from the mouth "of Raphael and Mesharetiel; and let him be ana- "thematized from the mouth of Tzabtzabib, and from "the mouth of Habhabib, he is Jehovah the Great, "and from the mouth of the seventy names of the "great king, and from the side of Tzortak the great "chancellor; and let him be swallowed up as Korah "and his company, with terror, and with trembling; "let his soul go out; let the reproof of the Lord "kill him; and let him be strangled as Ahitophel "in his counsel; and let his leprosy be as the leprosy "of Gehazi; and let there be no rising him up "from his fall; and in the sepulchres of Israel let ... be; and let his wife ... given to another; and let others bow upon her at his death: "in this anathema, let such an one, the son of such an one be, and let this be his inheritance; but upon "me, and upon all Israel, may God extend his peace "and his blessing. Amen." And if he would, he might add these verses in Deut. xxix. 19, 20, 21. *and it come to pass when he heareth the words of this curse, that he bless himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of mine heart, to add drunkenness to thirst: the Lord will not spare him, but then the anger of the Lord, and his jealousy shall smoke against that man, and all the curses that are written in this book shall lie upon him, and the Lord shall blot out his name from under heaven. And the Lord shall separate him unto evil, out of all the tribes of Israel, according to all the curses of the covenant, that are written in this book of the law.* There were many rites and ceremonies, which in process of time were used, when such a sentence was pronounced, as blowing of horns and trumpets, and lighting can- dles, and putting them out; hence, trumpets are reckoned[r] among the instruments of judges. It is said[s] of R. Judah, that being affronted by a certain person, he resented the injury, and brought out the trumpets and excommunicated him: and they tell us[t], that Barak anathematized Meroz, whom they take to be some great person, with four hundred trumpets: and they also say[u], that four hundred trum- pets were brought out, and they excommunicated Jesus of Nazareth; though these words are left out in some editions of the Talmud. Now this was done in order to inject terror both into those that were guilty, and also into the whole congregation of the people, that they might hear and fear: for the *Cherem*, or that sort of excommunication which goes by that name, was done publicly before the whole synagogue, all the heads and elders of the church being gathered together; and then candles were lighted, and as soon as the form of the curse was finished, they were put out, as a sign that the excommunicated person was un- worthy of the heavenly light[w]. Very likely the Papists took their horrible custom from hence of cursing with bell, book, and candle.

Ver. 23. *Therefore said his parents, he is of age, &c.*] See the note on ver. 21.

Ver. 24. *Then again called they the man that was blind, &c.*] That had been blind. After they had examined his parents, and could get nothing from them for their purpose, they try a second time what they could do with the son: *and said unto him, give God the praise*: a phrase used when confession of sin was required; see Josh. vii. 19. and this may be the meaning of it here; confess this fraud and im- posture before the omniscient God, the searcher of hearts, and in so doing glorify that perfection of his. One and the same word, ידה, signifies both to confess the truth of any thing, as a sinful action, Prov. xxviii. 13. and to give thanks and praise to God for any

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[h] [illegible]
[i] Opera ..., Tom. ii. p. 12, 17. Ed. Cocceii.
[k] [illegible]
[q] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 7. 2.

[r] T. Bab. ..., c. 4. in Beth Israel, fol. 27. 1.
[s] T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 16. 1. & Shebuot, fol. 36. 1.
[t] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 107. 2. Ed. Venet.
[w] Buxtorf. Epist. Heb. Institut. c. 6. p. 28.

mercy and blessing, Psal. xlv. 17. [torn]
take this to be the form of an oath, [torn]
Pharisees adjured the man by the living God, that h[torn]
would tell the truth, and discover the cheat and collusion used in this affair of receiving his sight; and thought hereby to have deterred him from speaking of this benefit he had received from Christ, especially in such a manner as to reflect any honour upon the author of it. Or the sense may be, if this really is matter of fact, that thou wast born blind, and hast received thy sight by the means of this man, give all the glory of it to God, to whom alone it is due, and not to him. God sometimes works by wicked instruments, when the glory of what is done ought not to be ascribed to them, but to him. *We know that this man is a sinner;* this they concluded from his breaking the sabbath, as they supposed; though they also aspersed his character, and accused him of other things, yet falsely; see Matt. xi. 19. Luke xxiii. 2. nor could they prove one single instance of sin in him, though they express themselves here with so much assurance.

Ver. 25. *He answered and said*, &c.] That is, the man who had been blind, who takes no notice of the confession they pressed him to, which is what he could not do; there being no collusion in this case, he only replies to the reproachful character they had given of his benefactor. *Whether he be a sinner* or no, *I know not:* or *if he is a sinner I know not*, as the Vulgate Latin version renders it, suggesting, that he did not know he was a sinner; he could not charge him with being one; nor could he join with them in saying he was a sinner; nor did he think and believe he was: however, he was sure he had done a good thing to him, and in that he was no sinner; and what proof they had of his being one he could not tell: and be that as it will, adds he, *one thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see;* as if he should say, whatever charges you bring against the person that has done me this favour, which I am not able to answer to, you can't reason me out of this; this I am sure of, that once I had no eyes to see with, and now I have, and that by the means of this man you reproach. And so it is with persons enlightened in a spiritual sense, whatever things they may be ignorant of, though they may not know the exact time of their conversion, nor have so much Gospel light and knowledge as others, or be so capable of expressing themselves, or giving such a distinct and orderly account of the work of God upon them as some can, nor dispute with an adversary for the truths of the Gospel, or have that faith of assurance, and discoveries of God's love, and the application of such great and precious promises as others have; yet this they know, that they were once blind, as to the knowledge of spiritual things, as to a saving knowledge of God in Christ, as to a true sight and sense of themselves, their sins and lost estate, as to the way of righteousness and salvation by Christ, or the work of the spirit of God upon their souls, or as to any true and spiritual discerning of the Scriptures, and the doctrines of grace in them: but now they are comfortably assured, they see the exceeding sinfulness of sin, the plague of their own hearts, the insufficiency of their righteousness to justify them before God, and the beauty, fulness,

gl[torn] of which [torn]

Ver. 26. [torn] *again* [torn]
they could not b[torn] eny the [torn]
him to entertain an ill [torn] of him [torn]
examine him again about the man[torn]
he to thee? how opened he [torn]
they had put before, ver. [torn]
in hope he would vary [torn]
would not fail of imp[torn]
would appear that [torn]
least from his birth; [torn]
unlawful means, as n[torn]
ready to charge him w[torn]
to a diabolical familiarity and [torn]
would have been glad to have ha[torn]
port such a calumny.

Ver. 27. *He answered them, I have told you* [torn]
&c.] As he had, ver. 15. *and ye did not hea*[torn]
Vulgate Latin version reads, *and ye have heard;* a[torn]
some copies of Stephens's; that is, an account [torn]
been given of the manner how his eyes were ope[torn]
and they had heard the account with their bodily [torn]
though not with the ears of their minds; and [torn]
fore, according to most copies and versio[torn]
ye did not hear; did not regard it, or g[torn]
and so the Persic version renders it, [torn]
believed: they would not believe th[torn]
blind, until they sent for his parents; [torn]
they believe the account of his cure: [torn]
ye hear it again? once is sufficient, [torn]
the former account has been disregar[torn]
dited: their view could not be their [torn]
but to baffle and confound the man, [torn] cou[torn]
The Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions leave o[torn]
the word *again*, and only read, *wherefore would* [torn]
hear? what end can you have in it? of what ava[torn]
would it be? or what purpose can be answered by it[torn]
will ye also be his disciples? as many whom you ca[torn]
ignorant and accursed people are, and as I myself desire to be. This he might say either in an ironical and sarcastic way; or else seriously, suggesting, that if they were willing to examine into this fact, with upright views and sincere intentions, that should it appear to be a true miracle, they would become the disciples and followers of Jesus, then he would, with all his heart, relate the account to them over and over again, or as often as they pleased.

Ver. 28. *Then they reviled him*, &c.] Called him an impertinent, saucy, impudent fellow, for talking in this pert manner to them, the great sanhedrim of the nation; or, as the Vulgate Latin version reads, *they cursed him;* they thundered out their anathemas against him, and pronounced him an execrable and an accursed fellow: *and said, thou art his disciple:* for they looked upon it a reproach and scandal to be called a disciple of Jesus of Nazareth; though there is nothing more honourable than to be a follower of him the Lamb whithersoever he goes: wherefore these Jews threw off what they thought a term of reproach from themselves to the blind man; and perhaps they might say this

...from us that ... we are Moses's ... they p... Moses to Christ, and ...isciples of Moses the servant, rather ...ugh indeed they were not ...ce; for if they had, they ...s of Christ, and believers ...testified of him; they ...iples of Moses, or of ...r righteousness and ...s law. This was a ... so the Targumist[i] on ... these are the names of the sons ...sts, תלמידא דמשה, *the disciples of* ...ster of the Israelites;" particularly ...ees as here, claimed this title to them... for it is said[k], "all the seven days (before the ...y of atonement) they delivered to him (the high-...riest) two of the disciples of the wise men, to ...struct him in the service (of that day), who were, מתלמידיו של משה, *of the disciples of Moses*, in oppo...n to the Sadducees:" from whence it appears, ...disciples of Moses were of the sect of the ... assumed this character as peculiar to ...metimes they call themselves the dis-...am, though the description they give of ...ham belongs to them; see the note on ...ey say[l], "whoever has three things in ..., מתלמידיו של אברהם, *of the disciples of Abra-*...ther, and who has three other things is ...les of Balaam the wicked: he that has a g... (beneficence, or temperance, or content-ment,) a lowly spirit, and an humble soul, he is of *the disciples of Abraham* our father; but he that has an "evil eye, and a proud spirit, and a large soul (lustful or "covetous), is of the disciples of Balaam." This last cha-racter best agrees with those very persons, who would be thought to be the disciples of Abraham and of Moses.

Ver. 29. *We know that God spake to Moses, &c.*] Out of the bush, and told him who he was, and sent him to deliver the children of Israel out of Egyptian bondage, and spoke the ten words, or law unto him, and by him delivered them to the children of Israel, and to whom he spake face to face, as a man does to his friend, and mouth to mouth, and not in dark say-ings: they mean, they knew that Moses had his mis-sion, commission, and credentials from God: but *as for this fellow;* so they contemptuously called the Lord Jesus Christ, *we know not from whence he is:* con-tradicting what others of them had said, ch. vii. 27. They imagined they knew the country from whence he came, which they supposed to be Galilee, and the place where he was born, which they concluded was Nazareth: though in both they were in the wrong: and they knew his parents, Joseph and Mary, and his ...e: but as to his divine filiation, they ...ng of it; nor would they own his mission, commission, and credentials to be from heaven; and ...tended they had no reason to conclude they were.

Ver. 30. *The man answered and said unto them, &c.*] Very appositely and pertinently, *why herein is a marvellous thing:* strange and unaccountable, *that ye know not from whence he is:* that you learned doctors, men of sagacity and penetration, should not be able to discern that this man is of God, is a prophet sent by him, and that there should be any doubt from whence he comes, or from whom he has his commission: *and yet he hath opened mine eyes:* which was so clearly and plainly the work of the Messiah, and to be done by him when he came, Isa. xxxv. 4, 5. and xlii. 7.

Ver. 31. *Now we know that God heareth not sinners, &c.*] All mankind are sinners, even God's elect; yea, such who are truly gracious and righteous persons; for there is no man without sin: and God hears such who cry unto him day and night; such Christ came to save; for such he died; and these he calls to re-pentance; and every penitent sinner God hears: but by *sinners* are meant notorious sinners, such in whom sin reigns, who live in sin, and particularly impostors. The man takes up the word the Jews had made use of, and applied to Christ, ver. 24. and suggests, that had Jesus been a sinner, that is, an impostor, God would not have heard him, or have assisted him in doing a miracle, to support an imposture, or cover and en-courage a fraud: but that he was heard and assisted, was a plain case: whereas not only they, the learned doctors of the nation, but such an illiterate man as himself knew, that notoriously wicked men, cheats, and deceivers, were not heard of God; and this was known from the Scripture, and all experience; see Psal. lxvi. 18. Isa. i. 15. The Persic and Ethiopic ver-sions read, I KNOW, *that God, &c. but if any man be a worshipper of God:* fears the Lord, and worships him in spirit and in truth, both with internal and external worship: *and doth his will;* for it is not every one that says Lord, Lord, or draws nigh to God with his mouth, and honours him with his lips, that is a true and sin-cere worshipper of him: but he that does his will in faith, from a principle of love, and with a view to his glory: and *him he heareth;* for he is nigh to all that call upon him in truth: and such an one the man inti-mates Jesus must be, since it was out of all dispute that God had heard him, and had bore a testimony to him.

Ver. 32. *Since the world began, &c.*] Ἐκ τοῦ αἰῶνος, *from eternity,* or never: the phrase answers to מעולם, frequently used by the Jews[m], for never: and so the Arabic version renders it, *it was never heard, &c.* since time was: *was it not heard, that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind;* as not any physician by any natural means, or art, so not any prophet in a miraculous way, no not Moses himself; among all the miracles he wrought, which the Jews say[n], were seventy-six, and which were two more than were wrought by all the prophets put together, this is not to be found in the list of them, nor in the catalogue

[i] Jonathan ben Uzziel in ib.
[k] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 4. 1.
[l] Pirke Abot, c. 5. sect. 19.

[m] Abot R. Nathan, c. 25. fol. 6. 2. Maimon. Mechira, c. 29. sect. 8. & Shelchim & Shotaphim, c. 10. sect. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. passim.
[n] Menasseh ben Israel, Conciliat. in Deut. Quæst. 11. p. 240.

of miracles done by others. Elisha indeed prayed to God to restore sight to an army smitten with blindness; but then they were persons who saw before, and were not blind from their birth. Wherefore it must follow, that Jesus, the author of this miracle, must be greater than any of the prophets, even than Moses himself, and has a greater confirmation of his mission from God, than either he or they had: and as this was a miracle in nature, it is no less a miracle in grace, that one born in the blindness and darkness of sin, ignorance, and infidelity, should have the eyes of his understanding opened, to behold divine and spiritual things.

Ver. 33. *If this man were not of God*, &c.] If he had not his mission, commission, and credentials from God; if he had not been sent by him, and had not authority from him, and was not assisted by him, as man, or God was not with him, *he could do nothing*; or *not do these things*, as the Syriac version reads: that is, such miraculous works; or, as the Persic version, *he could not do this miracle*: open the eyes of a man born blind. His doing this is a full proof that he is of God, and comes from him.

Ver. 34. *They answered and said unto him*, &c.] Being nettled, and stung at what he said, and not able to confute his reasoning; and it is amazing that a man that could never read the Scriptures, who had had no education, was not only blind, but a beggar from his youth, should be able to reason in so strong and nervous a manner, and should have that boldness and presence of mind, and freedom of speech before the whole sanhedrim. Certainly it was God that gave him a mouth and wisdom which these learned doctors could not resist, and therefore they reply in the following manner, *thou wast altogether born in sins*; meaning not in original sin, as all mankind are, for this might have been retorted on themselves; but having imbibed the Pythagorean notion of a transmigration of souls into other bodies, and of sinning in a pre-existent state, or a notion of infants sinning actually in the womb, and so punished with blindness, lameness, or some deformity or another for it, they reproach this man, calling him vile miscreant, saying, thou vile, sinful creature, who came into the world covered with sin, with the visible marks of having sinned, either in another body, or in the womb before birth, and therefore wast born blind: *and dost thou teach us*, holy, wise, and learned men! which breathes out the true pharisaical spirit they were possessed of, and which appeared in their ancestors before them; see Isa. lxv. 5. Luke xviii. 9. *And they cast him out*: not merely out of the place where the sanhedrim sat, or out of the temple; this would have been no great matter, nor have made any great noise in the city, or have been taken notice of by Christ, or moved his compassion towards him; nor merely out of any particular synagogue, or was the excommunication called *Niddui*, which was a separation for thirty days, and for the space of four cubits only; but was what they call *Cherem*, which was a cutting him off from the whole congregation of Israel; an anathematizing him, and a devoting him to ruin and destruction: and now in part was fulfilled, Isa. lxvi. 5. for this was done in pretence of zeal, for the honour and glory of God; and Christ appeared to the joy and comfort of this man, and to the shame and confusion of those that cast him out, as the following verses shew.

Ver. 35. *Jesus heard that they had cast him out*, &c.] For this being perhaps the first instance, of putting in execution the act they had made, ver. 22. and was a stretching of that act; which only threatened with an ejection, in case any should confess Jesus to be the Messiah; which this man had not done as yet, only had said he was a prophet, and that he was of God, it made a very great noise in the city, and the report of it was soon spread over it; and it became the talk of every one, and so Jesus, as man, came to hear of it; though he, as God, knew it the very instant it was done, and needed not any to make report of it to him: *and when he had found him*: not by chance, meeting him at an unawares, but seeking him; and knowing where he was, went to the very place, and found him in this piteous condition, abandoned by all mankind: this is an emblem of Christ's seeking after his chosen ones, both in redemption, and in effectual vocation, who are like sheep going astray, and never come to, and lay hold on Christ, till he comes first, seeks after, and apprehends them: he sends his ministers and his Gospel after them, where they are, and his spirit into their hearts; yea, he comes himself, and enters there, and dwells in them by faith: he knows where they are, as he did Matthew the publican, Zaccheus, and the woman of Samaria; and even though they are at the ends of the earth; and he goes and looks them up, and finds them; and he finds them in a deplorable condition, in a desert, in a waste howling wilderness, hopeless and helpless, poor and miserable, and blind and naked; in a pit wherein is no water; in the mire and clay of sin; in the paw of Satan, and under the power of darkness. *He said unto him, dost thou believe on the son of God?* the Persic version adds, *who hath healed thee*: this supposes that there was a son of God, or a divine person known by the Jews under this character, and that the expected Messiah would appear as such; and that, as such, he is the object of faith, and therefore, as such, must be God, since a creature, though ever so much diguified, or with whatsoever office invested, is not the object of faith, trust, and confidence, with respect to everlasting life and happiness: and it may be observed, that whenever Christ finds any of his people, he brings them to believe in him as the son of God for righteousness and life: he himself is the author of faith in them, as well as the object of it; and no doubt power went along with these words, creating faith in this man: this was a most proper and pertinent question put to him in his present case, and suggests, that if he believed in the son of God, it was no matter in what situation he was among men; since he would then appear to be a son of God himself by adopting grace, and so an heir of God, and a joint heir with Christ; would receive the remission of his sins, be openly justified in the court of conscience, as well as of God, and be everlastingly saved: and this question is put by Christ, not as though he was ignorant, whether he believed in him or no; for he knew from the beginning, who would, and who would not believe in him: he that knew whether Peter loved him or no, knew whether this man believed in him or no; but this he said to draw forth the principle of faith, which

was wrought in him, into act and exercise, and to direct it to its proper object. And this effect it had, as appears by what follows.

Ver. 36. *He answered and said*, &c.] That is, *he that was healed*, as the Syriac version reads: *who is the Lord that I might believe in him?* which shews, that though he knew there was a Messiah expected, and he believed in him as to come, yet he knew not that he was already come, nor the particular person in human nature, who was the Messiah, and the son of God; even though he had been cured of his blindness by him, and had vindicated him, and pleaded for him before the sanhedrim, and had also suffered for him; which makes it appear, that Christ does many and great things for his people before they know him: nor does their interest in him, in his favour, and in the blessings of his grace, depend upon their knowledge of him, and faith in him; as likewise, that a man may plead for Christ, and suffer much for him, and yet be ignorant of him: however, there were in this man desires of knowing Christ; he was not like those in Job xxi. 14. and there was a readiness in him to believe on him, as soon as he was pointed out to him; not that there is any natural disposition in men to believe, or any readiness in themselves to it, or that it is of themselves; nothing of this nature was in this man; but he having, by the power and grace of Christ, the principle of faith implanted in his heart, what he wanted was to be directed to the proper object of it, as he is in the next verse.

Ver. 37. *And Jesus said unto him*, &c.] Giving him the tokens by which he might know him: *thou hast both seen him*; not that he had seen him before now, with his bodily eyes; for he was blind when Christ anointed him, and sent him to Siloam to wash; nor when he came back, since Jesus was gone, and he knew not where he was; but he had seen him, that is, he had perceived and felt the power of him in restoring him to sight; and now he had seen him bodily, and did at this present time: but as this was not sufficient to distinguish him from other persons in company, he adds, *and it is he that talketh with thee*; in like manner he made himself known to the woman of Samaria, John iv. 26.

Ver. 38. *And he said, Lord, I believe*, &c.] He immediately found faith in his soul, and that in exercise, moving towards, and acting upon Christ, as the son of God, and true Messiah, for everlasting life and salvation; and as soon as he did perceive it, he made an open and hearty profession of it: *and he worshipped him*: as God, with religious worship and adoration, not only trusting in him, but ascribing honour, glory, and blessing to him, which are due to God only, and not a creature.

Ver. 39. *And Jesus said, for judgment I am come into this world*, &c.] The Syriac version reads, *for the judgment of this world I am come*: and with which agrees the Ethiopic version, *for the judgment of the world I am come into the world*; and the Arabic and Persic versions still more expressly, *to judge this world*, or *the world, am I come*: which seems contrary to what Christ elsewhere says, John iii. 17. and xii. 47. Nor is the sense of the words that Christ came by the judgment of God, or the order of divine providence, or to administer justice in the government of the world, in a providential way, or to distinguish his own people from others, though all these are true; but either to fulfil the purpose and decree of God in revealing truth to some, and hiding it from others; or in a way of judgment to inflict judicial blindness on some, whilst in a way of mercy he illuminated others. So Nonnus interprets it of κρίμα δισσὸν, a two-fold *judgment*, which is different the one from the other. *That they which see not, might see*; meaning, not so much corporeally as spiritually, since in the opposite clause corporeal blindness can have no place; for though Christ restored bodily sight to many, he never took it away from any person. The sense is, that Christ came as a light into the world, that those who are in the darkness of sin, ignorance, and unbelief, and who are sensible of the same, and desire spiritual illuminations, as this man did, might see what they are by nature, what need they stand in of him, and what fulness of grace, life, righteousness, and salvation, there is in him for them. *And that they which see might be made blind*; that such who are wise and knowing in their own conceit, who fancy themselves to have great light and knowledge, to have the key of knowledge, and to have the true understanding of divine things, and to be guides of the blind, such as the Scribes and Pharisees, might be given up to judicial blindness and hardness of heart, so as to shut their eyes, and harden their hearts against the Gospel, and the truths of it, and which was in judgment to them: such different effects Christ and his Gospel have, as to illuminate and soften some, and blind and harden others; just as some creatures, as bats and owls, are blinded by the sun, whilst others see clearly by the light of it; and as that also has these different effects to soften the wax, and harden the clay; see Isa. vi. 8.

Ver. 40. *And* some *of the Pharisees which were with him*, &c.] Who had followed him, and were watching him, and observing what he said and did, in order to take all advantages, and every opportunity against him, they could, *heard these words, and said unto him, are we blind also?* they perceived he pointed at them, and therefore with indignation ask this question, taking it as a great affront unto them, to put such wise, learned, and knowing men as they in company with the ignorant and unlearned common people; see Isa. xlii. 19.

Ver. 41. *Jesus said unto them, if ye were blind*, &c.] And sensible of it, and knew yourselves to be blind, and were desirous of light and knowledge, *ye would have no sin*; or your sin would not be so aggravated; it would not be imputed to you; it would be pardoned and taken away from you: for the sense cannot be, that their blindness would not have been criminal, or they should have no sin in them, or any done by them; only, that had this been barely their case, there would have been some hope of them, that their sin might be forgiven, and put away, and be no more; see 1 Tim. i. 13. *but now ye say we see*; they thought themselves to be wise and knowing, and stood in no need of any illumination from him, but were obstinate and hardened in their infidelity, and wilfully opposed and shut their eyes against all the light and evidence of truth: *therefore your sin remaineth*: untaken away, yea, immoveable, or unpardonable; the guilt of it abode upon

them; nor was there any hope of its being removed from them; owning that they saw, and yet believed not: sinning wilfully against light and knowledge in rejecting Jesus, as the Messiah, they sinned the sin against the Holy Ghost, which is never forgiven. And so the Ethiopic version renders it, *your error shall not be forgiven you;* see Matt. xii. 32.

CHAP. X.

Ver. 1. *VERILY, verily, I say unto you*, &c.] To the Scribes and Pharisees, who had taken it ill that they should be thought to be blind; and who had cast out the man that Christ had cured of blindness, for speaking in favour of him; and who had traduced Christ as an impostor, and a deceiver, and set up themselves to be the shepherds of the flock, and the guides and rulers of the people; all which occasion the following parable; the design of which is to shew, that Christ is the true and only shepherd, who was appointed, called, and sent of God, whose the sheep are, whose voice they hear, and know, and whom they follow; and that they, the Scribes and Pharisees, were thieves and robbers, and not shepherds of the flock; who were not sent of God, nor did they come in at the right door, but in another way, and usurped a domination, which did not belong to them. *He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold:* the sheepfold, with the Jews, was called דיר; and this, as their writers say[o], was an enclosure sometimes in the manner of a building, and made of stone, and sometimes was fenced with reeds, and in it was a large door, at which the shepherd went in and out, when he led in, or brought out the sheep. At tithing, which was done in the sheepfold, they made a little door, so that two lambs could not come out together; and to this enclosure is the allusion here; and by the *sheepfold* is meant the church of God; see ver. 16. and a good fold it is, Ezek. xxxiv. 14. The church may be compared to a sheepfold, because it is separated from the world: it is where the people of God, and sheep of Christ are gathered together; where there is a strict union between them; have society with each other; keep one another warm and comfortable; and where they are fed and nourished, and are preserved; and where they lie down and have rest; and which, like a sheepfold, will be taken down, and not always continue in the form it now is: and by *the door* into it, is meant Christ himself, as appears from ver. 7, 9. faith in him, a profession of him, and authority from him. Now he that does not come into the church of God, whether as a member of it, or officer in it, at this door, *but climbeth up some other way:* by hypocrisy and deceit; or, like the prophets of old, who ran and were not sent; prophesied when they were not spoken to, but took their place and post by usurpation: *the same is a thief and a robber;* steals into the church, or into an office in it, and robs God or Christ of their power and authority; and such were the Scribes and Pharisees: the Persic version renders the words, *whoever does not introduce the sheep through the door of the sheepfold, know that that man is a thief and a robber;* which these men were so far from doing, that they would not suffer those that were entering to go in, Matt. xxiii. 13. The difference between a thief and a robber, with the Jews, was, that the former took away a man's property privately, and the latter openly[p].

Ver. 2. *But he that entereth in by the door*, &c.] With a divine commission, and by a divine authority, who comes not of himself, but is sent; does not take the honour to himself, or thrust in himself, and assume an office to himself, but is called unto it, and invested in it, he *is the shepherd of the sheep;* by whom Christ means himself, as is evident from ver. 11, 14. whose the sheep are, and who takes care of them, and feeds them, as a shepherd does his flock; and which holds true of any under-shepherd, having his mission and commission, and deriving his authority from Christ.

Ver. 3. *To him the porter openeth*, &c.] There is nothing in the explanation of this parable given by Christ, that directs to the sense of this clause; the allusion cannot be, as some have thought, to great men, who have porters at their gates, to open them, and let in persons that come and knock; since the parable is concerning the sheepfold, and the shepherd, and the sheep that go into it; and therefore must refer to one that at least, at certain times, stood by the door of the sheepfold, and had the care of it, and opened it upon proper occasions: by whom is designed not Michael the Archangel, nor the Virgin Mary, nor Peter, the supposed doorkeeper of heaven, as say the Papists, nor Moses, as others, who wrote of Christ; nor does it seem so well to understand it of the ministers of the Gospel, who preach Jesus Christ, and open the door of faith, or set open the door of the Gospel, whereby Christ comes into the souls of men, and they come to him; though this is a sense not to be despised; but rather this intends God the father, from whom Christ, as man and Mediator, derives his authority, and by whom he is let into, and invested with his office, as the shepherd of the sheep; or else the Holy Spirit, who opens the everlasting doors of the hearts of men, of Christ's sheep, and lets him in unto them. *And the sheep hear his voice;* not the porter's; though they do hear the voice of Christ's ministers, and of God the father, and of the Holy Ghost; but the shepherd's, even the voice of Christ; and which is no other than the Gospel, which is a voice of love, grace, and mercy; which proclaims peace, pardon, liberty, life, righteousness, and salvation; and which is a soul-quickening, alluring, delighting, refreshing, and comforting voice: this the people of Christ are made to hear, not only externally, but internally; so as to understand it, delight in it, and distinguish it from another: and these are called *sheep,*

[o] Maimon & Bartenora in Misn. Becorot, c. 9 sect. 7.

[p] Maimon. Hilchot Genuba, c. 1. sect. 3.

and that before conversion; not because they have the agreeable properties of sheep; nor because predisposed unto, and unprejudiced against the Gospel of Christ, for they are the reverse of these; nor can some things be said of them before, as after conversion, as that they hear the voice of Christ, and follow him; nor merely by anticipation, but by reason of electing grace, and because given to Christ the great shepherd, under this character, to be kept and fed by him. And they are so called after conversion, because they are harmless and inoffensive in their lives and conversations; and yet are exposed to the malice, cruelty, and butchery of men; and are meek and patient under sufferings; and are clean, social, and profitable. *And he calleth his own sheep by name;* the Ethiopic version adds, *and loves them.* These are Christ's own, by the father's gift of them to him, by the purchase of his own blood, and by the power of his grace upon them; who looks them up, and finds them out, and brings them home, and takes care of them as his own, and feeds them as a shepherd his flock: these he may be said to *call by name,* in allusion to the eastern shepherds, who gave names to their sheep, as the Europeans do to their horses, and other creatures, and who could sit and call them by their names: this is expressive not only of Christ's call of his people by powerful and special grace, but of the exact and distinct knowledge he has of them, and the notice he takes of them, as well as of the affection he has for them; see Isa. xliii. 1, 2. Tim. ii. 19. *And leadeth them out:* from the world's goats, among whom they lay, and from the folds of sin, and the barren pastures of Mount Sinai, and their own righteousness, on which they were feeding, and out of themselves, and from off all dependence on any thing of their own; and he leads unto himself, and the fulness of his grace, and to his blood and righteousness, and into his father's presence and communion with him, and in the way of righteousness and truth, and into the green pastures of the word and ordinances, beside the still waters of his sovereign love and grace.

Ver. 4. *And when he putteth forth his own sheep,* &c.] The Ethiopic version reads, *when he leads them all out:* in order to bring them into proper pastures: *he goeth before them;* in allusion to the eastern shepherds, who when they put out their flocks, did not, as ours do, drive them before them, and follow after them, at least not always, but went before them: so Christ, the great shepherd, goes before his flock, not only to provide for them, but by way of example to them; in many instances he is an ensample to the flock, as under-shepherds, according to the measure of grace received, should be: he has left them an example in many respects, that they should tread in his steps: *and the sheep follow him:* in the exercise of the graces of humility, love, patience, self-denial, and resignation of will to the will of God; and in the discharge of duty, walking, in some measure, as he walked. *For they know his voice:* in the Gospel, which directs and encourages them to exercise grace in him, and to walk in the path of duty: this they know by the majesty and authority of it; and by the power with which it comes to their souls; and by its speaking of him, and leading to him; and by the evenness, harmony, and consistency of it. The Persic version renders the whole thus; *when he calls and leads out the sheep, they go before him, and their lambs after them, for they know his voice.*

Ver. 5. *And a stranger will they not follow,* &c.] One that knows not Christ, is not sent by him, and who does not preach him: *but will flee from him;* shun him and his ministry, as not only disagreeable, but dangerous: *for they know not the voice of strangers;* they don't approve of their doctrine, nor take any delight in it, or receive any profit from it. The Persic version, as before, reads, *neither will the lambs ever go after strange sheep, and if they see them, they will flee from them.*

Ver. 6. *This parable spake Jesus unto them,* &c.] To the Pharisees, who were with him, ch. ix. 40. *but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them;* the things spoken by him being delivered in a parabolical way, though in lively figures, and in terms plain and easy to be understood; yet what through the blindness of their minds, and the hardness of their hearts, and their prejudices in favour of themselves, and against Christ, they did not understand what were meant by them; see Matt. xiii. 13, 14, 15.

Ver. 7. *Then said Jesus unto them again,* &c.] By way of explanation of the above parable, since they did not understand it: *verily, verily, I say unto you;* this is certainly truth, and what may be depended on as such, whether it will be believed or no: *I am the door of the sheep;* and of none but them; not of goats, dogs, or swine; none but sheep enter at this door; and all the sheep do sooner or later: Christ is the door to them, by which they enter into a visible church-state, and are let into a participation of the ordinances of it, as baptism and the Lord's supper: no man comes into a church, at the right door, or in a right way, or has a right to partake of Gospel ordinances, but he that truly believes in Christ, and makes a profession of faith in him: Christ is the door of the under-shepherds of the sheep; none are fit to be pastors of churches, but who first enter into a Gospel church at this door, and are qualified, and called, and sent forth by Christ: he is the door of the sheep, by which they are let into the presence of his father, and have communion with him, and partake of all the blessings of grace; it is through him that sanctifying, justifying, pardoning, and adopting grace, are conveyed unto them, and they brought into the enjoyment of them; it is through him they have all their peace, joy, and comfort, and deliverance from, and victory over all their enemies; through him they have heirship, and a right unto eternal life, and that itself; for he is the door into heaven itself, through which they shall have an abundant entrance into it: and he is the only door into each of these; there's no coming to God the father but by, and through him; nor to a participation of the blessings of the covenant, nor rightly into a Gospel church-state, and to the ordinances of it, nor into heaven at last, but in at this door: and this is a door of faith and hope, and an open one, for all sensible sinners, for all the sheep of Christ, to enter in at; though it is a strait gate, the number being few that enter in at it; and those that do, though they are certainly, yet but scarcely saved; for 'tis through many tribulations and afflictions that they enter.

Ver. 8. *All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers*, &c.] This must be understood with some restrictions, not of every individual person, nor of every individual prophet or shepherd; not of Moses, nor of the prophets of the Lord, nor of John the Baptist, who came immediately before Christ, was his harbinger, and prepared his way: but of those prophets who came, and were not sent of God, and so did not come in by the door; of the shepherds of Israel, who fed themselves, and not the flock, but lorded it over God's heritage; and of such, as Theudas, and Judas the Galilean, who boasted that they were some great persons, but were only thieves and robbers; and particularly of the three shepherds cut off in one month, Zech. xi. 8. supposed to be the three sects among the Jews, and the leaders of them, the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes, especially the former; who were wolves in sheep's clothing, usurped a power that did not belong to them, robbed God of his authority, and glory; and, in a literal sense, plundered men of their substance, and devoured widows' houses, as well as destroyed their souls. The phrase, *before me*, is wanting in seven of Beza's exemplars, and in several others; and in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Persic versions: *but the sheep did not hear them*: the elect of God, some of which there were in all ages, though their number is comparatively few, did not attend to the false prophets, and false teachers, and idol shepherds; did not receive their doctrines, nor follow their practices; for it is not possible that these should be finally and totally deceived, or carried away with the error of the wicked.

Ver. 9. *I am the door*, &c.] Of the sheep, as before, see ver. 7. The Ethiopic version reads, *I am the true door of the sheep*: which is repeated for further confirmation, and for the sake of introducing what follows: *by me if any man enter in*; into the sheepfold, the church, *he shall be saved*: not that being in a church, and having submitted to ordinances, will save any, but entering into these, at the right door, or through faith in Christ, such will be saved, according to Mark xvi. 16. such shall be saved from sin, the dominion of it, the guilt and condemning power of it, and at last from the being of it; and from the law, its curse and condemnation, and from wrath to come, and from every evil, and every enemy; such are, and for ever shall be, in a safe state, being in Christ, and in his hands, out of which none can pluck them: *and shall go in and out*: in allusion to the sheep going in and out of the fold: not that those who come in at the right door, shall go out of the church, or from among the saints again; but this phrase rather denotes the exercises of faith in going unto Christ, and acting upon him, and in coming forth in the outward confession of him, and the performance of good works; or in going unto him, and dealing with his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, and coming out of themselves, and all dependence on their own righteousness; or it may regard the conversation of the saints in the church, their attendance on ordinances, their safety there, their free and open communion one with another, and with Christ, in whose name and strength they do all they do, coming in and out at this door: *and find pasture*; green and good pasture; pasture for their souls; the words of faith, and good doctrine; the wholesome words of Christ Jesus; the ordinances, the breasts of consolation; yea, Christ himself, whose flesh is meat indeed, and whose blood is drink indeed: the Persic version renders it, *and shall find a pastor*, or *shepherd*: see Jer. iii. 15.

Ver. 10. *The thief cometh not but for to steal*, &c.] That is his first and principal view; to steal, is to invade, seize, and carry away another's property. Such teachers that come not in by the right door, or with a divine commission, seek to deceive, and carry away the sheep of Christ from him, though they are not able to do it; and to steal away their hearts from him, as Absalom stole the hearts of the people from their rightful lord and sovereign, David his father; and to subject them to themselves, that they might lord it over them, and make a property of them, as the Pharisees did, who, under a pretence of long prayers, devoured widows' houses. *And to kill and to destroy*: either the souls of men by their false doctrines, which eat as doth a cancer, and poison the minds of men, and slay the souls that should not die, subverting the faith of nominal professors, though they cannot destroy any of the true sheep of Christ; or the bodies of the saints, by their oppression, tyranny, and persecution, who are killed all the day long for the sake of Christ, and are accounted as sheep for the slaughter, by these men, they thinking that by so doing they do God good service. *I am come that they might have life*: that the sheep might have life, or the elect of God might have life, both spiritual and eternal; who, as the rest of mankind, are by nature dead in trespasses and sins, and liable in themselves to an eternal death: Christ came into this world in human nature, to give his flesh, his body, his whole human nature, soul and body, for the life of these persons, or that they might live spiritually here, and eternally hereafter; and so the Arabic version renders it, *that they might have eternal life*; Nonnus calls it, *a life to come*; which is in Christ, and the gift of God through him; and which he gives to all his sheep, and has a power to give to as many as the father has given him: *and that they might have it more abundantly*; or, as the Syriac version reads, *something more abundant*: that is, than life; meaning not merely than the life of wicked men, whose blessings are curses to them; or than their own life, only in the present state of things; or than long life promised under the law to the observers of it; but even than the life Adam had in innocence, which was but a natural and moral, not a spiritual life, or that life which is hid with Christ in God; and also than that which angels live in heaven, which is the life of servants, and not of sons: or else the sense is, that Christ came that his people might have eternal life, with more abundant evidence of it than was under the former dispensation, and have stronger faith in it, and a more lively hope of it: or, as the words may be rendered, *and that they might have an abundance*: besides life, might have an abundance of grace from Christ, all spiritual blessings in him now, and all fulness of joy, glory, and happiness hereafter.

Ver. 11. *I am the good shepherd*, &c.] A shepherd of his father's appointing, calling, and sending, to whom the care of all his sheep, or chosen ones, was committed; who was set up as a shepherd over them by him, and was entrusted with them; and who being

called, undertook to feed them; and being promised, was sent unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel; and under the character of a shepherd, died for them, and rose again, and is accountable to his father for every one of them; the shepherd, the great and chief shepherd, the famous one, so often spoken and prophesied of, Gen. xlix. 24. Isa. xl. 11. Ezek. xxxiv. 23. And discharging his office aright, he is the good shepherd; as appears in his providing good pasture, and a good fold for his sheep; in protecting them from their enemies; in healing all their diseases; in restoring their souls when strayed from him; in watching over them in the night-seasons, lest any hurt them; in searching for them, when they have been driven, or scattered in the dark and cloudy day; in caring for them, so that he lose none of them; and in nothing more than in what follows, *the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep*: not only exposes it to danger, as David did his, for the sake of his father's flock, but gives it away freely and voluntarily, for the sake of the sheep; in their room and stead, as a ransom for them, that they may be delivered from death, and might have eternal life: the Ethiopic version renders it, *the good shepherd gives his life for the redemption of his sheep*: so Nonnus paraphrases it, the *ransom-price of his own sheep*: this belongs to Christ's priestly office, and with the Jews priests were sometimes shepherds: hence we read [q] of רועים כהנים, *shepherds that were priests*. Philo the Jew speaks [r] of God as a shepherd and king; and of his setting his word, his first-born son, over the holy flock, to take care of it: and a good shepherd is thus described by the [s] Jews; "as רועה טוב, "*a good shepherd*, delivers the flock from the wolf, and "from the lions, (see ver. 12.) so he that leads Israel, "if he is good, delivers them from the idolatrous nations, and from judgment below and above, and "leads them to the life of the world to come, or eternal life;" (see ver. 10.) Which description agrees with Christ, the good shepherd; and so the Lord is said to be רועה טוב, *the good shepherd*, and merciful, and there is none like him [t].

Ver. 12. *But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd*, &c.] That is, who is not the owner of the sheep, though he keeps them, yet only for reward: by whom are meant, not the faithful ministers of the word, who live upon the Gospel, as Christ has ordained, and who are worthy of their reward, and are not to be called hirelings by way of reproach; since they teach not for hire and reward, but for the good of souls, and the interest of the Redeemer; but such who seek only their gain from their quarter, and mind their own things, and not the things of Jesus Christ: *whose own the sheep are not*: who have neither a propriety in them, nor an hearty affection for them, and so care not what becomes of them: such an one *seeth the wolf coming*; by whom may be meant, either Satan; so the Jews compare Israel to a flock of sheep, and Satan, they say, הוא הזאב, *he is the wolf* [u]; or any false prophet, or teacher, who are ravenous wolves, though sometimes in sheep's clothing; or any tyrant, oppressor, or persecutor of the saints: *and leaveth the sheep*: as the idol shepherd, against whom a woe is pronounced, Zech. xi. 17. *And fleeth*; not being willing to bear any reproach or persecution, for the sake of Christ; not such a keeper of the flock as David, who went after the lion and the bear, and when they rose up against him, did not flee, but caught them by the beard and slew them; nor like the Apostle Paul, who fought with beasts at Ephesus, and would turn his back on none, nor give place, no, not for an hour, that truth might continue: *and the wolf catcheth them*: some of them: *and scattereth the sheep*; the rest; so are the sheep of Christ and his churches sometimes scattered, by persecution raised against them; see Acts viii. 1, 4. The Jews have a rule concerning such an hireling shepherd [w], which is this; "a shepherd that feeds his flock, and "leaves it, and goes to the city, and a wolf comes "and ravines, and the lion comes and tears in pieces, "he is free; but if he leaves by it his staff and his "scrip, he is guilty." Which Maimonides thus [x] expresses and explains; "a shepherd who can deliver "that which is torn, and that which is carried captive, with other shepherds, and with staves, and "does not call the other shepherds, nor bring the "staves to deliver them, he is guilty: one that keeps "freely, and one that keeps for hire; he that keeps "freely, calls the shepherds, and brings the staves "freely; and if he does not find them, he is not "guilty; but he that keeps for hire, is obliged to hire "shepherds and staves, in order to deliver them."

Ver. 13. *The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling*, &c.] And has no propriety in the sheep; had he, he would abide by them, and defend them; but because he has not, he'll not expose himself to any danger, but leaves them: *and careth not for the sheep*; what becomes of them, providing only for his own safety. Abarbinel [y] has a note on Isa. xl. 11. which may serve to illustrate this passage: "*he shall feed his flock like* "*a shepherd*: not as he that feeds the flock of others, "for the hire they give him, but as a shepherd that "feeds his own flock; who has compassion more "abundantly on it, because it is his own flock; and "therefore he saith, *behold his reward is with him*, for "he does not seek a reward from another; *and his* "*work is before him*: for he feeds what is his own, "and therefore his eyes and his heart are there." Which is not the case of the hireling; he does not care for them, he has not their good at heart; but the good shepherd has, such an one as Christ is.

Ver. 14. *I am the good shepherd*, &c.] See the note on ver. 11. *And know my sheep*; so as to call them all by their names: Christ has an universal, special, distinct, and exact knowledge of all his sheep, as they are the choice of his father, as his father's gift to him; and as his own purchase; he bears an affectionate love to them, and takes special care of them; indulges them with intimate communion with himself; and owns and acknowledges them as his, both here and hereafter: *and I am known of mine*: not in a general way, as devils and external professors may know him,

[q] Misn. Becurot, c. 5. sect. 4.
[r] De Agricultura, p. 195. & de nom. mutat. p. 1062.
[s] Zohar in Exod. fol. 9. 3.
[t] Aben Ezra in Psal. xxiii. 3. & Kimchi in Psal. xxiii. 1.
[u] Caphtor, fol. 58. 1.
[w] T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 41. 1. & 93. 2. & 106. 1.
[x] Hilchot Shechirut, c. 3. sect. 6.
[y] Mashmia Jeshua, fol. 20. 4.

but with a special, spiritual, and saving knowledge: Christ's own approve of him, as their shepherd and their Saviour, and desire no other; they love him above all, in the sincerity of their souls, and with a love as strong as death; they trust in him as their shepherd, believing they shall not want; and appropriate him to themselves, as their own; and care for him, his cause and interest, his Gospel, ordinances, and ministers; and are not ashamed to own him as theirs, in the most public manner.

Ver. 15. *As the father knoweth me*, &c.] These words, with what follow, are in connexion with the preceding verse; and the sense is, that the mutual knowledge of Christ, and his sheep, is like that which his father and he have of each other. The father knows Christ as his own son, and loves him as such, in the most strong and affectionate manner; and has entrusted him with the persons, grace, and glory, of all his people: *even so know I the father*; or rather, *and I know the father*; as he needs must, since he lay in his bosom, and still does, and knows his nature, perfections, purposes, and his whole mind and will; and loves him most ardently, which he has shewn by his coming down from heaven, to do his will; and trusts in him for the accomplishment of every thing he promised unto him: *and I lay down my life for the sheep*; which proves him to be the good shepherd, ver. 11. The Vulgate Latin version reads, *for my sheep*; which were his, by the father's gift, and for no other has he laid down his life. The Ethiopic version, as before, renders it, or rather explains it, *I lay down my life for the redemption of my sheep*.

Ver. 16. *And other sheep I have*, &c.] Not distinct from those for whom he laid down his life, but from those who were under the Old-Testament dispensation, and who heard not the thieves and robbers that were before Christ, ver. 8. others besides the lost sheep of the house of Israel, or the elect among the Jews, to whom Christ was sent; and by whom are meant the chosen of God among the Gentiles, who were sheep, though not called and folded, for the reasons given in the note on ver. 3. These, though uncalled, belonged to Christ; he had an interest in them, they were given him by his father; he had them in his hands, and upon his heart; his eye was upon them, and they were under his notice, inspection, and care: *which are not of this fold*: of the Jewish nation and church, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise; were as sheep going astray, and were scattered about in the several parts of the world; and were to be redeemed out of every kindred, tongue, people, and nation: *them also I must bring*; out of the wilderness of the world, from among the men of it, their former sinful companions, from the folds of sin and Satan, and the pastures of their own righteousness; to himself, and into his father's presence, to his house and ordinances, to a good fold and green pastures, and at last to his heavenly kingdom and glory: and there was a necessity of doing all this, partly on account of his father's will and pleasure, his purposes and decrees, who had resolved upon it; and partly on account of his own engagements, who had obliged himself to do it; as well as because of the case and condition of these sheep, who otherwise must have eternally perished: *and they shall hear my voice*: in the Gospel, not only externally, but internally; which is owing to his powerful and efficacious grace, who quickens them, and causes them to hear and live; unstops their deaf ears, and gives them ears to hear; and opens their hearts, to attend to his word, and gives them an understanding of it. The Arabic version reads this in connexion with the preceding clause, thus, *and I must bring them also to hear my voice*; as well as the rest of the sheep among the Jews, and therefore the Gospel was sent among them: *and there shall be one fold*, and *one shepherd*; one church-state, consisting both of Jews and Gentiles; the middle wall of partition being broke down, these two coalesce in one, become one new man, and members of one and the same body; for though there may be several visible Gospel churches, yet there is but one kind of church-state, and one general assembly and church of the first-born, one family to which they all belong; for what reasons a church is comparable to a fold, see the note on ver. 1. And over this fold, or flock, there is but one shepherd, Jesus Christ; who is the rightful proprietor, and whose own the sheep are; and who knows how to feed them, and does take care of them; though there are many under-shepherds, whom he employs in feeding them; in the original text the copulative *and* is wanting, and the words stand thus, *one fold, one shepherd*; which not only expresses a peculiar elegance, but answers the proverb delivered in the same form; and to which agree the Arabic and Ethiopic versions, which render them, *and there*, or *they shall be one fold of one shepherd*; or one flock which belongs to one shepherd only; see Ezek. xxxiv. 23. and xxxvii. 24.

Ver. 17. *Therefore doth my father love me*, &c.] Christ was the object of his father's love from all eternity, and was loved by him on various accounts: first and chiefly, as his own son, of the same nature with him, equal to him; and also as Mediator, engaging for, and on the behalf of his chosen people; and likewise as he was clothed with their nature, and even in his state of humiliation; and not only as subject to his ordinances, and obedient to his will, and doing what was pleasing in his sight, but likewise as suffering in their room and stead, and he loved him on this account; the bruising of him was a pleasure to him, not for the sake of that itself, but because hereby his counsels and decrees were accomplished, his covenant fulfilled, and the salvation of his people obtained: hence it follows here, *because I lay down my life*; that is, for the sheep; to ransom them from sin and Satan, the law, its curse and condemnation, and from death and hell, wrath, ruin and destruction: and the laying down his life on this account, was not only well-pleasing to his father, but likewise was done with the following view; or at least this was the event of it, *that I might take it again*; as he did, by raising himself from the dead, by which he was declared to be the son of God; and to have made full satisfaction to divine justice, for the sins of his people, and therefore rose again for their justification; and to be the victorious conqueror over death, having now abolished it, and having in his hands the keys of it, the power over that, and the grave: and which life he took up

again, by his divine power, and as the surety of his people, to use it for their good; by ascending to his God and theirs, entering into heaven as their forerunner, appearing in the presence of God for them, as their advocate, and ever living to make intercession for them.

Ver. 18. *No man taketh it from me*, &c.] It was indeed taken away at the instigation of the Jews, and by the order of Pilate, and by means of the Roman soldiers, who crucified him; and the former of these are often charged with slaying him, and killing him, the Prince of life; and it is expressly said, *his life is taken from the earth*, Acts viii. 33. and yet no man could, nor did take it away, without his father's will, and determinate counsel and knowledge, by which he was delivered up into the hands of the above persons, and by which they did to him what they did, or otherwise they could have had no power over him; nor could any man, nor did any man, take away his life from him, without his own consent; he voluntarily surrendered himself, or he could never have been taken; he went freely to the cross, or he could never have been led there; he suffered himself to be nailed to the accursed tree, and when he hung on it, he could easily have disengaged himself, and come down; and when they had him there, they could not have taken away his life, had he not of himself given up the ghost, and breathed out his life and soul: *I lay it down of myself;* of my own will, or of my own accord, as the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions render it; which was done with the greatest patience and meekness, resolution, courage and magnanimity; and with a full will, and with the greatest cheerfulness and alacrity; and that as a ransom for his people, and that they might live through him: *I have power to lay it down;* this was not his life as God, but as man; and was so his own, as it was not his father's, and was entirely at his own dispose; for it was the life of that individual human nature, which was united to his divine person; and so in a sense his, as it was not either the Father's or the Spirit's; and was so his own, as our's are not, which are from God, and dependent on him, and entirely to be disposed of by him, and not by ourselves: but Christ, the Prince of life, had a power of laying down his life of his own accord, as a ransom-price for his sheep: *and I have power to take it again;* as he was the son of God, and truly God, and as the surety of his people; having satisfied law and justice, by his obedience, sufferings, and death, and for the ends mentioned in the note on the preceding verse: *this commandment have I received of my father;* which may respect both branches of his power, but is not the foundation of it, but the reason of his exercising it; because it was so agreeable to his father's will, which is the same with his own, as he is the son of God, and one with his father, and equal to him; and what he delights in as Mediator, in which capacity he is considered as a servant; and in which he cheerfully became obedient, even unto death, to his father's command, or in compliance with his will: the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions read, *because this commandment have I received of my father;* this is a reason why he so readily exerted his power, both in laying down his life, and taking it again, because it was his father's command and will, and which he received from him, with the utmost pleasure; his and his father's love, good will, gracious ends and views towards the elect, herein being the same.

Ver. 19. *There was a division therefore again among the Jews*, &c.] As there had been before; see ch. vii. 12. and ix. 16. *For these sayings;* concerning his being the good shepherd, and laying down his life for the sheep, and having both a power to lay it down, and take it up again.

Ver. 20. *And many of them said, he hath a devil, and is mad*, &c.] It was a notion of the Jews, that madness or distraction was from the devil, and therefore these two are here joined together, having a devil, and being mad: there is a spirit which they call Tazazith, and which, they say [*], is an evil spirit that takes away the understanding of men; and under the influence of such a *demon*, the Jews thought Christ to be: and therefore say, *why hear ye him?* he is a lunatic, he is distracted, he is a madman; how can you bear to hear such ranting blasphemous stuff, which no man in his senses would ever utter? nor is any thing he says to be regarded, since he is not in his right mind; but is under the power and influence of some evil spirit, which instills these wild and frantic notions into him, and puts him upon venting them; but surely no sober man will ever give heed to them.

Ver. 21. *Others said, these are not the words of him that hath a devil*, &c.] No madman or demoniac, one possessed of a devil, and under the influence of Satan, would ever talk in so divine a manner, and speak such words of truth and soberness: these were some of the wiser sort, and were well-disposed to Christ, who reasoned thus, and they were but few: whereas those that charged him with madness and distraction were many, as in the preceding verse; *can a devil open the eyes of the blind?* referring to the late instance, of Christ's curing a man that was blind from his birth; if it was in the power of a devil to do such an action, which it is not, yet it is not in his nature, it is not usual with him to do any good; but to do all the hurt he can, both to the bodies and souls of men: in one of Beza's copies it is read, *can one that has a devil open the eyes of the blind?* so the Persic version, can a *demoniac, &c.?* which reading suits best with what is before said; and then the sense is, can a madman, one that is a lunatic, one possessed with the devil, either talk in the manner this man does, or do such wonderful actions as he has done, particularly cure a man that was born blind?

Ver. 22. *And it was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication*, &c.] That is, of the temple; not as built by Solomon, as Nonnus in his paraphrase suggests; or as rebuilt by Zorobabel, for there were no annual feasts appointed in commemoration of either of these; and besides, they were neither of them in the winter-time; the dedication of Solomon's temple was in autumn, at the feast of tabernacles, about September, 1 Kings viii. 2, 65, 66. and the dedication of the house in Zorobabel's time, was in the spring, about February, Ezra vi. 15, 16. but this was the feast of dedication, ap-

[*] R. David Kimchi, Sepher Shorash rad. זוז.

pointed by Judas Maccabæus and his brethren, on account of the purging the temple, and renewing the altar, after the profanation of them by Antiochus; which feast lasted eight days, and began on the twenty-fifth of the month Cisleu, which answers to part of our December; see 1. Maccab. v. 52, 56, 59. and 2 Maccab. x. 5, 8. and with which the Jewish writers agree [a]: the account Maimonides gives [b] of it is this: "when the Israelites prevailed over their enemies and destroyed them, it was on the twenty-fifth of the month Cisleu; and they went into the temple and could not find any pure oil in the sanctuary, but one vial; and it was not enough to light but one day only, and they lighted lamps of it for eight days, until the olives were squeezed, and they brought forth pure oil: wherefore the wise men of that generation ordered, that those eight days beginning at the twenty-fifth of Cisleu, should be days of rejoicing and praise, and they lighted lamps at the doors of their houses; every night of these eight nights, to shew and make known the miracle; and these days are called חנוכה, *the dedication*: and they are forbidden mourning and fasting, as the days of *purim*; and the lighting of the lamps on them, is a commandment from the Scribes, as is the reading of the book of Esther.—— How many lamps do they light at the feast of the dedication? the order is, that every house should light one lamp, whether the men of the house be many, or whether there is but one man in it; but he that honours the command, lights up lamps according to the number of the men of the house, a lamp for every one, whether men or women; and he that honours it more, lights up a lamp for every man the first night, and adds as he goes, every night a lamp; for instance, if there be ten men in the house, the first night he lights up ten lamps, and on the second night twenty, and on the third night thirty; until he comes to the eighth night, when he lights up fourscore lamps." Wherefore, as Josephus says [c], this feast was called φῶτα, *lights*; though he seems to assign another reason of its name, because that prosperity and happiness appeared to them beyond hope, and unexpected: and though this was only an order of Judas and his brethren, and the congregation of Israel, yet the Jews observe it as religiously, as if it was the appointment of God himself, and they don't spare to call it so; for in the service of this feast, they have these words [d]; "blessed art thou, O Lord our God, the King of the world, who hath sanctified us by his commandments, and hath *commanded* us to light the lamp of the dedication; blessed art thou, O Lord our God, the King of the world, who did wonders for our fathers on those days, at this time; blessed art thou, O Lord our God, the King of the world, who has kept us alive, and preserved us, and brought us to this time; these lamps we light, because of the wonders and marvellous things, and salvations, and wars, thou hast wrought for our fathers on those days, at this time, by the hand of thine holy priests.—These lamps are holy, we have no power to use them, but only to behold them, so as to confess and praise thy great name, for thy miracles, and for thy wonders, and for thy salvations." And though this feast is said to be at Jerusalem, yet it was not confined there, as were the other feasts of the passover, pentecost, and tabernacles, for this might be kept in any part of the land: mention is made of the feast of dedication at Lydda [e], and in other countries; Maimonides [f] says "it is a common custom in all our cities in Spain, that all the men of the house light up a lamp the first night, and add as they go along, a lamp every night, till he lights up on the eighth night eight lamps, whether the men of the house be many, or there be but one man." Some have been of opinion, that this feast of dedication was on the account of the victory Judith gained over Holophernes, by cutting off his head; or however, that the commemoration of that victory was a part of this festival: in the Vulgate Latin edition of Judith xvi. 31. it is said, "the day of the festivity of this victory is received by the Hebrews, into the number of holy days; and is kept by the Jews from that time, to the present day." And Sigonius [g] asserts, that it is celebrated by the Jews on the 25th day of the month Cisleu; which is the same day the feast began, that was instituted by Judas Maccabæus, on the above account; and certain it is, that the Jews do make mention of that fact of hers, in the service for the first sabbath of this feast [h]; and some of their writers would have this fact to be in the times of the Maccabees, though as one of their chronologers [i] observes, it appears from the history of Judith, to have been in the times of Nebuchadnezzar; and there are some that say it was in the times of Cambyses, son of Cyrus, king of Persia, and was two or three hundred years before the miracle of the dedication: but he observes, that the wise men of that age agreed to comprehend the memorial of that wonderful event, with the miracle of the dedication: and so R. Leo Modena [k] says, "they have a tradition, that in ordaining this feast to be kept, they had an eye also upon that famous exploit performed by Judith upon Holophernes; although many are of opinion, that this happened not at this time of the year; and that they make a commemoration of that piece of gallantry of hers now, because she was of the stock of the Maccabees." But that can't be, since she must be some hundreds of years before them; wherefore others make mention of another Judith, a daughter of one of the Maccabees, who performed a like exploit upon Nicanor, a general of Demetrius's army: to which R. Gedaliah has respect, when he says [l], "the wise men agreed to comprehend together in the joy of the feast of dedication, the affair of Judith, seeing there was another Judith, from her that killed Holophernes,

[a] Ganz Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 22. 1. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 137. 2.
[b] Hilchot Megilla Uchanucha, c. 3. sect. 2, 3. & 4. 1, 2. Vid. T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 21. 2.
[c] Antiqu. l. 12. c. 7. sect. 7.
[d] Seder Tephillot, fol. 234. 1, 2. Ed. Amsterd.
[e] T. Bab. Roshhashana, fol. 18. 2.
[f] Hilchot Chanuca, c. 4. sect. 3.
[g] De Repub. Heb. l. 3. c. 17.
[h] Seder Tephillot, fol. 133. 2.
[i] Ganz Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 22. 1.
[k] History of the Rites, &c. of the Jews, c. 9.
[l] Shalshelet Hakabala, fol. 17. 2.

"a daughter of the Maccabees." But it is not clear that there was any such woman, nor that Nicanor was slain by one; and besides, he was killed on the thirteenth of Adar, and that day was ordained to be kept yearly on that account, 1 Maccab. vii. 43, 49. 2 Maccab. xv. 36. and the month of Adar answers to part of February. *And it was winter;* for the month Cisleu answers to our November and December; so that the twenty-fifth of that month might be about the tenth of December, and the Jews reckon part of that month winter, and it must be the part in which this feast was; they say[m], "half Cisleu, Tebet, and half Shebet, "are חורף, *winter:*" so that the evangelist might with propriety say, according to the sense of the Jewish nation, that it was winter; though it was but just entered, even not more than ten days: the reason why this is observed, may be for what follows.

Ver. 23. *And Jesus walked in the temple,* &c.] To keep himself warm, and to secure him the better from the inclemency of the weather: *in Solomon's porch;* which was covered over, and the outside of it was enclosed with a wall, which made it very convenient for such a purpose: this was on the outside of the temple eastward, and was a very magnificent structure: the account Josephus[n] gives of it is this; "there was a "porch without the temple, overlooking a deep valley, "supported by walls of four hundred cubits, made of "four-square stone, very white; the length of each "stone was twenty cubits, and the breadth six; the "work of king Solomon, who first founded the whole "temple." Now, though this was not the porch that was built by Solomon, yet as it was built on the same spot, and in imitation of it, it bore his name; mention is made of it in Acts iii. 11. and v. 12.

Ver. 24. *Then came the Jews round about him,* &c.] Who might be walking there on the same account, and seeing Jesus, took this opportunity, and got about him in great numbers, and hemmed him in; having a design upon him to ensnare him, if possible: *and said unto him, how long dost thou make us doubt?* or as the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions literally render it, *how long dost thou take away our soul?* that is, deprive us of the knowledge of thee; Nonnus renders it, *wherefore dost thou steal away our minds with words?* so Jacob when he went away privately, without the knowledge of Laban, is said to steal away the heart of Laban, as it is in the Hebrew text, in Gen. xxxi. 20, 26[o]. In like manner the Jews charge Christ with taking away their soul, or stealing away their heart, or hiding himself from them; not telling them plainly, who he was: therefore say they, *if thou be the Christ, tell us plainly:* freely, boldly, openly, in express words; this they said, not as desirous of knowing who he was, or for the sake of information, but in order to insnare him; that should he say he was not the Christ, as they might hope he would, for fear of them, now they had got him by himself, hemmed him in, it would then lessen his credit among the people; and should he say he was the Messiah, they would have whereof to accuse him to the Roman governor, as an enemy to Cæsar, as one that set up for king of the Jews.

Ver. 25. *Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not,* &c.] He had often said, what amounted to it, in his ministry and doctrine; as that God was his father, and he was the light of the world, and the good shepherd, and the like; but they gave no heed nor credit to his words, even though he told them, that unless they believed he was such a person, they should die in their sins: *the works that I do in my father's name, they bear witness of me:* such as healing the sick, dispossessing devils, cleansing lepers, giving sight to the blind, causing the deaf to hear, the dumb to speak, and the lame to walk, and raising the dead to life; suggesting, that besides his words, his doctrine and ministry, they had his miracles before them, which plainly shewed who he was; so that they need not have been in any doubt of mind, or suspense about him; nor had they any reason to complain of his hiding himself from them, or depriving them of the knowledge of him.

Ver. 26. *But ye believe not,* &c.] In me, as the Messiah: *because ye are not of my sheep;* they were not among the sheep given him by his father, were they, they would have come to him; that is, have believed in him, according to John vi. 37. they were not the chosen of God, predestinated unto eternal life; for as many as are ordained of God to eternal happiness, do believe in God's own time, Acts xiii. 48. but these not being the elect of God, had not the faith of God's elect. Christ, as the omniscient God, knew this, that they were not the chosen of God; for he was present, when the names of God's elect were written in the book of life; had they been his sheep, he must have known them, for he knows all the sheep, and calls them by name; had they been given him by the father, he must have known it, and would have owned them as such; but so it was not, and therefore they were left to hardness and unbelief: *as I said unto you:* which seems to refer to what follows, since he had said before, that the sheep hear the voice of the shepherd, and follow him, and that he knows them, ver. 4, 14. This clause is omitted in the Vulgate Latin version, and in Nonnus, but is in the Greek copies, and Oriental versions.

Ver. 27. *My sheep hear my voice,* &c.] The voice of Christ in his Gospel, both externally and internally; see the notes on ver. 4, 16. and since therefore these Jews did not, it was a plain case they were not of his sheep: *and I know them:* see the note on ver. 14. but Christ knew not these as the elect of God, or as the father's gift to him, and therefore they could not be his sheep: *and they follow me:* both in the exercise of grace, and in the discharge of duty, and whithersoever he the good shepherd leads them; see the notes on ver. 3, 4. But now, whereas these Jews did not follow Christ, but turned their backs on him, and rejected him, it was notorious that they were none of his sheep; but both happy and safe are those persons, that are the sheep of Christ, as appears from what is next said of them.

Ver. 28. *And I give unto them eternal life,* &c.] Christ gives eternal life to his sheep, or people now;

[m] Bereshit Rabba, sect. 34. fol. 30. 2. T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 106. 2.
[n] Antiqu. l. 20. c. 8. sect. 7.

[o] See De Dieu in loc.

he gives them a spiritual life, or a life of grace, which issues in eternal life; he gives them himself, who is the true God and eternal life, and whoever has him has life; he gives them the knowledge of himself, which is life eternal; and he gives them his righteousness, which is their justification of life, or what entitles them to eternal life; and he gives them the foretastes of it, in faith and hope, in the enjoyment of himself, and the discoveries of his love; he gives them the earnest and pledge of it, his own spirit; and they have this life in him as their representative, and it is hid with him in God, and is safe and secure for them; and he will actually give it to them in their own persons, to be for ever enjoyed by them; and because of the certainty of it, he is said to do it now: this is a pure gift, it is of grace, and not of works; and it is in the gift of Christ as Mediator, who has power to give it to as many as the father has given him: *and they shall never perish*; though they were lost in Adam, and in a perishing condition in themselves, during their state of unregeneracy; in which condition they see themselves to be, when convinced by the spirit of God; and come as persons ready to perish to Christ, as a Saviour, resolving, that if they perish, they'll perish at his feet: and though after conversion, they are subject to many falls and spiritual declensions, and lose their peace, joy, and comfort, and imagine their strength and hope are perished, or at least fear they shall one day perish through one sin, or snare, or temptation or another, yet they shall never perish in such sense as the wicked will; they'll not be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and the glory of his power: *neither shall any pluck them out of my hand*: Christ's sheep are in his hands, being put there by God the father, both as an instance of his love to Christ, and them; and this was done from all eternity, even when they were chosen in him; so that they were in the hands of Christ, before they were in the loins of Adam; and were preserved in him, notwithstanding Adam's fall, and through the ruins of it. To be in the hands of Christ, is to be high in his esteem and favour; the saints are a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of their God; they are a signet on his right hand that shall never be plucked off; they are engraven on the palms of his hands: to be in the hands of Christ, is to be in his possession, and at his dispose, as all the elect of God are; and to be under his guidance, care, and protection, as they be; they are fed according to the integrity of his heart, and guided by the skilfulness of his hands; they are always under his care and watchful eye, who protects them from all their enemies, and hides them in the hollow of his hand: hence, because they are so, they are called the *sheep of his hand*, Psal. xcv. 7. And none shall ever pluck them from thence; no man can do it, not any false teacher can remove them from Christ, by all the art and cunning he is master of; nor any violent persecutor, by all the force and power he can use; nor can any sin, or snare, or temptation, draw them out of Christ's hands; nor any adversity whatever separate them from him: they must be safe, and always abide there, who are in the hands of Christ; for his hands have laid the foundations of the heavens and the earth, they grasp the whole universe, and hold all things together; and who then can pluck any out of these hands? Moreover, Christ, as Mediator, has all power in heaven and earth; and even as man, he is the man of God's right hand, made strong for himself.

Ver. 29. *My father which gave them me*, &c. So the sheep came to be Christ's, and to be in his hand: the father gave them to him, put them into his hands, and made them his care and charge: *is greater than all*; than all gods, than all beings, than all creatures, angels and men, and than all the enemies of his people; this must be allowed: the Vulgate Latin version, and so some of the ancients read, *what my father gave to me, is greater than all*; meaning, that the church given to him, and built on him, is stronger than all its enemies: *and none is able to pluck them out of my father's hand*; so that these sheep have a double security; they are in the hands of Christ, and they are in the hands of the father of Christ; wherefore could it be thought, which ought not to be, that they could be plucked out of Christ's hands, yet it can never be imagined, that any can pluck them out of the hands of God the father; and there is no more reason to think that they can be plucked out of the hands of the one, than there is that they can be plucked out of the hands of the other, as is clear from what follows in the next verse; see Wisdom iii. 1.

Ver. 30. *I and* my *father are one*.] Not in person, for the father must be a distinct person from the son, and the son a distinct person from the father; and which is further manifest, from the use of the verb plural, *I and* my *father*, ἐσμεν, *we are one*; that is, in nature and essence, and perfections, particularly in power; since Christ is speaking of the impossibility of plucking any of the sheep, out of his own and his father's hands; giving this as a reason for it, their unity of nature, and equality of power; so that it must be as impracticable to pluck them out of his hands, as out of his father's, because he is equal with God the father, and the one God with him. The Jew * objects, that "if the sense of this expression is, that the father "and the son are one, as the Nazarenes understand "and believe it, it will be found that Jesus himself "destroys this saying, as it is written in Mark xiii. 32. "for saith Jesus, *that day and that hour, there is none "knoweth, not the angels, nor the son, but the father "only*: lo, these words shew, that the father and the "son are not one, since the son does not know what "the father knows." But it should be observed, that Christ is both the son of God, and the son of man, as the Christians believe; as he is the son of God, he lay in the bosom of his father, and was privy to all his secrets, to all his thoughts, purposes, and designs; and as such, he knew the day and hour of judgment, being God omniscient; and in this respect is one with the father, having the same perfections of power, knowledge, *&c.* but then as the son of man, he is not of the same nature, and has not the same knowledge; his knowledge of things was derived, communicated, and not infinite; and did not reach to all things at once,

* R. Isaac Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 50. p. 438, 439.

but was capable of being increased, as it was; and it is with regard to him as the son of man, that Jesus speaks of himself in Mark; whereas he is here treating of his divine sonship, and almighty power; wherefore considered in the relation of the son of God, and as possessed of the same perfections with God, he and his father are one; though as man, he is different from him, and knew not some things he did: so that there is no contradiction between the words of Christ in one place, and in the other; nor is he chargeable with any blasphemy against God, or any arrogance in himself, by assuming deity to himself; nor deserving of punishment, even to be deprived of human life, as the Jew suggests: nor is what he produces from a Socinian writer, of any moment, that these words do not necessarily suppose, that the father and the son are of the same essence; since it may be said of two men, that they are one, and yet are not the same man, but one is one man, and the other another; for we don't say they are one and the same person, which does not follow from their being of one and the same nature, but that they are one God, and two distinct persons.

Ver. 31. *Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him.*] As they had done before, ch. viii. 59. see the note there.

Ver. 32. *Jesus answered them, many good works,* &c.] Such as healing the sick, and all manner of diseases; dispossessing devils, cleansing lepers, giving sight to the blind, causing the dumb to speak, the deaf to hear, and the lame to walk; which were not only works of power, but of mercy and beneficence; and therefore are called good works, as well as they were great and miraculous ones: *have I shewed you from my father:* which Christ did in the name, and by the command and authority of the father; who gave him them to do, and did them by him; and which were evident and notorious, and were done so openly and publicly, that they could not be denied: *for which of these works do ye stone me?* suggesting, that his public life had been a continued series of such kind actions to the sons of men, and it could be for nothing else surely, that they took up stones to stone him; wherefore the part they acted, was a most ungrateful, cruel, and barbarous one.

Ver. 33. *The Jews answered him, saying,* &c.] As follows: *for a good work we stone thee not:* they could not deny that he had done many good works; this was too barefaced to be contradicted; yet they cared not to own them; and though they industriously concealed their resentment at them, yet they were very much gravelled and made uneasy by them, but chose to give another reason for their stoning him: *but for blasphemy;* which required death by stoning, according to Lev. xxiv. 16. and according to the Jews' oral law[q]: *and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God;* which they concluded very rightly, from his saying, ver. 30. that God was his father, and that he and his father were one; that is, in nature and essence, and therefore he must be God: but then this was no blasphemy, but a real truth, as is hereafter made to appear; nor is there any contradiction between his being man, and being God; he is truly and really man, but then he is not a mere man, as the Jews suggested; but is truly God, as well as man, and is both God and man in one person, the divine and human nature being united in him, of which they were ignorant: two mistakes they seem to be guilty of in this account; one that Christ was a mere man, the other that he made himself God, or assumed deity to himself, which did not belong to him, and therefore must be guilty of blasphemy; neither of which were true: the phrase is used by the Jews, of others who have taken upon them the name and title of God; as of Hiram king of Tyre, of whom they say, שעשה עצמו אלוה, *that he made himself God*[r]; the same they say of Nebuchadnezzar; and the modern Jews still continue the same charge against Jesus, as their ancestors did, and express it in the same language, and say of him, that he was a man, and set himself up for God[s].

Ver. 34. *Jesus answered them, is it not written in your law,* &c.] In the law which was given unto them, of which they boasted, and pretended to understand, and interpret, even in Psal. lxxxii. 6. for the law includes not only the Pentateuch, but all the books of the Old Testament: it is an observation of one of the Jewish doctors[t], that "with the wise men of blessed "memory, it is found in many places that the word "*law* comprehends the Prophets and the Hagiogra- "pha." Among which last stands the book of Psalms; and this may be confirmed by a passage out of the Talmud[u]; it is asked, "from whence does the resurrection "of the dead appear, מן התורה, *out of the law?*" It is answered, "as it is said in Psal. lxxxiv. 4. *Blessed* "*are they that dwell in thy house, they will still praise* "*thee, Selah; they do praise thee,* it is not said, but "*they will praise thee:* from hence is a proof of the re- "surrection of the dead, *out of the law.*" The same question is again put, and then Isa. lii. 8. is cited, and the like observation made upon it. Moreover, this is a way of speaking used by the Jews, when they introduce another citing a passage of Scripture thus[w], הלא כתיב בתורתכם, *is it not written in your law,* Deut. iv. 9. *only take heed to thyself,* &c. so here the Scripture follows, *I said, ye are gods?* which is spoken to civil magistrates, so called, because of their authority and power; and because they do, in some sort, represent the divine majesty, in the government of nations and kingdoms. Many of the Jewish writers, by *gods,* understand *the angels.* The Targum paraphrases the words thus; "I said ye are accounted as angels, "as the angels on high, all of you;" and to this sense some of their commentators interpret it. Jarchi's gloss is, *ye are gods;* that is, angels; for when I gave the law to you, it was on this account, that the angel of death might not any more rule over you: the note of Aben Ezra is, *and the children of the Most High;* as angels; and the sense is, your soul is as the soul of angels: hence the[x] Jew charges Christ with seeking refuge in words, that will not profit, or be any help to him, when he cites these words, shewing that magistrates

[q] Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 7. sect. 4.
[r] Bereshit Rabba, sect. 96. fol. 83. 4. & Tzeror Hammor, fol. 134. 4.
[s] Aben Ezra in Gen, xxvii. 39. & Abarbinel Mashmia Jeshua, fol. 5. 1.
[t] R. Azarias in Meor Enayim, c. 7. fol. 47. 1.
[u] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 91. 2.
[w] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 32. 2.
[x] R. Isaac Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 51. p. 440, 441.

are called gods, when the sense is only, that they are like to the angels in respect of their souls: but let it be observed, that it is not said, *ye are as gods*, as in Gen. iii. 5. but *ye are gods*; not like unto them only, but are in some sense gods; and besides, to say that they are like to angels, with respect to their souls, which come from above, is to say no more of the judges of the earth, than what may be said of every man: to which may be added, that this objector himself owns, that judges are called אלהים, *gods*, as in Exod. xxii. 9. *the cause of both parties shall come before* אלהים, *the judges*; and that even the word is used in this sense in this very psalm, from whence these words are cited, ver. 1. *he judgeth among* אלהים, *the gods*; and both Kimchi and Ben Melech interpret this text itself in the same way, and observe, that judges are called gods, when they judge truly and aright: all which is sufficient to justify our Lord in the citation of this passage, and the use he makes of it.

Ver. 35. *If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came*, &c.] The Syriac version reads, *because the word of God came to them*; either the divine *Logos*, the essential word, the son of God, who appeared to Moses, and made him a God to Pharaoh, and who appointed rulers and magistrates among the Jews; and who is the King of kings, and Lord of lords, from whom all receive their power and dominion: this sense is favoured by the Ethiopic version, which renders it, *if he called them gods to whom God appeared, the word of God was with them*: or else the commission from God, authorizing them to act in the capacity of rulers and governors, is here meant; or rather the word of God, which, in the passage of Scripture cited, calls them so, as it certainly does: *and the Scripture cannot be broken*; or be made null and void; whatever that says is true, there is no contradicting it, or objecting to it: it is a Jewish way of speaking, much used in the Talmud [y]; when one doctor has produced an argument, or instance, in any point of debate, another says, איכא למיפרך, *it may be broken*; or objected to, in such and such a manner, and be refuted: but the Scripture can't be broken, that is not to be objected to, there can be no confutation of that.

Ver. 36. *Say ye of him whom the father hath sanctified*, &c.] Not by making his human nature pure and holy, and free from all sin, and by bestowing the holy spirit on him without measure, though both true; but these were upon, or after his mission into the world; whereas sanctification here, designs something previous to that, and respects the eternal separation of him to his office, as Mediator, in the counsel, purposes, and decrees of God, and in the covenant of his grace, being pre-ordained thereunto, before the foundation of the world: which supposes his eternal existence as a divine person, and tacitly proves his true and proper deity: *and sent into the world*; in human nature, to obtain eternal redemption and salvation for his people: to save them from sin, Satan, the world, law, hell and death, which none but God could do: *thou blasphemest, because I said, I am the son of God*; for what he had said in ver. 30. is equivalent to it: and in it he was rightly understood by the Jews, and what he here and afterwards says confirms it: the argument is what the Jews call קל וחומר, *from the lesser to the greater*, and stands thus; that if mere frail mortal men, and some of them wicked men, being made rulers and judges in the earth, are called gods, by God himself, to whom the word of God came in time, and constituted them gods, or governors, but for a time; and this is a fact stands recorded in Scripture, which cannot be denied or disproved, then surely it cannot be blasphemy in Christ, to assert himself to be the son of God, who existed as a divine person from all eternity; and was so early set apart to the office of prophet, priest, and king; and in the fulness of time was sent into this world, to be the author of eternal salvation to the sons of men.

Ver. 37. *If I do not the works of my father*, &c.] Not only what the father had given him to finish, and which he wrought by him as man, but such as were as great as the father had done, and were equal to them; and which could not be done by any, but by the father, or by one that is equal with him: *believe me not*; Christ appeals to his miracles as proofs of his deity, sonship, and Messiahship, and desires no other credit than what they demand; see Matt. xi. 3, 4, 5. John v. 36.

Ver. 38. *But if I do*, &c.] Works, which none but God can do: *though ye believe not me*; what Christ said in his doctrine and ministry, though they paid no regard to that, and did not receive his testimony, on the credit of him the testifier, as they ought to have done: *believe the works*; not only that they are true and real, and not imaginary and delusory; but for the sake of them believe the above assertion, that Christ is the son of God, he and his father being one; or take such notice of these works and miracles, consider the nature, evidence, and importance of them, and the divine power that attends them, *that ye may know and believe, that the father is in me, and I in him*; or *in the father*, as one of Beza's exemplars; the Vulgate Latin, Persic, and Ethiopic versions read, or *in my father*, as read the Syriac and Arabic versions: that they are one in nature, distinct in person, equal in power, and have a mutual inhabitation and communion in the divine essence; all which is manifest, by doing the same works, and which are out of the reach and power of any mere creature.

Ver. 39. *Therefore they sought again to take him*, &c.] Not to take away his life by stoning him, as before, in the manner the furious zealots did, and was the part they were about to act just now; but to lay hold upon him and bring him before the sanhedrim, as they had done in ch. v. he being so far from clearing himself from the charge of blasphemy, they had brought against him, that in their opinion he had greatly strengthened it; and they thought they had now sufficient proof and evidence to convict him as a blasphemer, in their high court of judicature; and therefore attempted to lay hands on him, and bring him thither: *but he escaped out of their hands*; either by withdrawing from them in some private way; or by open force, exerting his power, and obliging them on every side to fall back, and give way to him; or by

[y] T. Bab. Zebachim, fol. 4. 1. & Becorot, fol. 32. 1. & passim.

rendering himself invisible to them; and this he did, not through fear of death, but because his time was not yet come, and he had other work to do, before he suffered and died.

Ver. 40. *And went away again beyond Jordan,* &c.] Where he had been before; and whither he went; not merely for the security of his person, much less to indulge himself in ease, but to preach the Gospel, work miracles, and bring many souls to believe on him, as did: and he went *into the place where John at first baptized;* that is, Bethabara, where he baptized before he was at Enon, near Salim, John i. 28. and iii. 23. and was the place where Christ himself was baptized, and where John bore such a testimony of him: *and there he abode;* how long is not certain, perhaps till he went to Bethany, on account of raising Lazarus from the dead.

Ver. 41. *And many resorted to him,* &c.] From all the parts adjacent, having heard of his being there, and of the fame of him; and many of them doubtless personally knew him; these came to him, some very likely to be healed by him, others to see his person and miracles, and others to hear him preach: *and said, John did no miracle;* though it was now three years ago, yet the name, ministry, and baptism of John, were fresh in the memory of men in those parts; and what they say one to another, was not to lessen the character of John, but to exalt Jesus Christ, and to give a reason why they should receive and embrace him; for if John, who did no miracle, who only taught and baptized, and directed men to the Messiah, was justly reckoned a very great person, and his doctrine was received, and his baptism was submitted to, then much more should this illustrious person be attended to; who, besides his divine doctrine, did such great and amazing miracles; to which they add, though John did no miracle to confirm his mission, ministry, and baptism, *but all things that John spake of this man, were true;* as that he was greater than he, was the Lamb of God, yea, the son of God, the Saviour of the world, and true Messiah, who should baptize men with the Holy Ghost and with fire.

Ver. 42. *And many believed on him there.*] Through the doctrine he preached, the miracles he wrought, and through comparing these things with what John had said of him: this shews the reason of Christ's leaving Jerusalem, and coming into these parts; there were others that were to believe in his name: the word *there*, is left out in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Persic versions.

CHAP. XI.

Ver. 1. *NOW a certain man was sick,* &c.] Very likely of a fever; Nonnus calls it a morbid fire, a hot and burning disease: named *Lazarus of Bethany;* for his name, which the Ethiopic version reads *Eleazar*, and the Persic version *Gazarus*, see the note on Luke xvi. 24. and for the place Bethany, see the notes on Matt. xxi. 1, 17. *The town of Mary and her sister Martha;* where they were both born, as well as Lazarus, or at least where they dwelt; of the former, some account is given in the next verse, and of the latter, see the note on Luke x. 38.

Ver. 2. *It was* that *Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment,* &c.] Not the woman in Luke vii. 37. as some have thought, whose name is not mentioned, and which history is not related by John at all: but Mary in John xii. 3. who is both mentioned by name, and along with Lazarus her brother, and with whom all the circumstances of the affair suit; and though the fact was not yet done, yet John writing many years after it was done, and when it was well known, proleptically, and in a parenthesis, takes notice of it here: *and wiped his feet with her hair;* instead of a napkin, after she had anointed them with oil; see the notes on Luke vii. 37. and on John xii. 3. *Whose brother Lazarus was sick;* this is observed, to shew how well they were all acquainted with Christ, and affected to him.

Ver. 3. *Therefore his sisters sent unto him,* &c.] Both the sisters of Lazarus, Mary and Martha, sent to Jesus: they did not go themselves, being women, and the place where Jesus was, was at some distance; and besides, it was necessary they should abide at home, to attend their brother in his sickness, and therefore they sent a messenger, or messengers to Christ, *saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick;* for it seems that Lazarus was in a very singular manner loved by Christ, as man, as John the beloved disciple was; and this is the rather put into the message by the sisters, to engage Jesus to come to his assistance; and they were very right in applying to Christ in this time of need, who is the physician, both of the bodies and souls of men; and are greatly to be commended both for their modesty and piety, in not prescribing to Christ what should be done in this case: and it may be further observed, that such who are the peculiar objects of Christ's love, are attended in this life with bodily sickness, disorders, and diseases, which are sent unto them, not in a way of vindictive wrath, but in love, and as fatherly chastisements; which, as they are designed, so they are over-ruled for their good; and are to be considered, not as instances of wrath, but as tokens of love.

Ver. 4. *When Jesus heard that,* &c.] That his friend Lazarus was sick, *he said;* either to his disciples, or to the messenger or messengers that brought the account to him, and that on purpose to yield some relief to the afflicted family when it should be reported to them: *this sickness is not unto death;* it was to issue in death, but not in death which was to continue, or under which Lazarus was to continue till the general resurrection; for though he should die, yet he should be so quickly restored again to life, that it scarcely deserved the name of death. The Jews distinguish between sickness and sickness; there are some that

are *sick*, the greater part of whom are, לחיים, *for life*: and there are others that are *sick*, the greater part of whom are, למיתה, *for death*[z], or are sick unto death, whose sickness issues in death; but this of Lazarus's was not to be unto death, at least not finally: *but for the glory of God*; of his power and goodness in raising him again: *that the son of God might be glorified thereby*; that is, that his glory, as the son of God, might be made manifest in the resurrection of him from the dead; see ch. ii. 11.

Ver. 5. *Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus.*] Not only with an everlasting love, a love of complacency and delight, an unchangeable one, and which never varies, nor will ever end, with which he loves all his people alike; but with a very great human affection, and which was very singular and peculiar to them: these were the intimate friends, and familiar acquaintance of Christ, whom he often visited, at whose house he frequently was when in those parts; they were very hospitable to him; they kindly received him into their houses, and generously entertained him, and which he returned in love to them: hence Nonnus paraphrases the words, "Jesus loved the women, "φιλοξένους, *who were lovers of hospitality*, by the law "of kindness."

Ver. 6. *When he had heard therefore that he was sick*, &c.] Though Christ had heard that Lazarus was sick, and by such good hands, a message being sent him by his sisters, to acquaint him with it; and though he had such a very great love for him, and the whole family, yet he did not go directly to him, and to his assistance: but *he abode two days still in the same place where he was*; at Bethabara, beyond Jordan; this he did to try the faith and patience of the sisters of Lazarus, and that the miracle of raising him from the dead might be the more manifest, and his own glory might be the more illustrious, and yet equal, if not greater tenderness and love be shewn to his friends.

Ver. 7. *Then after that*, &c.] The next day, the third day after he had heard of Lazarus's sickness: *saith he to his disciples, let us go into Judea again*; for the country beyond Jordan was distinguished from Judea; see Matt. iv. 25. and the note there.

Ver. 8. His *disciples said unto him, master*, &c.] Addressing him very reverently, and with great concern for his safety, as well as their own: *the Jews of late*, or but now, *sought to stone thee*; as they had attempted to do twice in a very little time; see ch. viii. 59. and x. 31. *and goest thou thither again?* where there are so many enemies; and so much danger, and but little hope of doing much good; whereas here he was among his friends, and in safety, and very useful.

Ver. 9. *Jesus answered, are there not twelve hours in the day?* &c.] So the Jews reckoned, and so they commonly say[a], שתים עשרה שעות הוי היום, *twelve hours are a day*, or a day consists of twelve hours, which they divided into four parts, each part consisting of three hours. This was a matter well known, and Christ puts the question as such, it being what might be easily answered, and at once assented to: *if any man walk in the day*; within any of the twelve hours, even in the last of them, *he stumbleth not*, at any stone or stumbling-block in the way, *because he seeth the light of this world*: the sun in the horizon not being as yet set, by the light of which he sees what is before him, and avoids it; see the note on ch. viii. 12. So our Lord intimates, that as yet it was day with him, his time of life was not expired; and so, as yet, it was a time of walking and working; nor did he fear any danger he was exposed to, or any snares that were laid for him, since he could not be hurt by any, nor his life taken from him before his time.

Ver. 10. *But if a man walk in the night*, &c.] After the sun is set, and there is no light in the air and heavens to direct him: *he stumbleth*; at every thing that lies in the way, *because there is no light in him*: there being none from above communicated to him. So our Lord suggests, that when the time of his death was come, he should then fall a prey into the hands of his enemies, but till then he should walk safe and secure: nor had he any thing to fear from them, and therefore could go into Judea again, with intrepidity and unconcern.

Ver. 11. *These things said he*, &c.] In answer to his disciples, and made a pause. *And after that he saith unto them, our friend Lazarus sleepeth*; meaning, that he was dead; in which sense the word is often used in the Old Testament, and in the common dialect of the Jews, and frequently in their writings; and especially it is so used of good men: and it is an observation of theirs[b], that "it is usual to say of the righte- "ous, that there is no death in them, אלא שינה, *but* "*sleep*;" see the notes on Matt. ix. 24. 1 Cor. xv. 18, 20. 1 Thess. iv. 13, 14. *but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep*; that is, to raise him from the dead, for the resurrection of the dead is expressed by awaking; see Psal. xvii. 15. Isa. xix. 26. Dan. xii. 2. which for Christ to do, was as easy as to awake a man out of natural sleep: these words respecting Lazarus's sleeping and awaking, express both the omniscience and omnipotence of Christ; his omniscience, that he should know that Lazarus was dead, when at such a distance from him; and his omnipotence, that he could raise him from the dead; and yet his great modesty to signify it in such covert language, though not difficult to be understood.

Ver. 12. *Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep*, &c.] Soundly, quietly, and comfortably, and takes rest in it: *he shall do well*; or *be saved* from the disease; he will be delivered from it; he'll recover out of it; it is a sign the distemper is leaving him, and he is growing better, and will be restored to his health again: the Ethiopic version renders it by many words, *he will be well*, and *will awake*, and *will live*. Sound sleep is a sign of health. This they said to put off their master from going into Judea, fearing the danger he would be exposed unto.

Ver. 13. *Howbeit Jesus spake of his death*, &c.] Under the figurative phrase of sleeping: *but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep*; in a literal and natural sense.

Ver. 14. *Then said Jesus unto them plainly*, &c.] Without a figure, when he perceived they did not under-

[z] T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 71. 2.
[a] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 38. 2. Avoda Zara, fol. 3. 2. Vid. Philo de Somniis, p. 1148.
[b] Gloss. in T. Hieros. Celaim in En Yaacob, fol. 4. 4.

stand him, and yet it was a very easy and usual metaphor which he had made use of; but such was the present stupidity of their minds, that they did not take in his meaning: wherefore, without reproaching them with it, he said to them in so many words, *Lazarus is dead.* The Persic version reads, *Lazarus is dead indeed*, as he really was.

Ver. 15. *And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there,* &c.] At Bethany, before he died, or when he died; because he might have been prevailed upon through the solicitations of his dear friends, Mary and Martha, and through tender affection to Lazarus, to have prevented his death, by rebuking the distemper, and restoring him to health, or to have raised him immediately as soon as he was dead; and in either case the miracle would not have been so illustrious, nor have been such a means of confirming the faith of his disciples, as now it would be: *to the intent ye may believe:* more strongly, that he was the son of God, and true Messiah: *nevertheless, let us go unto him;* to Lazarus, to the grave where he lies: the Syriac version reads, *let us go there;* to Bethany, where he lived, and died, and now lay interred.

Ver. 16. *Then said Thomas, who is called Dydimus,* &c.] The former was his Hebrew name, and the latter his Greek name, and both signify a *twin;* and perhaps he may be so called because he was one: the same said *unto his fellow-disciples:* the other eleven; though the Ethiopic version reads, *to the next of the disciples;* as if he addressed himself only to one of them, to him that was nearest to him: *let us also go, that we may die with him;* either with Lazarus, as some think, or rather with Christ; for he, and the rest of the disciples, imagined that Christ, by returning to Judea, would be in great danger of losing his life; yea, by this expression they seem to be positive in it, that it was a matter out of question with them, that he would die, should he venture there again: and therefore Thomas stirs up his fellow-disciples to go along with him, and die altogether; signifying, that they should have but little comfort when he was taken from them: but both Thomas, and the rest, were differently minded, when Christ was apprehended, for they all forsook him and fled, and provided for their own safety, and left him to die alone, Matt. xxvii. 56.

Ver. 17. *Then when Jesus came,* &c.] The Alexandrian copy, and all the Oriental versions add, *to Bethany;* though it seems by what follows, that he was not come to the town itself, but near it; and it looks as if it was not far from Lazarus's grave; and it was usual to bury without the city; and here he had intelligence of his, Lazarus's, death, and how long he had been dead: *for he found he had lien in the grave four days already;* it is very likely that he died the same day that Mary and Martha sent to Christ to acquaint him with his sickness, and the same day he was buried; for the Jews used to bury the same day a person died, and so they do now: and after Christ had this account, he stayed two days where he was, and on the third day, he proposed to his disciples to go into Judea; and very probably on that, or on the next day, which was the fourth, they set out and came to Bethany; see the note on ver. 39.

Ver. 18. *Now Bethany was nigh unto Jerusalem,* &c.] Which was a reason why there were so many of the Jews come there to condole the two sisters upon the death of their brother; and by this means the following miracle became more known there: it was *about fifteen furlongs off;* that is, about two miles, for seven furlongs and a half made a Jewish mile, as appears from one of their canons [c], which runs thus: "they "don't spread nets for doves, except it be distant from "an habitable place, שלשים ריס, *thirty furlongs;*" which the commentators say [d] are *four miles:* and still more expressly it is said [e], that "between Jerusalem "and Zuck, (the place where the scape-goat was had,) "there were ten tents, and ninety furlongs, שבעה "ומחצה לכל מיל, *seven and a half to every mile.*" Hence a furlong was called one-seventh and a half of a mile [f], which was 266 cubits, and two-thirds of one.

Ver. 19. *And many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary,* &c.] Or *to those that were about Martha and Mary;* in order to have access to them, they came to them, and to the rest of the family; though the phrase may design them only, as the Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions read: these Jews, as appears from the context, ver. 18, 45, 46. came from Jerusalem, and might be some of the principal inhabitants; and it may be concluded, that these persons, Lazarus, Martha, and Mary, were people of note and figure; and indeed all the accounts of them here, and elsewhere, shew the same; see Luke x. 38. John xii. 1, 2, 3. The end of their coming to them was *to comfort them concerning their brother;* by reason of his death, as was usual with the Jews to do, after the dead was buried; for they did not allow of it before: hence that saying [g] of R. Simeon ben Eleazar, "don't comfort him (thy "friend) in the time his dead lies before him." The first office of this kind was done when they returned from the grave; for it is said [h], "when they return "from the grave they make rows round about the "mourner, לנחמו, *to comfort him*, and they make him "to sit, and they stand, and there never were less than "ten in a row." It was an ancient custom for the mourners to stand in their place in a row, and all the people passed by, and every man as he came to the mourner *comforted him*, and passed on [i]. But besides these consolations, there were others administered at their own houses, which were usually done the first week: for it is said [k], "the mourner the first week does not "go out of the door of his house; the second he goes "out, but does not sit, or continue in his place; the "third he continues in his place, but does not speak; "the fourth, lo, he is as every other man. R. Judah "says, there's no need to say, the first week he does "not go out of the door of his house, for behold, all "come to his house, לנחמו, *to comfort him.*" And it was on the third day more particularly on which these

[c] Misn. Bava Kama, c. 7. sect. 7.
[d] Maimon. Jarchi, & Bartenora in ib.
[e] Misn. Yoma, c. 6. sect. 4.
[f] T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 33. 1. Maimon. Hilch. Rotzeach, c. 13. sect. 8.
[g] Pirke Abot, c. 4. sect. 18.
[h] Gloss. in Cetubot, fol. 8. 2. & in Beracot, fol. 16. 2.
[i] Gloss. in T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 19. 1.
[k] T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 23. 1.

consolatory visits were paid[l]: "on the first day he "(the mourner) did not wear his phylacteries; on "the second, he put them on; on the third day, "others come *to comfort him*." This rule the Jews here seem to have observed, since Lazarus had been dead four days; and they were come from Jerusalem hither to comfort his sisters on account of his death. The whole of this ceremony is thus related by Maimonides[m], "how do they comfort mourners? after "they have buried the dead, the mourners gather "together, and stand on the side of the grave; and all "that accompany the dead stand round about them, "one row within another: and there is no row less "than ten; and the mourners are not of the number; "the mourners stand on the left hand of the com-"forters; and all the comforters go to the mourners, "one by one, and say to them, תנוחמו מן השמים, *may "ye be comforted from heaven*: after that the mourner "goes to his house, and every day of the seven days "of mourning, men come *to comfort him*; whether "new faces come, or do not, the mourner sits down "at the head, (or in the chief place,) and no com-"forters may sit but upon the floor, as it is said, "Job ii. 13. *and they sat with him on the ground*: nor "may they say any thing until the mourner has "opened his mouth first, as it is said, Job ii. 13. *and "none spake a word unto him*: and it is written after-"wards, ch. iii. 1. *so opened Job his mouth*, &c. and "*Eliphaz answered*, ch. iv. 1. and when he nods with "his head, the comforters may not sit with him any "longer, that they may not trouble him more than "is necessary. If a man dies, and there are no "mourners to be comforted, ten worthy men go and "sit in his place all the seven days of mourning; and "the rest of the people gather to them; and if there "are not ten fixed every day, ten of the rest of the "people gather together, and sit in his place:" for this business of comforting mourners was reckoned an act of great piety and mercy[n]; and these Jews here might come, not so much out of respect to the dead, or to his sisters, as because it was thought to be a meritorious act.

Ver. 20. *Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming*, &c.] Which she might hear of, either by a messenger sent by Christ to her, to acquaint her of it; or rather by some of the people of the town, who knew him, and ran and told her of it; and she being an active person, and stirring about house, might receive the report unknown to her sister, as it seems she did; and as soon as she had the hint, without staying to communicate it to her sister, *went and met him*: either through her great affection to him, and eager desire of seeing him; or to consult his safety, and let him know what number of Jews were in their house, that he might consider whether it would be safe for him to be at their house or not. *But Mary sat* still *in the house*: not out of disrespect to Jesus, or through want of affection to him, or through any indifference and sloth, but because she knew not that Jesus was coming; see ver. 28, 29.

Ver. 21. *Then said Martha unto Jesus*, &c.] When she was come to him, *Lord, if thou hadst been here my brother had not died*: which expresses much faith, but with a mixture of weakness, as if the presence of Christ was necessary for the working a cure; whereas he could as well have restored her brother to health absent, as present, had it been his will, as he did the centurion's servant, and the nobleman's son of Capernaum.

Ver. 22. *But I know that even now*, &c.] At this distance of time, though her brother had been in the grave four days: *whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give* it *thee*; whether *Martha* had such a clear notion of the deity of Christ, as yet, as she afterwards had, is not so certain: however, she was persuaded that he had great interest with God, and that whatever he desired of him was granted to him; and though she does not mention the resurrection of her brother, yet it seems to be what she had in view.

Ver. 23. *Jesus saith unto her, thy brother shall rise again.*] Christ knew what she meant, and accordingly gave her an answer, and yet in such general terms, that she could not tell whether his meaning was, that he should rise now, or at the general resurrection.

Ver. 24. *Martha saith unto him*, &c.] Being desirous of knowing the sense and meaning of Christ, as well as to express her own faith; *I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection, at the last day*. The Jews were divided about the doctrine of the resurrection, the Sadducees denied it, the Pharisees asserted it; and on this latter side was Martha; she believed there would be a resurrection of the dead; that this would be at the last day, or at the end of the world; and that her brother would rise at that general resurrection: wherefore, if Christ meant no more than that, this was what she always believed. The Syriac version renders it, *in the consolation* at *the last day*: and so the time of the resurrection is, by the Jews, called *the days of consolation*[o]. And good reason there is for it in those who shall have part in the first resurrection, or come forth to the resurrection of life; their bodies will rise glorious, powerful, spiritual, and incorruptible, fashioned like to the glorious body of Christ; they'll no more be attended with infirmities, disorders, and diseases; they'll feel no more pain, nor die any more; being reunited to their souls they'll meet the Lord in the air, and in the judgment they'll stand at his right hand; they'll enter into his joy, and be for ever with him; with their bodily eyes they'll behold Christ, and see him for themselves, and not another; they'll meet their spiritual friends and acquaintance, and enjoy their company for ever; they'll have uninterrupted communion with angels and saints, and with God, Father, Son, and Spirit; their consolation will be inconceivable and inexpressible.

Ver. 25. *Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life*, &c.] Signifying, that he was able of himself to raise men from death to life, without asking it of his father; and that he could do it now, as well as at the general resurrection; at which time Christ will be the efficient cause of it; and which will display both his omniscience and his omnipotence; as his

[l] Massech. Semachot, c. 6. fol. 14. 3.
[m] Hilch. Ebel, c. 13. sect. 1, 2, 3, 4.
[n] Maimon. in Misn. Peah, c. 1. sect. 1.
[o] Targum Jon. in Gen. i. 21. & in Hos. vi. 2.

resurrection is the earnest and pledge, and will be the model and exemplar of it. This is true of Christ, with regard to a spiritual resurrection, from a death of sin, to a life of grace; he is concerned both in the life itself, and in the resurrection to it: he is the meritorious and procuring cause of it; he died for his people, that they, being dead to sin, might live unto God, and unto righteousness: he is the author of it; he says unto them, when dead in sin, live; he speaks life into them: he commands it in them, and by his spirit breathes into them the breath of spiritual life, and implants the principle of it in their souls; and he supports and maintains it by giving himself to them as the bread of life to feed upon, and by supplying them with grace continually; yea, he himself is their life; he lives in them, and their life is hid with him. It is owing to his resurrection, that they are begotten again to a lively hope, or are quickened, that has a virtual influence upon it; and it is not only the cause, but the exemplar of it. Saints, as they are planted together in the likeness of his death, so in the likeness of his resurrection': to which may be added, that it is his voice in the Gospel, attended with an almighty power, which is the means of quickening them, which they hear, and so live; and it is his image that is instamped upon them; and by his spirit they are made to live, and to walk in newness of life. *He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live;* believers in Christ die as well as others, though death is not a penal evil to them; its curse is removed, its sting is taken away, being satisfied for by Christ, and so becomes a blessing and privilege to them, and is desirable by them; but though they die, they shall live again; their dust is under the peculiar care of Christ; and they shall rise by virtue of union to him, and shall rise, first in the morning of the resurrection, and with peculiar privileges, or to the resurrection of life, and with the peculiar properties of incorruption, power, glory, and spirituality. So likewise such that have been dead in sin, and dead in law, under a sentence of condemnation, as all mankind are in Adam, and being in a natural and sinful estate, and as the chosen of God themselves are; yet being brought to believe in Christ, that is, to see the excellency and suitableness of him as a Saviour, and the necessity of salvation by him; to go out of themselves to him, disclaiming their own righteousness; venture their souls upon him, give up themselves to him, trust in him, and depend upon him for eternal life and salvation; these live spiritually; they appear to have a principle of life in them; they breathe after spiritual things; they see the son of God, and behold his glory; they handle the word of life; they speak the language of Canaan, and walk by faith on Christ, as they have received him; they live a life of sanctification and justification; they are manifestly in Christ, and have him, an interest in him, and so must have life; they live comfortably; they live by faith on Christ, and his righteousness, and have communion with him here, and expect to have, and shall have eternal life hereafter.

Ver. 26. *And whosoever liveth and believeth in me, &c.*] Whoever will be found alive at Christ's second coming, and is a believer in him, *shall never die,* but shall be changed, and shall be for ever with Christ; and such as shall be raised to life by him, shall never die any more, not even a bodily death, and much less an eternal one, or the second death: and though believers die a corporeal death as others do, yet their souls live, and live in happiness, whilst their bodies are under the power of death; nor shall they always continue so, but being raised, shall become immortal, and die no more. So living believers in Christ shall never die more a spiritual death; they are passed from death to life, and shall never return to death more; their spiritual life cannot be lost; grace in them is an immortal seed, a well of living water springing up into everlasting life: grace may be very low in its exercise, and may seem to be ready to die; they may be in lifeless frames, and without the comforts of a spiritual life, and be under the hidings of God's face, which is as death unto them, and may reckon themselves as free among the dead; yet the principle of life will never be extinct in them; nor shall they die the second death, which lies in an eternal separation from God, and in an everlasting sense of his wrath; that shall have no power on them, nor shall they be in the least hurt by it; for they are ordained to eternal life, and have the promise of it; they are united to Christ, and their life is secured in him; and he has redeemed them from death; and they have the spirit of life dwelling in them, as the pledge and earnest of eternal glory. *Believest thou this?* the whole of this concerning the power of Christ, and privilege of believers; every tittle of it is to be believed. And as with respect to a corporeal resurrection, so with regard to a spiritual one; that men by nature are dead in sins; that Christ is the author of the resurrection from such a state, to a spiritual life; that this life is only by Christ, and can never be lost: this is a doctrine to be believed; it is the doctrine of the Scriptures; it is according to godliness; it makes for the comfort of the people of God, and glorifies the divine perfections.

Ver. 27. *She saith unto him, yea, Lord, &c.*] That is, she firmly believed all that he said concerning himself, and the happiness of those that believed in him: and for the confirmation of it adds, *I believe:* or *I have believed,* as the Vulgate Latin version renders it; that is, long ago, ever since she knew him: *that thou art the Christ the son of God, which should come into the world;* that he was the true Messiah, and the proper and natural son of God, of the same nature with God, equal to him, having the same perfections with him; and who was long promised, much prophesied of, and greatly expected to come into the world; and was now come into the world by the assumption of human nature, to work out salvation for his people, and therefore, since she believed all this of him, she must believe that he was able to raise the dead to life, and to secure those that believe in him from dying eternally.

Ver. 28. *And when she had so said, &c.*] Had expressed her faith in Christ in such terms, as the apostles themselves did, Matt. xvi. 16. John i. 49. and vi. 69. *She went her way:* from Christ, being ordered by him to go to her sister Mary, and fetch her to him: *and called Mary her sister secretly:* either beckoned her to come to her, or whispered her in the ear privately, as Nonnus paraphrases it, that the Jews, who were enemies to Christ, might not hear: *saying, the*

master is come; near the town; is not a great way off: she might use the phrase, *the master*, for greater privacy, that should she be overheard, it would not be known who she meant; and because it was an usual appellation by which Christ was called in that family, and by which he was well known; and was expressive of honour to him, and subjection in them as his disciples: *and calleth for thee;* to come to him; Christ asked after her, desired to see her, and ordered her to come to him; which was an instance of his respect for her.

Ver. 29. *As soon as she heard that*, &c.] That Christ was come, and inquired for her, and wanted to see her: *she arose quickly, and came unto him*: having an equal affection for him as her sister Martha; and which she shewed, by leaving her comforters at once, and by making the haste she did, to another and better comforter: both Martha and Mary, out of their great love to Christ, break through the rule for mourners mentioned in ver. 19. of not going out of the door of the house the first week of mourning.

Ver. 30. *Now Jesus was not yet come into the town*, &c.] Of Bethany, but staid without, being nearer to Lazarus's grave, which he intended to go to, in order to raise him to life, it being usual to bury the dead without the towns and cities; see the notes on Matt. viii. 28. and Luke vii. 12. *but was in that place where Martha met him;* here he stopped, and here he continued: the Persic version reads, *but was sitting in the same place*, &c. waiting for the coming of Mary along with Martha; judging this to be a more suitable place to converse together in, than their own house, which was thronged with Jews; and especially he chose it for the reason above given.

Ver. 31. *The Jews then which were with her in the house*, &c.] Who came from Jerusalem to visit this afflicted family, and continued in the house with them: *and comforted her;* which was the end of their coming, ver. 19. This they endeavoured to do, though they did not succeed: *when they saw Mary, that she rose up hastily, and went out, followed her;* they did not know what Martha whispered to her, but observed that she rose off her seat in great haste, and went out of the house at once; and therefore they went after to see where she went, and to persuade her to return; *saying*, within themselves; *thinking*, as all the Oriental versions seem to read, *she goeth unto the grave to weep there:* the Jews were wont to go to the graves on different accounts; one was to see whether the persons were dead or no: for so it is said[p], "they go to the "graves and visit until three days." It happened that they visited one, and he lived five and twenty years, and after that died: and another was on a religious account; such went to the graves of the prophets, wise men, and righteous, and prostrated themselves upon them, to pray with weeping and supplication, and seek mercy for themselves, and for their brethren, expressing their faith in the resurrection[q]. Dr. Pocock[r] has given a large form of prayer used by them at such times, from Solomon bar Nathan; and is as follows: "let it be the will of the Lord our God, our Creator, "our Holy One, the Holy One of Jacob, who hath "created all the children of his covenant in judgment, and causes them to die in judgment, and "will raise them again to the life of the world to come, "who knows the number of them all; that he would "hasten to awake our master and doctor, (such an "one,) that holy, (or that righteous, or that wise doctor,) whose body dwells in this sepulchre, whose "bones rest in the midst of these stones; and that "he would quicken him with that eternal life which "no death follows; with that life which swallows up "all death, and which wipes away all tears, and takes "away all reproach; together with all those who are "written unto life in Jerusalem; with the seven shepherds, and eight principal men, who are spoken of "in Mic. v. 5. and give him a part with them that understand, and with them that justify many, who "will be like the stars for ever and ever; and the "whole residue of the people of the Lord, the house "of Israel, who keep the covenant of our God, and "do his pleasure, may the Lord our God shake all "these out of their dust, and let their lot, and our lot, "be in life, in everlasting life, that in it he may establish all, both great and small, according to what is "written, Psal. lxxii. 16. *there shall be an handful of "corn*, &c. and confirm the assurance he gave by "Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amos, Isa. xxvi. 19. "*thy dead men shall live*, &c. and as he promised to "Daniel, a man of desires, Dan. xii. 13. *but go thou "thy way till the end* be, &c. and as he promised to all "the congregations of Israel, by his servant Ezekiel, "the son of Buzi the priest, Ezek. xxxvii. 12. *therefore prophesy and say to them*, &c. that the saints "may rejoice with glory, and sing upon their beds, "and that the righteous may rejoice, and exult before "God, and be glad in his salvation, and say in that "day, *behold this is our God, we have waited for him*, "&c. Isa. xxv. 9. and we will bless the Lord from this "time forth, and for ever, Hallelujah." A shorter one, which is in their liturgies, and is used as they pass by the sepulchres of the Israelites, is this: "blessed "art thou, O Lord our God, who has formed you in "judgment, and has quickened you in judgment, and "has fed you in judgment, and knows the number of "all of you, and he will quicken you, and restore you: "blessed art thou, O Lord, that quickens the dead." But sometimes they went only to vent their grief, and lament the loss of their deceased friends, which the Jews imagined was the case of Mary. And such a custom as this is used by the Turks, whose women on Friday, which is their day of worship, go before sun-rising to the graves of the deceased, which are without the city, where they mourn over the death of their friends, and sprinkle their monuments with water and flowers; and even such as are not at the funeral or interment of the dead, after some days, will go to the graves, and make their lamentations there, and inquire of the dead the reason of their departure, and, as it were, expostulate with them, and to their lamentations add oblations of loaves, cheeses, eggs, and flesh[s]. The Persians also visit the sepulchres of their principal *Imams*, or prelates[t]; and the Jews were wont to

[p] Massech. Semachot, c. 8. fol. 15. 1.
[q] Cippi Heb. p. 3, 4.
[r] Misc. not. in port. Mosis, p. 224.
[s] Gejer. de Ebræor. Luctu, c. 6. sect. 26.
[t] Reland, de Relig. Mohammed. l. 1. p. 72.

visit the graves of their great men, in honour to them; yea, the disciples of the wise men used to meet there to study the law, thereby shewing respect, and doing honour to the deceased. It is said of Hezekiah, 2 Chron. xxxii. 33. *that all Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, did him honour at his death*: from whence, say the Talmudists[u], we learn, that they fixed a sitting or a school at his grave; the gloss is, a session (or school) of the wise men to study in the law there. So says Maimonides[w], when a king dies they make a sitting at his grave seven days, as it is said, 2 Chron. xxxii. 33. *they did him honour at his death*; that is, they made a sitting at his grave.

Ver. 32. *Then when Mary was come where Jesus was*, &c.] Where Martha met him, and where she left him. Travellers tell us, that close by a well, about a stone's cast out of the town of Bethany, is shewed the place where Martha met our Lord when he came to raise Lazarus, and where Mary, being called also, met him; but this is not to be depended on, nor is it of any moment to know it. It is blessed meeting Christ any where; and where he is preached, and his ordinances administered, let it be in what place it will, there may the presence of Christ be expected; and it is an encouragement to go there where others have met with him: Martha had been here before, and had had some conversation with Christ to her great satisfaction, and she goes and calls her sister, that she might enjoy the same: so souls that have met with Jesus under such a ministry, in such a place, invite others to go thither also; and often it is that this is a means, in providence, of finding Christ, and enjoying communion with him. *And saw him, she fell down at his feet*: in great respect to him, and reverence of him, worshipping him as her Lord and God. *Saying unto him, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died*; which were the same words Martha uttered upon her first meeting Jesus, ver. 21. and it is very likely that they had often expressed themselves in such language one to another, saying to each other, if our Lord Jesus had been but here, our dear brother Lazarus would not have died.

Ver. 33. *When Jesus therefore saw her weeping*, &c.] At his feet, who, for sorrow and grief of heart, could say no more to him; but having expressed these words, burst out into floods of tears: *and the Jews also weeping, which came with her*; either through sympathy with her, or hypocritically: *he groaned in the spirit*; in his human soul; and which shews, that he had a real human soul, subject to passions, though sinless ones. The word signifies an inward motion of the mind, through indignation and anger; and it may be partly at the weakness of Mary's faith, and at her immoderate sorrow; and partly at the hypocrisy of the Jews: or else this inward groaning was through grief, sympathizing with Mary, and her friends, his human soul being touched with a fellow-feeling of their griefs and sorrows: *and was troubled*; or *troubled himself*; threw himself into some forms and gestures of sorrow, and mourning, as lifting up his eyes, wringing his hands, and changing the form of his countenance.

Ver. 34. *And said, where have ye laid him?* &c.] This he might say as man, though he, as the omniscient God, knew where he was laid; and that it might appear there was no juggle and contrivance between him, and the relations of the deceased; and to raise some expectation of what he intended to do; and to draw the Jews thither, that they might be witnesses of the miracle he was about to work. *They say unto him*; That is, Martha and Mary, *Lord, come and see*; it being but a little way off.

Ver. 35. *Jesus wept.*] As he was going along to the grave, see ver. 28. as he was meditating upon the state of his friend Lazarus, the distress his two sisters were in, and the greater damnation that would befall the Jews then present, who, notwithstanding the miracle, would not believe in him. This shews him to be truly and really man, subject to like passions, only without sin.

Ver. 36. *Then said the Jews, behold, how he loved him!*] Lazarus; for they supposed that these tears were shed purely on his account; and by all circumstances they could not but judge, that they proceeded from an hearty and sincere affection to him; and it was amazing to them, that his love to him should be so strong, when he was no relation, only, as they imagined, a common friend. Christ's love to all his people, even when they are dead in trespasses and sins, is wonderful, and passes knowledge. And it is amazing indeed, if it be considered who the lover is, the eternal son of God, who is God over all, blessed for ever, the Creator of all things, the King of kings, and Lord of lords: and also, who they are that are loved by him, not only creatures, but sinful ones, exceeding mean and abject; the base things of this world, bankrupts, beggars, yea, comparable to the beasts that perish; who had nothing external, nor internal, to recommend them to him, and engage his affections; yea, every thing to give him an aversion to them, and render them odious in his sight, being enemies in their minds by wicked works, and children of wrath, as others: and likewise, if it be considered what he has done for these, in which his love appears to them; as before time, in espousing their persons, becoming their surety, engaging in covenant with his father for them, agreeing to all he proposed, taking the care of their persons, and of all blessings and promises, grace and glory for them; and in time here on earth, by assuming their nature, fulfilling the law for them, dying in their room and stead, paying their debts, procuring all blessings for them, peace, pardon, righteousness, and eternal redemption; and now in heaven, by preparing a place for them, being their intercessor and advocate there, supplying their wants, frequently visiting them, and indulging them with communion with himself, preserving them safe to his kingdom and glory, into which he will introduce them, presenting them to his father with exceeding joy; all which are marvellous acts of love and grace: to which may be added, the consideration of the nature of his love, that it should be from everlasting, before these persons were born; that it should be a love of complacency and delight in them; that it should be free, and unmerited, without any reason, or motive on their part; that it should be distinguishing, that they, and not others, should be the

[u] T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 16. 2.

[w] Hilchot Ebel. c. 14. sect. 25.

objects of it; and that it should continue unchangeably the same, notwithstanding their manifold transgressions, and provocations; wherefore it may be justly said, behold, how he loved them!

Ver. 37. *And some of them said*, &c.] Who were averse to him, and bore him a secret grudge, and were willing to put the worst construction on every action of his: *could not this man which opened the eyes of the blind*; as it is said, at least pretended, that he did, ch. ix. 6, 7. for this must be understood as calling the miracle into question, and as a sneer upon it, and not as taking it for granted that so it was; and even supposing that, it is mentioned to his reproach, since if so, he might *have caused that even this man should not have died*: for either the above cure was a sham, or, if it was a real thing, he who did that could have prevented Lazarus's death; and if he could, and would not, where is his friendship? and what must be thought of all this shew of affection to him? and what are these tears, but crocodile ones? but this reasoning, as specious as it may seem, was very fallacious; for he that cured the man born blind, could raise Lazarus from the dead, which he intended; and therefore did not prevent his death, that he might still give more joy to the family, bring more glory to God, and himself, and more shame and confusion to his enemies.

Ver. 38. *Jesus therefore groaning in himself*, &c.] Not only through grief, just coming up to the grave, where his dear friend lay, but through an holy anger and indignation at the malice and wickedness of the Jews; *cometh to the grave* of *Lazarus*, *it was a cave*; either a natural one, such as were in rocks and mountains, of which sort there were many in Judea, and near Jerusalem, being a rocky and mountainous country, of which Josephus[x] makes mention; where thieves and robbers sheltered themselves, and could not easily be come at, and where persons in danger fled to for safety, and hid themselves; and the reason why such places were chose to bury in, was because here the bodies were safe from beasts of prey: or this was an artificial cave made out of a rock, in form of one, as was the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea; and it was the common custom of the Jews to make caves and bury in; yea, they were obliged to it by their traditions: thus says Maimonides[y], "he that sells a place to his "friend to make in it a grave, or that receives from his "friend a place to make in it a grave, עשה מערה, *must* "*make a cave*, and open in it eight graves, three on "one side and three on another, and two over-against "the entrance *into the cave*; the measure of *the cave* is "four cubits by six, and every grave is four cubits "long, and six hands broad, and seven high; and there "is a space between every grave, on the sides a cubit "and a half, and between the two in the middle two "cubits." And elsewhere[z] he observes, that "they "dig מערות, *caves* in the earth, and make a grave in "the side *of the cave*, and bury him (the dead) in it." And such caves for burying the dead, were at and near the Mount of Olives; and near the same must be this cave where Lazarus was buried; for Bethany was not far from thence: so in the Cippi Hebraici we read[a], that at the bottom of the Mount (of Olives) is a very great *cave*, said to be Haggai the prophet's; and in it are many caves.—And near it is the grave of Zachariah the prophet, in a *cave* shut up; and frequent mention is made there of caves in which persons were buried; see the note on Matt. xxiii. 29. perhaps the custom of burying in them might take its rise from the cave of Machpelah, which Abraham, their father, bought for a burying-place for his dead. The sepulchre of Lazarus is pretended[b] to be shewn to travellers to this day, over which is built a chapel of marble, very decent, and comely, and stands close by a church built in honour of Martha and Mary, the two sisters of Lazarus, in the place where their house stood; but certain it is, that the grave of Lazarus was out of the town: *and a stone lay upon it.* Our version is not so accurate, nor so agreeable to the form of graves with the Jews, nor to this of Lazarus's; their graves were not as ours, dug in the earth and open above, so as to have a stone laid over them, for they often were, as this, caves in rocks, either natural, or hewn out of them by art; and there was a door at the side of them, by which there was an entrance into them; and at this door a stone was laid: it would be better rendered here, and *a stone was laid to it*: not *upon it*, for it had no opening above, but *to it*, at the side of it; and accordingly the Syriac and Persic versions read, *a stone was laid at the door of it*; and the Arabic version, *and there was a great stone at the door of it*; as was at the door of Christ's sepulchre. In the Jewish sepulchres there was חצר, *a court*[c], which was before the entrance into the cave; this was four-square; it was six cubits long, and six broad; and here the bearers put down the corpse, and from hence it was carried into the cave, at which there was an entrance, sometimes called פי המערה, *the mouth of the cave*[d]; and sometimes, פתח הקבר, *the door of the grave*[e]; of its form, measure, and place, there is no express mention in the Jewish writings: it is thought to be about a cubit's breadth, and was on the side of the cave; so that at it, it might be looked into; and at the mouth of the cave was a stone put to stop it up, which was called גולל, from its being rolled there; though that with which the mouth of the cave was shut up, was not always a stone, nor made of stone; Maimonides[f] says, it was made of stone, or wood, or the like matter; and so in the Misna[g] it is said, "גולל לקבר, *the cover-* "*ing for a grave*, (or that with which it is stopped up,) "if it be made of a piece of timber, whether it stands, "or whether it inclines to the side, does not defile, "but over-against the door only;" see the note on Matt. xxvii. 60.

Ver. 39. *Jesus said, take ye away the stone*, &c.] This was said either to the Jews, or rather to the servants that came along with Martha and Mary; and this he ordered, not to facilitate the resurrection, or merely in order to make way for Lazarus: he that could command him to come forth, could have com-

[x] Antiqu. l. 14. c. 15. sect. 5.
[y] Hilchot Mecira, c. 21. sect. 6.
[z] Hilchot Ebel, c. 4. sect. 4.
[a] P. 27, 29. Ed. Hottinger.
[b] Itinerar. Bunting. p. 364.
[c] Misn. Bava Bathra, c. 6. sect. 8.
[d] Misn. ib.
[e] Maimon. R. Samson, & Bartenora in Misn. Ohalot, c. 15. sect. 8.
[f] In Misn. Ohalot, c. 2. sect. 4.
[g] Ib. c. 15. sect. 8.

manded away the stone, but he chose to have it removed this way, that the corpse might be seen, and even smelt; and that it might be manifest, there was no fallacy, nor any intrigue between him, and the sisters of the deceased in this matter: this order was contrary to a rule of the Jews, which forbid the opening of a grave after it was stopped up [h]; but a greater than the fathers of the traditions was here, even he who has the keys of hell, or the grave, and can open, or order it to be opened, when he pleases: *Martha the sister of him that was dead;* that is, of Lazarus, as the Persic version expresses it, calling him, *Gazarus, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh;* or *smells:* not that she perceived this upon their moving the stone, but she concluded it from the time he had been dead, and had lain in the grave, in which dead bodies usually putrefy and smell: whether she said this out of respect to her brother, being unwilling he should be exposed to the view of persons, in such a state of corruption, she knew he must now be; or whether out of respect to Christ, lest he should be disordered with the offensive smell, is not certain: however, it seems as if she had no notion that Christ was about to raise her brother from the dead; and that the stone was commanded to be removed for that purpose, not merely for a sight of the dead, but that the dead might be seen to come forth alive: she imagined that Christ only wanted to have the stone removed, that he might have a sight of his deceased friend, which she thought would be very disagreeable and nauseous; so soon had she forgot what Christ had said to her, and lost that little exercise she had of faith and hope, with respect to the resurrection of her brother. Frames of soul, and acts of grace, are very changeable, and uncertain things; and especially when carnal reasoning is indulged. *For he hath been dead four days:* he had been so long in the grave, ver. 17. The word *dead* is not in the text; he might have been dead longer; though the Jews usually buried on the same day a person died: however, the sense is here, he had been so long in the grave; and so the Persic version renders it, *for it is the fourth day that he has been in the grave;* in the original text it is, *he is one of four days;* so many days he had been in the house appointed for all living; so long he had been removed from the sight of men, and had been in another world, and had begun another æra, and four days had passed in it; he was so many days old according to that: so that his countenance was changed, he was not fit to be seen, nor approached unto; nor was there any hope of his returning to life. The Jews [i] say, that "for three days the soul goes to the grave, thinking "the body may return; but when it sees the figure of "the face changed, it goes away, and leaves it, as it is "said, Job xiv. 22." So of Jonah's being three days and three nights in the whale's belly, they say [k], "these "are the three days a man is in the grave, and his "bowels burst; and after three days that defilement "is turned upon his face." Hence, they don't allow any one to bear witness of one that is dead or killed, that he is such an one, after three days, because then his countenance is changed [l], and he can't be well known.

Ver. 40. *Jesus saith unto her, said I not unto thee,* &c.] Not in so many words, but what might be concluded from what he said; yea, the following express words might be delivered by Christ, in his conversation with Martha, though they are not before recorded by the evangelist: *that if thou wouldst believe thou shouldst see the glory of God:* a glorious work of God, wherein the glory of his power and goodness would be displayed, and the son of God be glorified, or should see such a miracle wrought, which should engage her to glorify God; and on account of which, she would see just reason to do it, and would be concerned in it: and when it would appear that the sickness and death of her brother, which had given her and her sister so much distress and uneasiness, were for the glory of God, and the honour of Christ; see ver. 4. Moreover, to *see the glory of God,* is to see Christ, who is the brightness of his father's glory; and though she had a sight of him now, and before this time, with her bodily eyes, and also with the eyes of her understanding, and knew that he was the son of God, and the true Messiah; yet it is suggested, that upon a fresh and strong exercise of faith on Christ, with respect to the resurrection of her brother, and by means of that, she should have a clearer view of his glory, as the only-begotten of the father; for as he was declared to be the son of God, by his own resurrection from the dead afterwards, so he was more fully manifested to be that glorious and divine person, by his raising others from the dead, than by any other miracle; and to be indulged with such a sight of him, is a very high favour; see Psal. lxiii. 2. and such who have their faith most in exercise, see much of the glory of God, both in the face of Christ, and in his providences, and the performance of his promises.

Ver. 41. *Then they took away the stone,* &c.] *From the door of the sepulchre,* as the Arabic version adds; *from the place where the dead was laid:* this clause is left out in the Alexandrian copy, and in the Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions: *and Jesus lift up his eyes;* to heaven; this is a praying gesture, as in ch. xvii. 1. *and said, father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me:* which cannot refer to the resurrection of Lazarus from the dead, or to any assistance given him in performing that miracle, because that as yet was not done; and when it was done, was done by his own power, as all the circumstances of it shew; but it relates to every thing in which he had before heard him, and was a foundation for him, as man, to believe he still would, in whatever was to come; and particularly to the present opportunity of shewing his power in so remarkable a manner, and before so many witnesses.

Ver. 42. *And I knew that thou hearest me always,* &c.] Which was not only a support to the faith of Christ, as man, but is also to his people, whose advocate, intercessor, and mediator he is. *But because of*

[h] Apud Buxtorf. Lex. Rab. col. 437.
[i] Bereshit Rabba, sect. 100. fol. 88. 2. & T. Hieros. Moed Katon, fol. 82. 2.
[k] Zohar in Exod. fol. 78. 2.

[l] Misn. Yebamot, c. 16. sect. 3. & Maimon. Jarchi, & Bartenora in ib. & Maimon. Hilchot Gerushim, c. 13. sect. 21. T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 120. 1. & Gloss. in ib.

the people which stand by, I said it: that he was heard, and always heard by God; and therefore must have great interest in his affection, and knowledge of his will; yea, their wills must be the same: *that they may believe that thou hast sent me*: for if he had not sent him, he would never have heard him in any thing, and much less in every thing; wherefore this was a full proof, and clear evidence of his divine mission.

Ver. 43. *And when he had thus spoken*, &c.] To God his father, in the presence and hearing of the people; *he cried with a loud voice*: not on account of the dead, but for the sake of those around him, that all might hear and observe; and chiefly to shew his majesty, power and authority, and that what he did was open and above board, and not done by any secret, superstitious, and magical whisper; and as an emblem of the voice and power of his Gospel in quickening dead sinners, and of the voice of the arch-angel and trumpet of God, at the general resurrection; *Lazarus come forth*; he calls him by his name, not only as being his friend, and known by him, but to distinguish him from any other corpse that might lie interred in the same cave; and he bids him come forth out of the cave, he being quickened and raised immediately by the power which went forth from Christ as soon as ever he lifted up his voice; which shewed him to be truly and properly God, and to have an absolute dominion over death and the grave.

Ver. 44. *And he that was dead came forth*, &c.] That is, he who had been dead, being now made alive, and raised up, and set on his feet, came out of the cave: *bound hand and foot with grave-clothes*; not that his hands were bound together, and much less his hands and feet together, with any bands or lists of cloth; but his whole body, as Nonnus expresses it, was bound with grave-clothes from head to foot, according to the manner of the eastern countries, Jews, Egyptians, and others, who used to wrap up their dead in many folds of linen cloth, as infants are wrapped in swaddling-bands: and their manner was to let down their arms and hands close by their sides, and wind up altogether from head to foot: so that there was another miracle besides that of raising him from the dead; that in such a situation, in which he could have no natural use of his hands and feet, he should rise up, stand on his feet, walk, and come forth thus bound, out of the cave: *and his face was bound about with a napkin*: the use of which was not only to tie up the chin and jaws, but to hide the grim and ghastly looks of a dead corpse; and one of the same price and value was used by rich and poor: for it is said[m], "the "wise men introduced a custom of using סודר, *a* "*napkin*, (the very word here used, which Nonnus "says is Syriac,) of the same value, not exceeding a "penny, that he might not be ashamed who had "not one so good as another; and they cover the faces "of the dead, that they might not shame the poor, "whose faces were black with famine." For it seems[n], "formerly they used to uncover the faces of the rich, "and cover the faces of the poor, because their faces "were black through want, and the poor were "ashamed; wherefore they ordered, that they should "cover the faces of all, for the honour of the poor." *Jesus saith unto them*; to the servants that stood by: *loose him, and let him go*; unwind the linen rolls about him, and set his hands and feet at liberty, and let him go to his own house.

Ver. 45. *Then many of the Jews which came to Mary*, &c.] To her house, to comfort her, and that came along with her to the grave: *and had seen the things which Jesus did*; in raising the dead body of Lazarus, and causing him to walk, though bound in grave-clothes: *believed on him*: that he was the true Messiah: such an effect the miracle had on them; so that it was a happy day for them, that they came from Jerusalem to Bethany to pay this visit.

Ver. 46. *But some of them went their way to the Pharisees*, &c.] At Jerusalem, who were members of the sanhedrim; so far were some of them from receiving any advantage by this miracle, that they were the more hardened, and filled with malice and envy to Christ, and made the best of their way to acquaint his most inveterate enemies: *and told them what things Jesus had done*; at Bethany; not to soften their minds, and bring them to entertain a good opinion of him, but to irritate them, and put them upon schemes to destroy him; thus even miracles, as well as the doctrines of the Gospel, are to some the savour of death unto death, whilst to others the savour of life unto life.

Ver. 47. *Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council*, &c.] They convened the sanhedrim, the great council of the nation together, of which they were some of the principal members: *and said, what do we?* that is, why is nothing done? why are we so dilatory? why do we sit still, and do nothing? or what is to be done? this now lies before us, this is to be considered and deliberated on: *for this man doth many miracles*: this is owned, and could not be denied by them; and should have been a reason why they should have acknowledged him to have been the Messiah, and embraced him; whereas they used it as a reason, why they should think of, and concert some measures, to hinder and put a stop to the belief of him as such.

Ver. 48. *If we let him thus alone*, &c.] Going about from place to place, teaching the people, and doing such miracles: *all men will believe on him*; the whole nation will receive him as the Messiah, and proclaim him their king, and yield a cheerful obedience to all his commands: *the Romans will come*; against us, with their powerful armies; interpreting the setting him up as Messiah, to be an instance of rebellion against Cæsar, and his government; *and take away both our place and nation*; that is, will destroy the temple, their holy place, the place of their religion and worship; and their city, the place of their habitation, and lay waste their country; and take away from them that little share of power and government they had, and strip them both of their civil and religious privileges: the Persic version renders it, *they will take away our place, and make a decree against our religion*.

Ver. 49. *And one of them, named Caiaphas*, &c.] See the notes on Matt. xxvii. 3. Luke iii. 2. John

[m] Maimon. Hilchot Ebel, c. 4. sect. 1.

[n] T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 27. 1.

xviii. 13. *being the high-priest that same year;* the high-priesthood originally was not annual, but for life; but towards the close of the second temple, it came into the hands of the king, to appoint who would to be high-priest[o]; and it became venal; it was purchased with money; insomuch that they changed the priesthood once a twelve-month, and every year a new high-priest was made[p]: now this man being in such an high office, and a man of no conscience, and of bad principles, being a Sadducee, as seems from Acts iv. 6. and v. 17. who denied the resurrection of the dead, and was unconcerned about a future state; and having no restraint upon him, in a bold, haughty, and blustering manner, *said unto them, ye know nothing at all;* ye are a parcel of ignorant and stupid creatures, mere fools and ideots, to sit disputing and arguing, *pro* and *con.* about such a fellow as this; what is to be done is obvious enough, and that is to take away this man's life, without any more ado; it matters not what he is, nor what he does; these are things that are not to be considered, they are out of the question; would you save the nation, destroy the man; things are come to this crisis, that either his life must go, or the nation perish; and which is most expedient, requires no time to debate about.

Ver. 50. *Nor consider that it is expedient for us,* &c.] Priests, Levites, Pharisees, the sanhedrim, and ecclesiastical rulers of the people; who, as Caiaphas apprehended, must suffer in their characters and revenues, must quit their honourable and gainful posts and places, if Jesus went on and succeeded at this rate: wherefore it was most expedient and advantageous for them, which was the main thing to be considered in such a council, so he thought it was, *that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not;* he proceeded entirely upon this political principle, that a public good ought to be preferred to a private one; that it was no matter what the man was, whether innocent or not; common prudence, and the public safety of the nation, required him to fall a sacrifice, rather than the Romans should be exasperated and provoked to such a degree, as to threaten the utter ruin and destruction of the whole nation.

Ver. 51. *And this spake he not of himself,* &c.] Not of his own devising and dictating, but by the spirit of God; as a wicked man sometimes may, and as Balaam did; the spirit of God dictated the words unto him, and put them into his mouth; nor did he use them in the sense, in which the Holy Ghost designed them: *but being high-priest that year;* by his office he was the oracle of God, and was so esteemed by the people, and therefore a proper person to be made use of in this way; and especially being high-priest *that year,* in which the priesthood was to be changed, and vision and prophecy to be sealed up: *he prophesied;* though he did not know he did, as did Pharaoh, Exod. x. 28. and the people of the Jews, Matt. xxvii. 25. *That Jesus should die for that nation;* these words, with what follows in the next verse, are the words of the evangelist, interpreting the prophecy of Caiaphas, according to the sense of the Holy Ghost, that Jesus should die, which was contrary to a notion the Jews had imbibed, concerning the Messiah; see ch. xii. 34. But Jesus the true Messiah must die; this was determined in the counsel of God, agreed to by Christ in the covenant of grace, foretold by the prophets from the beginning of the world, typified by sacrifices and other things, under the former dispensation, predicted by Christ himself, and accordingly came to pass; and upon the above accounts was necessary, as well as for the salvation of his people, who otherwise must have perished; and yet was free and voluntary in him, and a strong expression, and a demonstrative proof of his love to them: and not only this prophecy declared, that Jesus should die, but that he should die for that nation, for the nation of the Jews; not for every individual in it, for all of them were not saved by him; some received him not; they rejected him as the Messiah, Saviour, and Redeemer, and died in their sins; but for all the elect of God among them, the sheep of the house of Israel, to whom he was sent, and whom he came to seek and save; and whom he blessed, by turning them away from their iniquities, and by taking away their iniquities from them: and moreover, this prophecy suggests, that Jesus was to die, not merely as a martyr, to confirm with his blood the doctrine he preached, nor only as an example of courage, meekness, patience, and love, but for, or in the room and stead of his people, as their surety; giving his life a ransom, and himself a sacrifice to the justice of God, for them; thereby fulfilling the law, and satisfying it, and appeasing the wrath of God on their account.

Ver. 52. *And not for that nation only,* &c.] For though Christ, as a prophet, was sent to the Jews only, and was the minister of the circumcision, yet as a priest he did not die for them only, but for the Gentiles also; even for the whole mystical Israel of God, all the world over, whether among Jews or Gentiles; see 1 John ii. 2. *But that also he should gather together in one, the children of God that were scattered abroad;* by which may be meant, not only the elect of God among the Jews, who were scattered amidst the nations of the world, for whom Christ died, and to whom the Gospel was in the first place sent, and who were gathered together into a Gospel church-state; see John vii. 35. 1 Pet. i. 1, 2. James i. 1. but rather the elect of God among the Gentiles, called *the children of God,* in opposition to a notion of the Jews, who took this character to themselves, on account of their national adoption, and denied it to the Gentiles, reckoning them no other than as dogs; and because they were the children of God by special adoption, in divine predestination, and in the covenant of grace; and were so considered, when given to Christ, who looked upon them as in this relation, when he assumed their nature, and died in their room and stead; and not merely because they would hereafter appear to be the children of God in regeneration, and by faith in Christ Jesus, and have the witnessings of the spirit that they were so; and much less because they had a fitness and disposition to be the children of God, since they were by nature as others, children of wrath: and

[o] Misn. Yebamot, c. 6. sect. 4.

[p] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 8. 2. Juchasin, fol. 139. 1.

these are said to be *scattered abroad*, both from God, as they were by the fall, and by their own transgressions; which separated between God and them, and set them at a distance from him; for in their nature-head, and nature-state, they are afar off from him, and from one another; which may regard not only distance of place, being scattered about in the several parts of the world, but their disagreement in mind and judgment, in religion and manners; every one pursuing his own way, going astray like lost sheep: now Christ died for them, in order to bring them nigh to God, to the one true and living God; and to gather them together under one head, himself, their common head; by whom they were represented in his crucifixion, burial, and resurrection; and to make them one body, and bring them into one fold, into one church-state here, and at last to one place, to heaven, there to be for ever with him; and so the Persic version renders it, *that he might gather them into one place:* and in this, the red heifer was a type of Christ; whose blood was sprinkled directly before the tabernacle of the congregation, and without the camp; and which was done, as a Jewish writer says[q], "to call to mind "the design of the heifer, which was to bring "המרוחקים, *those that were afar off*, from the camp "of the Shekinah, to be near unto it."

Ver. 53. *Then from that day forth*, &c.] Caiaphas's reasoning appeared so good, and his advice so agreeable, that it was at once, and generally assented to, except by one or two, as Nicodemus, and Joseph of Arimathea; that ever after this, *they took counsel together;* at certain times, and that very often, and agreed in their counsel, *for to put him to death;* this they resolved upon, before there was any legal process, before any crime was charged upon him, or any proof given, or he was heard what he had to say for himself; so highly approved of was Caiaphas's motion, to put him to death, right or wrong, whether he was innocent or not; that they had nothing to do, but to consult of ways and means of getting him into their hands, and of taking away his life in a manner, as would be most for their own credit among the people, and to his shame and disgrace, and at the most proper and suitable time.

Ver. 54. *Jesus therefore*, &c.] Knowing the resolution the sanhedrim had taken to put him to death, and the schemes they were forming to apprehend him: *walked no more openly among the Jews:* at, or near Jerusalem; he did not teach in their streets, nor work miracles, nor appear in public company: *but went thence*, from Bethany: *unto a country near to the wilderness:* whether this was the wilderness of Judea, where John came preaching, and near to which our Lord was before he came to Bethany, or the wilderness of Bethaven, Josh. xviii. 12. is not certain: *into a city called Ephraim:* the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions, call it Ephrem, and so some copies; it seems to be the same with the Ephraim of the Misnic and Talmudic doctors; concerning which they say[r], "Micmas and Mezonicha "are the first for fine flour, and the next to them is "Ephraim in the valley." For it seems there were two Ephraims, one in the valley, and another in the mount[s]: it was a place very fruitful for wheat; hence that saying of Jannes and Jambres, the magicians of Egypt, to Moses[t]; "do you bring straw to "Ephraim?" which was a proverbial expression, the same with ours of carrying coals to Newcastle: they seeing Moses do signs and wonders, supposed he did them by enchantment; and the sense of their proverb is, do you bring enchantments into Egypt, where there there are so many already? This Ephraim, the Jews say[u], is the same with that in 2 Chron. xiii. 19. and as there Bethel is mentioned with it, it seems to have been in the tribe of Benjamin: and it may be observed, that Josephus[w] speaks of an Ephraim, along with Bethel likewise; so that they all seem to mean the same place; and according to the same writer, it was but a little city, and it may be an obscure one, for which reason Christ withdrew to it. Epiphanius[x] makes mention of the wilderness of Bethel and Ephraim, through which he travelled, accompanied by a Jew, as he came up from Jericho to the hill country; and is very likely the same wilderness which is here spoken of; and by some called Quarentana, and placed by the river Chereth, in the tribe of Benjamin, north-east of Jerusalem; and the same writer elsewhere calls[y] Ephraim, the city of the wilderness: according to Jerom[z], it was twenty miles from Ælia, or Jerusalem; though according to Eusebius, it was but eight miles, which is thought to be the truest account; and by them both is said to be a very large village, and in which they may not differ from Josephus; for it might be a large village, and yet a little city. Jerom[a] takes notice of a place called Aphra, in the tribe of Benjamin, which he says at that time was called the village Effrem, and was five miles from Bethel eastward; and of another called Aphraim, a city in the tribe of Issachar, which in his time went by the name of the village Affarea, six miles from the legion, northward; the former agrees best with this Ephraim. *And there continued with his disciples:* spending his time in private conversation with them, teaching and instructing them in things concerning the kingdom of God, his time with them being now but short.

Ver. 55. *And the Jews' passover was nigh at hand*, &c.] Which was the fourth passover from Christ's entrance on his public ministry, and the last he ate with his disciples; when he, by being sacrificed for his people, put an end to that, and all other ceremonial observances: *and many went out of the country up to Jerusalem, before the passover:* not only from the country where Ephraim was, but from all other countries in Judea and Galilee: all the males were obliged to go up to Jerusalem, at the time of the passover, where it was only kept; but many went before that time, for

[q] Abarbinel in Lev. xix. 3, 4.
[r] Misn. Menachot, c. 8. sect. 1.
[s] Bartenora in ib.
[t] T. Bab. Menachot, fol. 85. 1. Gloss. in ib. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 170. 2. Bereshit Rabba, sect. 86. fol. 75. 4.
[u] Yom. Tob. in Misn. Menachot, c. 8. sect. 1 & Gloss. in T. Bab. Menachot, fol. 83. 2.

[w] De Bello Jud. l. 4. c. 9. sect. 9.
[x] Adv. Hæres. l. 1. Tom. II. Hæres. 30.
[y] Ib. Hæres. 29.
[z] De locis Hebraicis, fol. 91. A.
[a] Ib. fol. 88. H. 1.

the reason following: *to purify themselves;* we read in 2 Chron. xxx. 18. of many that had not cleansed themselves, and yet ate the passover: for whom Hezekiah prayed, that they might be pardoned, which shews that they had done amiss: upon which place, Jarchi has this observation; that "Judah (the men of Judah) "were all clean, because they were near to Jerusalem, "and could purify and sanctify themselves, and return "to Jerusalem; but many of Ephraim, and Menasseh, "and Issachar, and Zabulon, could not do so." And this seems to be the case of these people, they were country-people, that lived at a distance, and not having purified themselves from several uncleannesses, came up before the time, that they might cleanse themselves, and be ready at the time: in several cases purification was required; as in women after lying-in, menstruous and profluvious persons, and such that had touched a dead body, or any creeping thing, and in other cases; and which by reason of distance, might be neglected; wherefore it was necessary they should come up before the time of the passover, to fit themselves for it: the rule about defiled persons eating the passover, is this[b]; "if the congregation is polluted, or the greatest "part of it, or the priests are unclean, and the congregation pure, it is kept in uncleanness; but if the "lesser part of the congregation is defiled, the pure "keep the first passover, and the unclean the second." This, their commentators say[c], is to be understood of uncleanness, by touching the dead, which required seven days of purification; and it is very probable that this was the case of these persons, since it was about so many days before the passover, that they came up; see ch. xii. 1. The account Maimonides[d] gives of this matter is this; "who is a defiled person, that is put "off to the second passover? every one who cannot "eat the passover, on the night of the fifteenth of "Nisan, because of his uncleanness; as profluvious "men and women, menstruous and lying-in women, "and the husbands of menstruous women; but he "that toucheth the dead carcass of a beast, or a creeping thing, and the like, on the fourteenth, lo, he "dips, and they slay for him (the passover) after he "has dipped; and in the evening, when his sun is set, "he eats the passover; he that is defiled by touching "the dead, whose seventh day happens to be on the "fourteenth, though he dips and is sprinkled on, and "lo, he is fit to eat the holy things at evening, yet "they don't kill for him, but he is put off to the second "passover; as it is said, Numb. ix. 6. *And there were* "*certain men who were defiled by the dead body of a* "*man, that they could not keep the passover on that* "*day;* by tradition it is learned, that it was their "seventh day, and therefore they asked if it should "be killed for them, and they should eat at evening? "and it was declared to them, that they should not "kill for them: of what is this to be understood? "when he is polluted with a defilement by the dead, "which Nazarites shave for; but if he is polluted "with other defilements by the dead, which the "Nazarites do not shave for, they kill for him on "his seventh day, after he has dipped, and is sprinkled upon; and when his sun is set, he eats his "passover; a profluvious person, who sees two appearances, and reckons seven days, and dips on "the seventh, they kill for him, and he eats at evening.——They don't kill for a menstruous woman on "her seventh day, for lo, she does not dip till the "eighth night, and she is not fit to eat holy things "until the ninth night." These, with many other cases there instanced, may serve to illustrate this passage.

Ver. 56. *Then sought they for Jesus,* &c.] That is, the country-people; some on one account, and some on another; some out of curiosity to see his person, others to see his miracles, and others to hear his doctrine; and some, it may be, to take him, and deliver him up to the sanhedrim, who had issued out a proclamation to that purpose, and doubtless offered a reward: *and spake among themselves, as they stood in the temple;* whither they came to purify themselves, according to the law of the sanctuary: *what think ye, that he will not come to the feast?* it was a matter of dispute with them, whether Christ would come or no, to the feast; some might be of opinion that he would not, at least they very much questioned it, since the sanhedrim had published such an order for the discovery of him; and since upon it he was gone from Bethany, further into the country; though others might be differently minded, and believe he would come, since all the males of Israel were obliged to appear at that feast, and it was his duty; and they could not persuade themselves that he would neglect his duty, for fear of the Jews.

Ver. 57. *Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees,* &c.] Who were of the sanhedrim: *had given a commandment:* or published an edict, a decree of the senate: *that if any man knew where he were, he should shew it, that they might take him;* and this made it a doubtful point with some, whether he would come to the feast or no; and was the reason why others sought for him, and inquired after him, that they might discover him to the chief priests and Pharisees, and have the promised reward.

CHAP. XII.

Ver. 1. *THEN Jesus, six days before the passover,* &c.] Or *before the six days of the passover;* not as designing the days of that feast, for they were seven; but as reckoning so many days back from it, that is, before the sixth day from the ensuing passover: if there were six complete days between this and the

[b] Misn. Pesachim, c. 7. sect. 6. Vid. Maimon. Korban Pesach. c. 7. sect. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. & Biah Hamikdash, c. 4. sect. 10—12.

[c] Maimon. & Bartenora in Misn. ib.

[d] Hilchot Korban Pesach. c. 6. sect. 1, 2, 3.

passover, as this way of speaking seems to imply; then this must be the day before the Jewish sabbath, and this is more likely, than that Christ should travel on the sabbath-day: but if this was the sixth day before it, it was their sabbath-day, and so at the going out of it in the evening, a supper was made for him, which with the Jews on that night, was a plentiful one; for they remembered the sabbath in its going out, as well as in its coming in[e], and this was to prevent grief at the going out of it: so some days before the passover, the lamb was separated from the flock, and kept up till the fourteenth day, Exod. xii. 3, 6. particularly it may be observed, that seven days before the day of atonement, the high-priest was separated from his own house, and had to the chamber Palhedrin[f]; and much such a space of time there was, between the day of the great atonement by Christ, and his unction by Mary; which is said to be against the day of his burial, which being the same day with his sufferings, was the great day of atonement: at this time Jesus *came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, which had been dead*: the last clause is left out in the Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions: *whom he raised from the dead*; that is, *Jesus*, as the Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions express; and the Ethiopic version adds, *in Bethany*. This was the town of Lazarus; here he lived, and here he died, and here he was raised from the dead; and here he continued and dwelt, after his resurrection; and hither Christ came to see him, and the rest of the family, though he knew he exposed himself to danger in so doing.

Ver. 2. *There they made him a supper*, &c.] At Bethany, in the house of Lazarus, Martha, and Mary; by whose order, and at whose charge it was prepared for him; and not in the house of Simon the leper, which was four days after this, Matt. xxvi. 2, 6. *And Martha served*: who was always a busy, active, and stirring woman; and this she did, to testify her love to Christ, and great respect for him; otherwise, as she was a person of substance, she had servants enough to wait at table: *but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him*: and ate, and drank, and conversed; by which it appeared, that he was really risen from the dead, and was in a good state of health.

Ver. 3. *Then took Mary a pound of ointment very costly*, &c.] With three hundred pence, according to Judas's estimation of it. This Mary was the other sister of Lazarus; see the notes on Matt. xxvi. 7. and Mark xiv. 3. concerning the nature and value of this ointment: *and anointed the feet of Jesus*: as he lay upon the bed or couch, at supper: *and wiped his feet with her hair*: see the note on Luke vii. 38. *And the house was filled with the odour of the ointment*: see Cant. i. 3, 12. ointment of spikenard was very odoriferous: this may be an emblem of the sweet savour of Christ, in the ministration of the Gospel, throughout the whole world.

Ver. 4. *Then saith one of his disciples*, &c.] Who had no true love for his master, was an hypocrite, and a covetous person: Judas Iscariot; so called, to distinguish him from another Judas, an apostle; see the note on Matt. x. 4. Simon's son; this is omitted in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions; see the note on ch. xiii. 2. *which should betray him*: and so he did; this was pre-determined by God, foretold in prophecy, and foreknown by Christ; and is observed here, to shew the temper and character of the man.

Ver. 5. *Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence*, &c.] Meaning Roman pence, one of which is, of the value of our money, seven-pence halfpenny; so that three hundred pence amount to nine pounds seven shillings and six-pence: *and given to the poor?* this was his pretence, and with which he covered himself; his uneasiness was, because it was not sold, and the money put into his hands, as appears by what follows.

Ver. 6. *This he said, not that he cared for the poor*, &c.] He had no affection for them, and was unconcerned about them, and took no care of them to feed and clothe them; he was no ways solicitous for their support, refreshment, and more comfortable living: *but because he was a thief*: to his master, and purloined the money he was intrusted with by him, and put it to his own use: *and had the bag, and bare what was put therein*: the word rendered a *bag*, is adopted by the Rabbinical Jews, into their language; and is sometimes read *Gloskema*, and at other times *Dloskema*, and is used by them for different things; sometimes[g] for a bier, or coffin, in which the dead was buried, which sense can have no place here; sometimes for a chest, or coffer[h]; and so the Septuagint use the Greek word, in 2 Chron. xxiv. 8, 10, 11. for the chest into which the people put their collection; and it may be so interpreted here, and so Nonnus renders it; it may signify the chest or coffer, which Judas had the care of, the keys of which were in his hands, and whatever were to be put into it, he bore, or carried thither: and it is also used by the Jewish writers, for a purse[i]; it is asked, "what is *Dloskema*? says Rabbah bar "Samuel, טליקא דסבי, *the purse of old men*;" or such as ancient men use; and this is the signification of it here: it may be the same with the *Loculi* of the Romans, and so the Vulgate Latin renders it here; which were different from a chest, or coffer, being moveable, and to be carried about, and which were carried by servants, as well as the purse[k]. Judas had the purse, into which was put whatsoever was ministered to Christ, for the common supply of him and his disciples, and for the relief of the poor.

Ver. 7. *Then said Jesus, let her alone*, &c.] Don't disturb her in what she does, or hinder her, or blame her for it: *against the day of my burial hath she kept this*; this ointment, which she now poured on Christ; it was usual to embalm the dead with ointments and spices: Christ suggests, that the time of his death and burial were nigh, and that this woman had kept this ointment till now, for such a purpose; and whereas she would not be able to make use of it at the time of

[e] Maimon. Hilchot Sabbat. c. 29. sect. 1. 11, [illegible]9.
[f] Misn. Yoma, c. 1. sect. 1.
[g] Targum Jon. & Jerus. in Gen. i. 26. T. Bab. [illegible] Katon, fol. 24. 2. & Massech. Semacot, c. 3. sect. 2.
[h] Misn. Meila, c. 6. sect. 1. T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 26. 2.
[i] T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 28. 1. & Bava Metzia, fol. 20. 2.
[k] Vid. Pignorium de Servis, p. 327, 328.

his interment, she had embalmed his body with it now, beforehand; though without any knowledge of his death, or any such intention and design in her, but the Holy Ghost so directing her: for this is not to be understood of her keeping any part of it till that time, which it does not appear she did.

Ver. 8. *For the poor always ye have with you*, &c.] And so would not want opportunities of shewing a regard to them, which Christ always recommended; nor does he here in the least discourage an industrious and affectionate concern for them: the words seem to be a sort of prophecy, that there would be always poor persons in the churches of Christ, to be taken care of and provided for; see the note on Matt. xxvi. 11. and yet the Jews suppose cases, in which the collectors of alms may have no poor to distribute to, and direct what they shall do in such cases[1]: *but me ye have not always*: meaning, with respect to his corporeal presence, which would be quickly withdrawn from them, when there would be no more an opportunity of shewing him personal respect, in such a way.

Ver. 9. *Much of the people of the Jews therefore knew that he was there*, &c.] That is, many of the Jews that dwelt at Jerusalem, knew that Jesus was at Bethany; for it being but two miles from Jerusalem, the report of his being come soon reached thither: *and they came* from Jerusalem to Bethany, *not for Jesus' sake only*: to see him, and hear him, and observe what he said and did: *but that they might see Lazarus also, whom he had raised from the dead*: that is, whom Jesus had raised from the dead, as the Alexandrian copy, and the Ethiopic version express it; for it equally excited their curiosity, to see the person that had been dead, and was raised from the dead, as to see him who raised him: and 'tis very likely before they had no opportunity of seeing him; it may be he did not appear publicly before, but kept himself retired; but now Jesus being come, he shewed himself openly; which the Jerusalem Jews being informed of, induced them to come to see both the one and the other.

Ver. 10. *But the chief priests*, &c.] With the rest of the sanhedrim: *consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death*: as well as Jesus, and that for no other crime, but because he was raised from the dead by him; which shews what consciences these men had, and how horribly wicked they were; that they stuck at nothing, whereby they might satisfy their malice and envy, and secure their worldly interests and advantages.

Ver. 11. *Because that by reason of him*, &c.] Of the miracle which was wrought upon him, in raising him from the dead, of which he was a living and an abiding witness: *many of the Jews went away*; not from Jerusalem only, but from the chief priests and Pharisees, and the rest of the Jews, that combined against Christ; they withdrew themselves from their party, and deserted them: *and believed on Jesus*; as the Messiah; so that they found their interest was decreasing and weakening every day, and that those on the side of Christ were increasing; and this they could not bear, and therefore consulted to take away the life of Lazarus, as well as Jesus; who they imagined, as long as he lived, would be a means of inducing persons to believe in Jesus as the Messiah: whereas if he was dead, the fact would be forgotten, or be more easily denied.

Ver. 12. *On the next day, much people that were come to the feast*, &c.] Of the passover; and they were much people indeed, that came yearly to this feast, from all parts of the nation; for all the males in Israel, were obliged to appear at this time; and though the women were not obliged, yet multitudes of them came, and the fame of Jesus might bring the more; add to which, that there was now a general expectation of the Messiah's coming, which brought the Jews from all parts of the world, to Jerusalem; so that this might be called indeed, פסח מעוכין, *a crowded passover*: and though the following account is a stretching it too far, yet it may serve to illustrate this matter: "would "you desire to know what multitudes were at Jerusalem of the priests, you may know, as it is written, "1 Kings viii. 63, and the tradition is, that an ox "was offered for twenty-four, and a sheep for eleven. "——King Agrippa sought to know what was the "number of the multitude, which were in Jerusalem; "he said to the priests, lay by for me one kidney of "every passover lamb; they laid by for him six hundred thousand pair of kidneys, double the number "of those that came out of Egypt: and there is never "a passover lamb, but there are more than ten numbered for it[m], &c." Now the day following the supper at Bethany, and which seems to be the first day of the week, this multitude of people, *when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem*; from Bethany, which was soon known, it being so near.

Ver. 13. *Took branches of palm-trees*, &c.] The Ethiopic version adds, *and young shoots from Jerusalem*; these grew in great plenty, on one part of the Mount of Olives, that next to Bethany, from whence that town had its name; for it signifies the house of dates, the fruit of the palm-tree; see the note on Matt. xxi. 17. And as that tree was a sign o' joy and victory, they carried branches of it in thei' hands, as they met the King Messiah, who was ab'ut to make his public entrance into Jerusalem, in riumph; and where by his sufferings and death, 'e should gain the victory over sin, Satan, the w'ld, and death; and lay a solid foundation for 'y and peace, to all that believe in him: the Jew say[n], "if a man "takes באיין, (the very Greek w d here used,) palm- "tree branches in his hands we know that he is "victorious." The Persic v sion reads, *branches of olives. And went forth to m't him, and cried*; when they came up to him, a as he passed by them: *Hosanna, blessed is the K of Israel, that cometh in the name of the Lord*: see note on Matt. xxi. 9.

Ver. 14. *And Jesu hen he had found a young ass*, &c.] Which he se his disciples for, to a neighbouring village, and th brought to him: *sat thereon, as it is written*: in Z. ix. 9. though some part of the words seems t taken out of Isa. lxii. 11. see the

[1] T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 13. 1. & Bava Metzia, fol. 38. 1. & Bava Bathra, fol. 8. 2.

ol. 42. 3, 4.
[m] Echa Rabbi sect. 30. fol. 170. 3.
[n] Vajikra R

note on Matt. xxi. 5. and so Nonnus paraphrases it here, "that it might be fulfilled which Esaias said."

Ver. 15. *Fear not, daughter of Zion*, &c.] But rejoice; see Zech. ix. 9. and the note on Matt. xxi. 5.

Ver. 16. *These things understood not his disciples at the first*, &c.] Or *at that time*, as the Syriac and Persic versions render it; or *on that day*, as the Ethiopic version; they did not then know the sense of that prophecy, nor that the things which were now doing were a fulfilling of it: *but when Jesus was glorified*; was raised from the dead, and ascended to heaven, and was set down at the right hand of God, crowned with glory and honour; and when having received the promise of the father, the Holy Ghost, and his gifts, he poured them forth in a very plenteous and extraordinary manner upon them; whereby their minds were greatly illuminated, and they had a very distinct knowledge of the Scriptures of the Old Testament; and saw clearly how they severally had their accomplishment in Christ: *then remembered they that these things were written of him*, in the prophecies of the Old Testament; *and* that *they had done these things unto him*, both the disciples and the multitude, or that these things were done to him; such as bringing the ass to him, laying their clothes on it, and setting him upon it, attending him with shoutings and hosannahs to the city of Jerusalem, *&c.*

Ver. 17. *The people therefore that was with him*, &c.] The Jews, that came from Jerusalem to Bethany, to comfort the two sisters of Lazarus upon his death, who believed in Christ; and others of the town of Bethany, who with them were along with Christ: *when he called Lazarus out of his grave*; saying, Lazarus, come forth: *and raised him from the dead*; to life: *bare record*; to the Jews at Jerusalem, and to the people that came out of the several countries, of the truth of that fact; declaring, that they were eye and ear witnesses of the whole, and that it was a truth that might be depended on.

Ver. 18. *For this cause the people also met him*, &c.] This was a principal reason, among others, which induced them to set out in the manner they did, with palm-tree branches in their hands, and accost him as the king of Israel, when they met him, and *hosanna'd* him into the city: *for that they heard that he had done this miracle*; the witnesses were so many, and the proofs they gave so strong, that they firmly believed it: and this being a most amazing miracle, and which exceeded even any of the same kind; Jairus's daughter was but just dead, and the widow of Naim's son was not buried, when they were raised, but Lazarus had been dead and buried four days; it made a very strong impression upon the minds of the people, and engaged their attention to him, and belief in him.

Ver. 19. *The Pharisees therefore said among themselves*, &c.] Either when assembled in their own private houses, or in the sanhedrim; or as they stood together in the streets, seeing Jesus pass by in such pomp, and such a multitude with him: *perceive ye how ye prevail nothing?* the Vulgate Latin and Arabic versions read, *we prevail nothing*, so Nonnus; the sense is the same; suggesting, that all their wise schemes and crafty councils signified nothing; the commands they enjoined the people not to follow him, or to apprehend him, or to shew them where he was, were disregarded; their threatenings to put out of the synagogue such as should confess him, were taken no notice of; their promises of reward were slighted; their examples were not followed; and all their artifice and cunning, backed with power and authority, did not succeed: *behold, the world is gone after him*; the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read, *the whole world*, and so Nonnus; the Persic version, *all the people*; that is, a very great number of people; for they could not mean, that all the inhabitants of the world, or every individual of mankind were followers of him, and became his disciples, nor even all in their own land; they themselves, with multitudes more of the same complexion, were an exception to this: but they speak in the common dialect of that nation, of which take two or three instances; "it happened to a certain "high-priest, that he went out of the sanctuary, והוו "אזלי כולי עלמא בתריה, *and the whole world went after* "*him*; and when they saw Shemaiah and Abtalion, "they left him, and went after them[o]." And again[p], "R. Aba proclaimed, whoever seeks riches, and who-"ever seeks the way of life in the world to come, let "him come and study in the law, and כולי עלמא, "*the whole world* will gather together to him." Once more[q], "Jonathan said to David, 1 Sam. xxiii. 17. "*Thou shalt be king over Israel, and I will be next to* "*thee*; what is the meaning of this? perhaps Jona-"than the son of Saul saw עלמא, *the world* draw after "David." This shews the sense of those phrases, *the world*, and *the whole world*, when used in the article of redemption by Jesus Christ; see the note on 1 John ii. 2.

Ver. 20. *And there were certain Greeks*, &c.] *Hellenes*, so called, from Hellen, a king of that name, as Pliny says[r]. These were not Græcizing Jews, or Jews that dwelt in Greece, and spoke the Greek language; for they were called not Hellenes, but Hellenists; but these were, as the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions render it, Gentiles; and were either mere Gentiles, and yet devout and religious men, who were allowed to offer sacrifice, and to worship, in the court of the Gentiles; or they were proselytes, either of righteousness, and so were circumcised, and had a right to eat of the passover, as well as to worship at it; or of the gate, and so being uncircumcised, might not eat of the passover, yet might worship at it; which latter seems to be the case, by what follows: for these were *among them, that came up to worship at the feast*; of the passover, which was near at hand: these were among those, that went forth to meet Jesus, and that attended him to Jerusalem, who were come up out of the country to this feast; and these came along with them to worship at it, to offer their sacrifices, and join in prayer, though they might not eat of the passover.

Ver. 21. *The same came therefore to Philip*, &c.] Who might know him; they might have been some of

[o] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 71. 2.
[p] Zohar in Gen. fol. 60. 4.

[q] T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 85. 1.
[r] Nat. Hist. l. 4. c. 7.

his neighbours formerly, for that Philip's parents, though Jews, dwelt among Greeks, seems probable, from the name given to him, which is a Greek one; some have thought, that these Greeks were Syrophœnicians, who dwelt upon the borders of Tyre and Sidon, and were not far off from Galilee, and from Bethsaida, the native place of Philip, and is therefore mentioned as follows: *which was of Bethsaida of Galilee*; as in John i. 44. see the note there. This place may be interpreted, *the house of hunting*, or *of fishing*; for it is not easy to say which it has its name from, since צידא, *saida*, signifies both hunting and fishing: and seeing it was in or near the tribe of Nephthali, where was plenty of deer, and a wilderness was near it, where might be wild beasts, it might be so called from hunting: and as it was situated near the lake of Gennesareth, it might have its name from the fishing-trade used in it; for Peter and Andrew, who were of it, were both fishermen: but it is yet more difficult to determine, whether this is the same with, or different from the Bethsaida Josephus[s] speaks of, as rebuilt by Philip, and called by him Julias, after the name of Cæsar's daughter, as I have observed in the notes on Luke ix. 10. and John i. 44. since this was in Galilee, of which Herod Antipas was tetrarch, and where Philip could have no power to rebuild places, and change their names; and besides, the city, which he repaired, and called Julias, according to Josephus[t] was in lower Gaulonitis, and therefore must be different, unless that, or any part of it, can be thought to be the same with Galilee: wherefore the learned Reland[u] thinks, that there were two Bethsaidas, and which seems very probable; and it is likely, that this is here purposely called Bethsaida of Galilee, to distinguish it from the other, which, by some persons, might still be called Bethsaida, though it had got a new name. Moreover, this Bethsaida is mentioned in other places along with Capernaum and Chorasin, Matt. xi. 21, 23. which were in Galilee. And Epiphanius says[w], that Bethsaida and Capernaum were not far distant one from another: and according to Jerom[x], Chorasin was but two miles from Capernaum; and who elsewhere says[y], that Capernaum, Tiberias, Bethsaida, and Chorasin, were situated on the shore of the lake of Genneraseth. It is said to be fifty-six miles from Jerusalem: *and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus*; that is, they entreated him, that he would introduce them into the company of Jesus; they wanted to be admitted into his presence, to have some discourse and conversation with him; and what might make them the more desirous of it, was the miracle he had lately wrought in raising Lazarus from the dead; as also the uncommon manner of his entering into Jerusalem, which they saw; and which shews, that it was not a bare sight of his person they meant, but the enjoyment of his company, for a while; and this favour they ask of Philip, with great respect to him, and in a very polite way, and yet with great sincerity, and strong affection, and earnest importunity; and was a pledge and presage of the future conversion of the Gentiles, when the Jews would be rejected. And it may be observed, that sensible sinners are very desirous of having a spiritual sight of Christ, of the glories of his person, and the fulness of his grace, and to see their interest in him, and to have communion and fellowship with him: he is all in all to them; no object so delightful, and satisfying to them as he is; and they never see him, but they receive something from him, and are made more like unto him.

Ver. 22. *Philip cometh and telleth Andrew, &c.*] The request the Greeks made to him, and this he did, that he might have his advice in this matter; and that not only because he might be a senior man as well as apostle, but because he was of the same town, and might know these men as well as Philip: *and again, Andrew and Philip told Jesus*; after they had consulted together, whether it was proper or no, to move this thing to their master; since he had forbid them going in the way of the Gentiles, they agreed to acquaint him with it, that he might do his pleasure.

Ver. 23. *And Jesus answered them, &c.*] Not directly and particularly; he did not in plain terms signify what was his will, whether these Greeks should be admitted or no; and yet expressed himself in such a manner as shews he was not averse to it, but was pleased with it, and takes notice of it, as an evidence of the near approach of his glorification: *saying, the hour is come, that the son of man should be glorified*; by rising from the dead, ascending to heaven, sitting at the right hand of God, and from thence pouring forth the spirit upon his disciples, who should go and preach the Gospel to the Gentiles, as well as Jews; and which would issue in the conversion of many of them, and so in his glory, of which the coming of these Greeks was an earnest. But he intimates, in the next verse, that he must first die.

Ver. 24. *Verily, verily, I say unto you, &c.*] This is a certain truth in nature, Christ was about to assert, and what he signifies by it would be a certain fact, and which he mentions, that his death might not be a stumbling-block to his disciples, or any objection to his glorification; but was rather to be considered as a means of it, and necessary in order to [illegible]: *except a corn of wheat fall into the ground*; or [illegible] sown in the earth; for sowing with the Jews is ex[illegible]ressed by the falling of the seed into the earth; see [illegible] note on Matt. xiii. 4. and is a very fit phrase to [illegible] forth the death of Christ by, who fell a sacrific[illegible] to justice by the hands of men: *and die*; or is cor[illegible]pted, and putrefies; and which is done in three d[illegible] time in moist land, but is longer in dry ground [illegible]re it perishes[z]: and a corn of wheat is almost the [illegible]ly seed, that being cast into the earth, does die; [illegible]d therefore is very aptly used by Christ: *it abidet[illegible] [a]lone*; a mere single corn as it is: *but if it die*: if [illegible] wastes, consumes, and rots, as it does, being cast i[illegible] the earth, in the time before mentioned: *it bring[s] forth much fruit*; it shoots out, and rises above gro[illegible], and appears in blade, and stalk, and ear, and prod[illegible] many corns or grains of wheat; all which our L[illegible] intends should be accommodated to

[s] Antiqu. l. 18. c. 2. sect. 1. Ed. Hudson.
[t] De Bello. Jud. l. 2. c. 9. sect. 1.
[u] Palestina Illustrata, l. 2. p. 654, 655.
[w] Contra Hæres. l. 2. Hæres. 51.

[illegible], fol. 90. 6.
[x] De locis Hebraicis, c. 9. 1.
[y] Comment. in & Bartenora in Misn. Celaim, c. 2. sect. 3.
[z] Rabbenu S[illegible]

himself, and to his death, and the fruits of it. He compares himself to a corn of wheat; to wheat, for the choiceness and excellency of it above all other grain, he being the chiefest among ten thousand, angels or men; and for the purity and cleanness of it, he being, even in his human nature, pure, and free from sin; and for its fruitfulness, he being fruitful in himself, and the cause of all fruitfulness in his people; and for its usefulness for food, he being the bread of life, and the finest of the wheat: and whereas the wheat must be threshed, and ground, and sifted, and kneaded, and baked, before it is fit for food; all this may express the sufferings and death of Christ, in order to be proper food for the faith of his people: and Christ here compares himself to a single corn of wheat, because he was of little account among men, and but little or nothing was expected by them from him; and chiefly because he was alone in the salvation of his people. The death of Christ is signified by the falling of the corn of wheat into the ground, and dying, and shews that Christ's death was not accidental, but designed; it was determined in the counsels and purposes of God, and intended for his glory and the redemption of men; even as wheat falls out of the hands of the sower, not casually, but on purpose, that it may die and spring up again, and produce an increase: and also, that the death of Christ was voluntary, both on his father's part, and on his own; and was real, and not in appearance only, and yet was but for a short time; as the corn of wheat that dies, soon revives again, and is quickly above ground, so Christ, though he really died, did not long continue under the power of death, but rose again the third day, and now lives for ever. Moreover, Christ intimates by this simile, that if he had not died, he should have been alone; not without his father, and the blessed spirit; nor without the holy and elect angels, but without any of the sons of men, who all fell and died in Adam; and had not Christ died, none of them would have lived; none of them could have been justified; nor could their sins have been expiated; nor would any of them have been regenerated: Christ must have been without them in heaven; wherefore he chose rather to die for them, that they might be for ever with him, than be alone in the human nature. And he further observes hereby, that his death would be productive of much fruit; which may be understood both of a large harvest of souls, that should be saved, among Jews, and Gentiles, and especially the latter; and of the blessings of grace, as redemption, justification, peace, pardon, and eternal life, that should follow upon it.

Ver. 25. *He that loveth his life shall lose it*, &c.] The sense is, that whoever is so in love with this present temporal life, as to be anxiously careful of it, and takes all precautions to secure it; and rather than to expose it to any danger, chooses to deny the faith of Christ, and desert his cause and interest; as such an one shall not long enjoy this life, so he shall come short of an eternal one: *and he that hateth his life in this world*: on the other hand, whoever seems careless about it, and not to consult the safety of it, but is unconcerned about it; yea, as if he was throwing it away, as of no great moment and significancy, rather than do any thing to preserve it, which would be scandalous to himself, and be dishonourable to his Lord and master; he *shall keep it unto life eternal*: he shall be preserved in his temporal life, in a remarkable manner, until he has done the will and work of God, notwithstanding all attempts upon it; and he shall appear to have that spiritual life, which is the beginning and pledge of, and which springs up unto, and issues in eternal life; and that he shall enjoy in the world to come. This Christ said to let his disciples and followers know, that they must suffer and die, as well as he, though not on the same account, and for the self-same reasons; and that their sufferings and death in his cause, and for his Gospel, would turn to their advantage.

Ver. 26. *If any man serve me*, &c.] Or is willing to be a servant of Christ, and to be esteemed as such; *let him follow me*; as in the exercise of the graces of love, humility, patience, self-denial, and resignation of will to the will of God, and in the discharge of every duty, walking as he walked, so in a way of suffering; for as the master, so the servants, as the head, so the members, through many tribulations, must enter the kingdom; to which he encourages by the following things: *and where I am*; in heaven, as he now was, as the son of God; or *where I shall be*, as the Syriac and Persic versions render it, even as man, in the human nature, when raised from the dead: *there shall also my servant be*; when he has done his work, and the place is prepared for him, and he for that, and where he shall ever abide; and as a further encouragement, he adds, *if any man serve me, him will my father honour*: by accepting his service, affording him his gracious presence here, and by giving him eternal glory hereafter, to which he has called him.

Ver. 27. *Now is my soul troubled*, &c.] At the hardness and unbelief of the Jews, and the rejection of them, when the Gentiles would be called, and converted, by which he would be glorified: and at the conduct and carriage of his disciples to him, he had a fore-knowledge of; at the betraying of him by one, and the denial of him by another, and the flight of them all from him; and at the devil, and the furious and violent attack he knew he would make upon him, though he had obliged him to leave him, when he assaulted him before, and knew he could find nothing in him now, and that as God, he was able to destroy him; but this was to be done by him, as man, and by dying too: he was in his human soul troubled at the thoughts of his death, though it was his father's will, and he had agreed to it, and was for the salvation of his people, his heart was so much set upon; yet it was terrible to the human nature, and especially as attended with the wrath of God; at the apprehensions of which, his soul was exceedingly troubled; not as about to fall on him on his own personal account, but as being the surety of his people, and as having their sins upon him to satisfy angry and injured justice for: *and what shall I say?* this question he puts, as being in the utmost distress, and difficulty, as if he knew not what to say; and yet not as advising with his disciples, what was to be said or done in his case; but is rather used to introduce another question, as the following words may be formed: shall I say,

father, save me from this hour? as requesting his father, that he might be strengthened under his sufferings and death, and carried through them, and out of them; or rather as deprecating them, desiring the cup might pass from him, as he afterwards did; and then the sense is, shall I put up such a petition to my father, to save me from sorrows, sufferings, and death? no, I will not: the human nature through frailty might prompt him to it, and he be just going to do it, when he corrects himself, saying; *but for this cause came I unto this hour:* this hour or time of sorrow and suffering was appointed for him; it was fixed in the covenant of grace, and Christ had agreed to it; he was sent into this world, and he came into it, on account of this hour; and was preserved hitherto for this purpose; and was now come to Jerusalem, and was there at this instant, for that very reason, namely, to suffer and die. And since this was the case, he would not put up such a petition to his father, but the following one.

Ver. 28. *Father, glorify thy name,* &c.] The perfections of his nature, particularly his justice and holiness, meaning in himself, by his sufferings and death; intimating hereby, that his father's glory was what he had in view, and that the securing of that would give him an infinite pleasure amidst all his sorrows. The Arabic version, and Nounus, read *glorify thy son,* as in ch. xvii. 1. and the Ethiopic version takes in both, *glorify thy name, and thy son:* and indeed, what glorifies the one, glorifies the other; see ch. xiii. 31, 32. *Then came there a voice from heaven;* as at his baptism and transfiguration, and which came from the father, and was an articulate one, and what the Jews call *Bath Kol,* or *the daughter of the voice:* saying, *I have both glorified* it; meaning in the incarnation, ministry, obedience and miracles of Christ; and particularly in that late one in raising Lazarus from the dead: *and will glorify it again:* by supporting him under, and carrying him through his sufferings and death, and by raising him from the dead, and setting him at his own right hand.

Ver. 29. *The people therefore that stood by and heard it,* &c.] Some more confusedly, who were furthest off; others more distinctly, who were nearer: the first of these, *said that it thundered;* as it used to do when *Bath Kol* was heard, which, as the Jews say[a], "is a "voice that comes out of heaven proceeding from the "midst of another voice," as thunder; wherefore some took this for thunder, and others for the voice of an angel out of the thunder: *others said, an angel spoke to him;* these being nearer, perceived it was an articulate voice, which expressed certain distinct words, which they thought were delivered by an angel; for the Jews had a mighty notion of the discourse and conversation of angels with men, which their doctors pretended to understand; particularly R. Jochanan ben Zaccai, a Rabbi, who was living at this time, had learned their speech, and was well versed in it[b].

Ver. 30. *Jesus answered and said,* &c.] To the people that stood by, and were disputing among themselves about what they heard, whether it was thunder, or the voice of an angel: *this voice came not because of me;* at least not only and chiefly; it was not so much in answer to his prayer, or in order to comfort him under the apprehensions he had of his sufferings and death, or to assure him of his future glorification, though all this was true: *but for your sakes;* to convince them that he was the Messiah, and engage them to believe in him, or to leave them without excuse; since not only miracles were wrought before their eyes, but with their ears they heard God speaking to him, and which is the rule that they themselves prescribe; for according to them, no man is to be hearkened to, though he should do as many signs and wonders as Moses, the son of Amram, unless they hear with their ears, that the Lord speaks to him as he did to Moses[c].

Ver. 31. *Now is the judgment of this world,* &c.] That is, in a very short time will be the judgment either of the Jewish world, when that shall be reproved, convinced, and condemned for their sin of rejecting Christ, and crucifying him, by the spirit, in the ministration of the Gospel; and they still continuing in their impenitence and unbelief, in process of time wrath will come upon them, upon their nation, city, and temple, to the uttermost; or of the Gentile world, when there shall be a discrimination, and separation made in it, of the chosen of God, who shall be called by special grace, and with the converted and believing Jews, shall form a Gospel church-state, separate from the world of the ungodly; or of the world of God's elect among Jews and Gentiles, whose cause, being undertook by Christ, he will now vindicate it, and redeem them from sin and Satan, who have usurped a power and dominion over them: hence it follows, *now shall the prince of this world be cast out.* The phrase, שר העולם, *the prince of the world,* is much used by Jewish writers[d], by whom an angel is meant; and they seem to design the angel of death, which is the devil: and it is certain, that he is here intended, and is so called, not because he has any legal power and authority over the world; but because he has usurped a dominion over it, and has great power and efficacy in the hearts of the children of disobedience, who yield a voluntary subjection to him, as if he was their proper lord and sovereign: now the time was at hand, when he should be cast out of the empire of the world he had assumed, and out of the temples of the Gentiles, and out of the hearts of God's elect among them.

Ver. 32. *And I, if I be lifted up from the earth,* &c.] The death of Christ is here signified by his being *lifted up from the earth,* in allusion to the lifting up of the brazen serpent on the pole; and shews, that his death would not be natural, but violent, and would be public, and not private; and fitly expresses his mediation between God, and men, being lifted up between the heavens and the earth; and points out the death of the cross, as is intimated in the next verse: and the *if* here does not suppose that his death, and the manner of it, were uncertain, for it was determined by God, agreed to by himself, predicted in the Scriptures, signified by types, and foretold by himself, and was necessary for the salvation of his people; but it designs the time of

[a] Piske Tosephot in T. Bab. Sanhedrin, art. 30.
[b] T. Bab. Succa, fol. 28. 1. & Bava Bathra, fol. 134. 1.
[c] R. Mosis Kotsensis præfat. ad Mitzvot Tora, pr. Affirm.

[d] T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 16. 2. & Sanhedrin, fol. 94. 1. & Cholin, fol. 60. 1.

his drawing persons to himself, which is afterwards expressed, and may be rendered, *when I am lifted up*, as it is by the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions: now when this will be, Christ says, *I will draw all men to me;* which is not to be understood of the concourse of people about him, when on the cross, some for him, and others against him, some to bewail him, and others to reproach him; but rather of the gathering of the elect to him, and in him, as their head and representative, when he was crucified for them; or of the collection of them, through the ministry of the apostles, and of their being brought to believe on him for eternal life and salvation: and this drawing of them to him, in consequence of his death, supposes distance from him, want of power, and will, to come to him, and the efficacious grace of God to bring them, though without any force and compulsion; and this is to be understood not of every individual of human nature; for all are not drawn to Christ, or enabled to come to him, and believe in him. There were many of the Jews who would not, and did not come to him for life; and who instead of being drawn to him in this sense, when lifted up on the cross, vilified and reproached him; moreover, in the preceding verse, a *world* is spoken of, whose judgment, or condemnation, was now come; and besides, there was at this time a multitude of souls in hell, who could not, nor never will be, drawn to Christ; and a greater number still there will be at the last day, who, instead of drawing to him in this gracious way and manner, will be bid to depart from him, as having been workers of iniquity. Christ died indeed for all men who are drawn unto him; but this is not true of all men, that are, were, or shall be in the world. Add to this, that the word *men* is not in the text, it is only παντας, *all:* Beza's most ancient copy, and some others, and the Vulgate Latin version read παντα, *all things;* and by *all* are meant, all the elect of God, all the children of God, that were scattered abroad; the Persic version reads, *I will draw my friends to me;* it designs some of all sorts of men, of every state, condition, age, sex, and nation, Gentiles as well as Jews, and especially the former; which agrees with the ancient prophecy, Gen. xlix. 10. and with the context, and the occasion of the words, which was the desire of the Greeks, that were come to the feast, to see Jesus; and which was a specimen of the large numbers of them, that should be drawn to Christ, through the preaching of the Gospel, after his death: the Jews say, that in the time to come, or in the days of the Messiah, all the proselytes shall be נגררים, *drawn*, shall freely become proselytes[e]. The allusion here, is to the setting up of a standard or ensign, to gather persons together. Christ's cross is the standard, his love is the banner, and he himself is the ensign, which draw souls to himself, and engage them to enlist themselves under him, and become his volunteers in the day of his power; see Isa. xi. 10.

Ver. 33. *This he said,* &c.] These are the words of the evangelist, interpreting the design of Christ in the above words, thereby *signifying what death he should die;* the phrase of being lifted up from the earth, not only signified his death, but the kind, or manner of it, that it should be by crucifixion; a person crucified being stretched forth upon a cross, and that erected, was lifted up between earth and heaven.

Ver. 34. *The people answered him,* &c.] Not the Greeks, but the Jews, and these not such as were friends to Christ, but cavillers at him: *we have heard out of the law;* not the five books of Moses, but the Prophets, and Hagiographa; even all the books of the Old Testament are called the law; see the note on ch. x. 34. *that Christ abideth for ever;* referring to those places which speak of the perpetuity of his priesthood, and the everlasting duration of his kingdom, Psal. cx. 4. and xlv. 6. and lxxii. 17. and lxxxix. 36, 37. Dan. ii. 44. and vii. 13, 14. in which last text express mention is made of the son of man, and that and the first may be more especially respected; from whence it appears, that these passages were understood of the Messiah by the ancient Jews: they knew he was designed in Psal. cx. 4. He is David's Lord that was bid to sit at the right hand of Jehovah, after he was raised from the dead, and had ascended on high; whose Gospel went forth with power, and whose people, by it, were made willing to submit to him, to his righteousness, and the sceptre of his kingdom; and who also is a priest for ever; and which is appealed to as a proof of the nature, kind, and duration of Christ's priesthood, Heb. v. 6. and vii. 17. and so it may be observed it is expressly applied to him by Jewish writers: in Zech. iv. 14. it is said, *these are the two anointed ones that stand by the Lord of the whole earth;* of which this interpretation is given[f]. "These are Aaron and the "Messiah; and it would not be known which of them "is (most) beloved, but that he says, Psal. cx. 4. *the "Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, thou art a priest "for ever;* from whence it is manifest that the Mes-"siah is more beloved than Aaron the righteous "priest." And so another of them[g], speaking of Melchizedek, says, "this is that which is written Psal. cx. "4. *the Lord hath sworn,* &c. who is this? this is he "that is just, and having salvation, the King Messiah, "as it is said, Zach. ix. 9." So the 45th Psalm is understood by them of the Messiah; the King, in ver. 1. is by Ben Melech, said to be the King Messiah; ver. 2. is thus paraphrased by the Targum, "thy beauty, "O King Messiah, is more excellent than the children "of men." And Aben Ezra observes, that this Psalm is either concerning David, or the Messiah his son, whose name is David, Ezek. xxxvii. 25.[h]; and the passage in Psal. lxxii. 17. is frequently interpreted of the Messiah and his name, and is brought as a proof of the antiquity of it[i]; and Psal. lxxxix. 36. is also applied to him; and as for Dan. vii. 13. that is by many, both ancient and modern Jews, explained of the Messiah[k]: and since then they understood these passages of him, it is easy to observe from whence they took this notion that the Messiah should abide for ever; but then they

[e] T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 24. 1. & Gloss. in ib.
[f] Abot R. Nathan, c. 34.
[g] R. Moses Hadarsan in Galatin. de cath. ver. l. 10. c. 6.
[h] Vid. Tzeror Hammur, fol. 49. 2.
[i] T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 54. 1. Nedarim, fol. 39. 2. Bereshit Rabba, fol. 1, 2. Echa Rabbati, fol. 50. 2. Pirke Eliezer, c. 32.
[k] Zohar in Gen. fol. 85. 4. Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 13. fol. 209. 4. Jarchi & Saadiah Gaon in Dan. vii. 13. & R. Jeshua in Aben Ezra in ib.

should have observed out of the same law, or Holy Scriptures, that the Messiah was to be stricken and cut off, was to be brought to the dust of death, and to pour out his soul unto death; all which is consistent with his abiding for ever, in his person and office; for though according to the said writings, he was to die and be buried, yet he was not to see corruption; he was to rise again, ascend on high, sit at the right hand of God, and rule till all his enemies became his footstool; his sufferings were to be in the way, and in order to his entrance into the glory that should always abide. The Jews have entertained a notion that Messiah the son of David shall not die, and they lay down this as a rule, that if any one sets up for a Messiah, and does not prosper, but is *slain*, it is a plain case he is not the Messiah; so all the wise men at first thought that Ben Coziba was the Messiah, but when he was slain it was known to them that he was not[l]. And upon this principle these Jews confront the Messiahship of Jesus, saying, *and how sayest thou, the son of man must be lifted up?* for it seems Christ used the phrase the son of man, in his discourse, though John has not recorded it; he attending to his sense, and not to his express words. The Jews rightly understood him, that by the son of man he meant the Messiah, and by his being lifted up, his death; but they did not understand, how the Messiah could die, and yet abide for ever; and therefore since he intended himself by the son of man, they concluded he talked very inconsistent with the Scriptures, and with the character he assumed, and ask very pertly, *who is this son of man?* is there any other son of man besides the Messiah? and can the son of man, that is the Messiah, be lifted up, or die, who is to abide for ever? and if thou art to be lifted up, or die, thou art not the Messiah or Daniel's son of man, whose kingdom is everlasting: but how come the Jews themselves to say, that the days of the Messiah, according to some, are but forty years, according to others seventy, according to others, three hundred and sixty-five[m]? yea, they say, he shall be as other men, marry, have children, and then die[n]. And how comes it to pass that Messiah ben Joseph shall be slain[o]? the truth of the matter is this, they having lost the true sense of the prophecies concerning the Messiah, and observing some that seem to differ, and which they know not how to reconcile, have fancied two Messiahs, the one that will be much distressed and be overcome and be slain; the other, who will be potent and victorious.

Ver. 35. *Then Jesus said unto them,* &c.] Not directly answering to their questions, but suggests to them their ignorance and stupidity, amidst so much light, that was about them: *yet a little while is the light with you:* meaning either himself, the light of the world, ch. viii. 12. and xii. 46, who was to be but a very little while longer with them, a few days more, and he was to go away from them by death, and be seen and heard no more by them: or the Gospel, which, though that was to continue somewhat longer, it being, after Christ's death, resurrection, and ascension, to be preached to the Jews, both in Judea, and in other parts of the world; yet that would be but for a little while, as the event has shewn; for the Jews rejecting the Gospel, and putting it away from them, the apostles, as they were ordered, turned to the Gentiles, Acts xiii. 46, 47. *walk while ye have the light;* that is, as it is explained in the following verse, *believe ye in the light;* which the Persic version adds here, and leaves out there: and the sense is, believe in the Messiah, and in his Gospel; embrace him and that, and walk on in him, and worthy of him and of his Gospel, as children of the light: *lest darkness come upon you;* suddenly, at an unawares; either a greater degree of the darkness of ignorance and unbelief; even a judicial blindness and stupidity, which did seize on that people, and continues upon them to this day; or the darkness of afflictions, calamities, and distress, and which have come upon them to the uttermost, to the destruction of their temple, city, and nation; or else a worse darkness, even blackness of darkness, outer darkness in hell, where are weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth. *For he that walketh in darkness, knoweth not whither he goeth;* he cannot see his way, nor the stumbling-blocks that lie in it, and the dangers he is exposed unto; nor does he know where it leads, and what is the end of it; and just so it is with a man in a state of unregeneracy, and more especially under judicial blindness: he is not aware of the pits and snares that lie in his way, or of the dark mountains on which he stumbles; and though destruction and misery are in his ways, he knows not that he is going thereunto.

Ver. 36. *While ye have light, believe in the light,* &c.] Receive the Messiah, and credit the Gospel revelation; this is an explanation of the exhortation in the preceding verse: *that ye may be the children of the light;* that is, that they might appear to be such who are enlightened persons; and such are truly so, who are made light in the Lord, or who are enlightened by the spirit of God to see their own sinfulness, impotency, and unrighteousness, and their need of Christ, and his righteousness and strength, and of salvation by him; and who are made meet, by the grace of God, to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; and which is made manifest by believing in Christ, and walking on in him, as they have received him, and by walking honestly, as in the day-time, and circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, for such walk as children of the light. *These things spake Jesus, and departed;* from those Jews, as being unworthy of any further conversation with him; and from Jerusalem, very likely to Bethany, whither he frequently retired, especially at night, during the few days before the passover: *and did hide himself from them;* for his safety, for he knew that they were irritated by what he said, and would seek to lay hold upon him, and deliver him to the sanhedrim; and whereas his hour was not yet fully come, there were a few more sands in the glass to run, he provided for his security, by absconding from them; and this was an emblem of his wholly removing from them, and leaving them, and their house, desolate; and it is very likely that from this time forward, they saw him no more as ministering the

[l] Maimon. Hilchot Melacim, c. 11. sect. 3, 4. Vid. Bereshit Rabba, sect. 99. fol. 86. 2.
[m] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 99. 1.
[n] Maimon in Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 11. sect. 1.
[o] T. Bab. Succa, fol. 52. 1.

word unto them; and also of his taking his Gospel from them in a little time, and of his hiding the things of it from them, which respected himself, and salvation by him.

Ver. 37. *But though he had done so many miracles before them*, &c.] Openly, and in the presence of them; meaning those miracles which were done at Jerusalem, as those which brought Nicodemus to him, and to an acknowledgment of him as a teacher sent from God; and particularly the cure of the lame man at Bethesda's pool, the giving sight to the man that was born blind, by anointing his eyes with clay, and sending him to wash in the Pool of Siloam, and the raising Lazarus from the dead at Bethany, which was within two miles of Jerusalem, in the presence of many of them who were come there to comfort Martha and Mary. *Yet they believed not on him*; the miracles done by Christ before their eyes, which they could not deny, nor disprove, and were so many, and so great, were aggravations of their unbelief; and such indeed is the nature of that sin, and so deeply rooted is it, that the most powerful means, and mighty works, will not bring a person to believe in Christ, without the powerful and efficacious grace of God.

Ver. 38. *That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled*, &c.] For though this was not the end of these men in disbelieving Christ, that the words of Esaiah might be fulfilled, yet hereby they were eventually fulfilled; and though the predictions of the prophet had no such influence on the wills of these men, as to lay upon them a coactive necessity, or force them to do, or to answer to the things foretold; yet they were to have, and had an infallible event or completion, otherwise the fore-knowledge of God, and the authority of the prophetic writings, could not be maintained: *which he spake* in Isa. liii. 1. *Lord, who hath believed our report?* which words the prophet delivered by way of complaint to God the father; not so much with respect to his own time, and the men of it, as to the times of Christ, and his apostles, whom he personates; for the whole chapter is a prophecy of the Messiah, and suggests, that in those times there would be but few that would believe the report made in the ministry of the Gospel, concerning the Messiah, his person, office, and grace; though so true in itself, and so much confirmed by miracles, and mighty deeds; the reason of which, he intimates, would be his outward mean appearance in the world; and which, 'tis certain, was the true reason, God denying the influence of his powerful and special grace, as follows: *and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?* meaning either the Gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation, and which was hid from the wise and prudent; or the Lord Jesus Christ himself, who is the power of God, by whom he made the heavens and the earth, and upholds them in their being, and by whom he has redeemed and saved his people; and who was not revealed neither to them in the ministry of the word, nor in them the hope of glory: or the Holy Spirit is meant, the finger of God, by whom these surprising miracles were done; and yet he did not exert himself in these persons, in the special operations of his grace; or the powerful and efficacious grace of God itself is designed, which was not put forth, and did not attend the report of the Gospel, and therefore it was not believed.

Ver. 39. *Therefore they could not believe*, &c.] God had determined to leave them to the blindness and hardness of their hearts, and to deny them his grace, which only could cure them of it, and enable them to believe: he had foretold this in prophecy, and they were manifestly the persons spoken of; and therefore considering the decrees of God, the predictions of the prophet, and the hardness of their hearts, they were left unto, it was morally impossible they should believe, *because that Esaias said again*, in Isa. vi. 9, 10.

Ver. 40. *He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart*, &c.] It is of no great moment, whether the *he*, who is said to blind and harden, be God or Christ, or whether the words be rendered, *it hath blinded*, &c. that is, malice or wickedness; or whether they be read impersonally, *their eyes are blinded*, &c. since God or Christ blind and harden not by any positive act, but by leaving and giving men up to the blindness and hardness of their hearts, and denying them the grace which could only cure them, and which they are not obliged to give; and which was the case of these Jews, so as never to be converted, or be turned even by external repentance and reformation, that they might be healed in a national way, and be preserved from national ruin, as it follows, *that they should not see with their eyes*, &c. see the notes on Matt. xiii. 14, 15. The Syriac and Persic versions read, *they have blinded their eyes*, &c.

Ver. 41. *These things said Esaias*, &c.] Concerning the blinding and hardening of the Jews: *when he saw his glory, and spake of him*: when he saw, in a visionary way, the glory of the Messiah in the temple, and the angels covering their faces with their wings at the sight of him; and when he spake of him as the King, the Lord of hosts, whom he had seen, Isa. vi. 1—10. from whence it is clear that he had respect to the Jews in the times of the Messiah. The prophet says in ver. 1. that he *saw the Lord*: the Targumist renders it, *I saw*, את יקרא דיי, *the glory of Jehovah*; and in ver. 6. he says, *mine eyes have seen the King*, Jehovah, Zebaot, the Lord of hosts; which the Chaldee paraphrase renders, *mine eyes have seen* את יקר, *the glory* of the Shekinah, the King of the world, the Lord of hosts. Agreeably to which our Lord says here, that he saw his glory, the glory of his majesty, the glory of his divine nature, the train of his divine perfections, filling the temple of the human nature; and he spoke of him as the true Jehovah, the Lord of hosts; and which therefore is a very clear and strong proof of the proper divinity of Christ. And it may be observed from hence, that such persons who have a true, spiritual, and saving sight of Christ, of the glory of his person, and the fulness of his grace, cannot but be speaking of him to others, either in private, or in public, as Isaiah here did, and as the church in Cant. v. 10—16. and as the apostles of Christ, John i. 14. 1 John i. 1, 2. and indeed, should they hold their peace, the stones would cry out; such must, and will speak of his glory in his temple, Psal. xxix. 9. and cxlv. 4, 5, 6, 7, 11, 12.

Ver. 42. *Nevertheless among the chief rulers also*, &c.] These were the members of the Jewish sanhedrim, as Nicodemus, Joseph of Arimathea, and others: *many*

believed on him: that he was the Messiah, though they did not believe in him in a spiritual and saving manner, as their Redeemer and Saviour, only in their minds, being convicted by his miracles, gave an assent unto him, as the promised Messiah. The two persons just mentioned may be thought truly to have believed in Christ; but the many here spoken of seem to have had only an historical faith in him, as appears by what follows: *but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him;* as they ought to have done, and as they would have done, if their faith had been right; for where with the heart men believe in Christ to righteousness, there, with the mouth, confession is made to salvation; and between a non-confession of Christ, and a denying him, is no medium; and Christ interprets the one to be the same with the other; see Rom. x. 9, 10. Matt. x. 32, 33. and this they did not do, because of the Pharisees, who were the inveterate and implacable enemies of Christ, and were the prevailing party in the sanhedrim: wherefore these chief rulers, though many, were afraid of them, *lest they should be put out of the synagogue;* for they had made a decree in the sanhedrim, that whoever confessed that Jesus was the Messiah, should be cast out; and they had put it into execution upon the man born blind, whose eyes Christ opened, for speaking in favour of his benefactor; and this had struck terror in the minds, not only of the common people, but of the chief rulers themselves; for it was looked upon as a very dreadful thing to be put out of the synagogue; see the note on ch. ix. 22.

Ver. 43. *For they loved the praise of men,* &c.] To be in the esteem of men, to have their applause, and receive honour from them: *more than the praise of God:* than either to receive honour from him, and be praised by him, or to praise and glorify him. By confessing Christ they knew they should run the risk of losing their places of honour and profit, and of falling under the disgrace and contempt of men; and therefore they chose rather not to confess Christ, than by so doing to glorify God, and please him, and be praised by him, as all the faithful professors of Christ will be at the last day; for then every such an one will have praise of God, and it will be said, well done good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of thy Lord.

Ver. 44. *Jesus cried and said,* &c.] Upon this occasion, on account of the prevailing hardness and unbelief of the Jewish nation, and the non-confession of him by those who did believe him to be the Messiah. He *cried* with a loud voice, that he might be heard, and his audience left inexcusable; it denotes the concern of his mind, the vehemency of his spirit, and that openness and freedom in which he discharged his ministry, by shewing the nature, excellency, and usefulness of believing in him, and the dangerous consequences of unbelief: *he that believeth on me, believeth not on me:* which is not to be understood simply and absolutely, for this would be a contradiction in terms: they that believe in Christ, do believe in him, and they do right to believe in him; Christ is the object of faith; he is proposed as such in the Gospel; and it is his father's will, and his own advice, that his people should believe in him: but then those that truly believe in him, do not believe in him as a mere man, but as God, as the son of God; and not as separate from, or to the exclusion of his father: nor do they believe in him as a new, or another God, but as the one God with the father, and the spirit; for he and his father are one: nor do they believe in him *only:* and so the Arabic version reads; but in God the father also: nor does their faith rest in him, but it proceeds through him, as the Mediator unto God; see 1 Pet. i. 21. Besides, he is here to be considered in his office-capacity, as being sent of God; and he that believes on him as the sent of God, does not so much believe on him, as on the sender of him, as follows: *but on him that sent me;* just as whatever honour or dishonour are done to an ambassador, sent by an earthly king to a foreign court, are not so much done to the ambassador that is sent, as to the king that sends him; for what is done to him, is all one as if it was personally done to his prince: so he that despises Christ, despises him that sent him; and he that receives Christ, receives him that sent him; and he that believes on Christ, believes on him that sent him; see Luke x. 16. Matt. x. 40.

Ver. 45. *And he that seeth me, seeth him that sent me.*] Not with bodily eyes, for there were many that saw Christ, who never saw the father: they saw Christ as a mere man, and were offended at the meanness of his outward appearance; they saw nothing divine in him, nor the glory of the father through him; but with the eyes of the understanding, whoever saw or perceived the glory of Christ in his miracles, saw the glory of God in them also, for the father that dwelt in him did the works, John ii. 11. and xi. 40. and xiv. 10. and whoever truly sees Christ with an eye of faith, sees his glory, as the glory of the only-begotten of the father, as the brightness of his father's glory, as having the fulness of the Godhead dwelling in him, the same perfections as in the father; so that he that hath seen the one, hath seen the other also, John xiv. 9.

Ver. 46. *I am come a light into the world,* &c.] And even as the light of it, being the sun of righteousness that was to arise, and now was risen, to enlighten men with the light of the living; see John iii. 19. and viii. 12. *that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness:* God's elect themselves, whilst in a state of unregeneracy and unbelief, are in darkness; when Christ shines in upon them, and infuses the light of faith into them, they are no longer in darkness; the darkness is past, at least in a great measure, and the true light shines; in which they see light, see the glory and grace of Christ, and the invisible realities of another world: nor do they continue in the darkness of sin, ignorance, and unbelief, but walk in the light of truth, faith, and holiness, until the perfect day comes, when all the shadows of remaining darkness will flee away.

Ver. 47. *And if any man hear my words and believe not,* &c.] Men may hear the Gospel of Christ, and not understand it; and they may understand it literally and grammatically, though not spiritually and experimentally, and not believe it; not so much as give credit or an assent to the truth of it, but reject and deny it; for though faith comes by hearing to some, it does not come to all: some receive no profit by hearing it, because it is not mixed with faith by them. The Alexandrian copy, and all the Oriental versions,

and also Nonnus, read the last clause thus, *and keep them not*; or does not observe them, is negligent of them, and shews no regard, and yields not the obedience of faith to them; the sense is the same. *I judge him not*: I do not accuse him to the father, nor do I condemn him, nor shall I take vengeance on him for so doing; meaning, that he should do none of these things now, though hereafter he will be a swift witness against him, and will convict and condemn him, and pass sentence on him, and execute it: *for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world*. Christ, at his first coming, came not under the character of a judge, but a Saviour; wherefore suitable to his character, and the end of his coming, he would not accuse, condemn, or judge any man, even the greatest unbelievers in him, and despisers of him, but would leave them to another day, when righteous judgment shall take place.

Ver. 48. *He that rejecteth me*, &c.] As the Messiah, with abhorrence and contempt, as many among the Jews did, who would not have him to reign over them, but sought to put him to death: *and receiveth not my words*; the doctrines of the Gospel, but disbelieves them, and denies them to be true, looking upon them as the doctrines of a mere man, and an impostor: *hath one that judgeth him*: let not such an one think that he shall escape righteous judgment; though Christ does not judge him now, there is one that judges him, yea, even now; and declares, that he that believeth not shall be damned, and that he is condemned already: *the word that I have spoken unto you, the same shall judge him in the last day*; according to the different dispensations wicked men are under in this world, will be the rule of their judgment hereafter: such who are only under the law of nature, will be judged according to that, that will accuse them, convict them, and condemn them: such who have been under the law of Moses, or the written law, will be arraigned, proved, and pronounced guilty, and punished by, and according to that law; and such who have been under the Gospel dispensation, and have been favoured with the revelation of the Gospel, but have contemned and denied it, that will judge them at the last day. The judge will act by its present declaration, and according to that proceed, as it stands in Mark xvi. 16. It will rise up in judgment against such persons, and be an aggravation of their condemnation.

Ver. 49. *For I have not spoken of myself*, &c.] As man, or as separate from his father; his doctrine was not human, but divine, and therefore a rejection of it cannot escape notice at the future judgment: *but the father which sent me, he gave me a commandment what I should say, and what I should speak*; Christ, as man, had his mission, and commission, and his instructions from his father to preach the Gospel unto men; he was anointed for it by the Holy Ghost; he was enjoined the preaching of it by his father, and the several doctrines he published were delivered him by him; see John viii. 28. and xvii. 8.

Ver. 50. *And I know that his commandment is life everlasting*, &c.] By *his commandment* is not meant the law; that indeed is often styled the commandment; and it is the commandment of God; and many excellent things are said of it; and among the rest it is called *life*, Deut. xxx. 15. but not everlasting life: it only promised a continuation of natural life to man, on condition of obedience to it; more than this it did not promise to Adam, in innocence; and what it promised to the obedient Israelites, was only a prolongation of natural life in the land which God gave unto them: but it neither promises, nor gives spiritual life to the fallen sons of Adam; it leaves men as it finds them, dead in trespasses and sins; and cannot communicate either a life of sanctification, or of justification to them; nor does it so much as give them any hopes of life, or shew where it is to be had; nor is everlasting life to be obtained by the works of it: justification is not by the works of the law; nor salvation by works of righteousness done by men; and consequently eternal life is never to be attained unto by obedience to the commands of the law: it is so far from being in this sense life everlasting, that it is the ministration of condemnation and death. But the Gospel is here meant, and is called a commandment; not that it has the nature of a law, or consists of precepts, as the law does; but because it is by the commandment of the everlasting God published by Christ, and his apostles. Christ, as appears from the preceding verse, had a commandment from his father, what he should say and speak; now, not the doctrine he delivered was the commandment itself, but it was a commandment of the father that he should deliver that doctrine; besides, the word *commandment* sometimes signifies no other than a doctrine, as in Psal. xix. 8. 1 John ii. 7. and the sense is, that the doctrine of the Gospel, which Christ had in commission from the father to preach, is life everlasting; and is so called, because it is a means of quickening sinners with a spiritual life, which issues in an eternal one; it is the savour of life unto life, and the spirit which giveth life, and is the ministration of it; and it is a means of implanting the graces of the spirit of God in the heart, which sprung up unto everlasting life; and of bringing souls to the knowledge of Christ, which is the beginning, pledge, and earnest of eternal life: and besides all this, it gives an account of the nature of eternal life; it directs the way unto it, which is by Christ, and describes the persons who shall enjoy it; shewing, that their title to it is the righteousness of Christ, and their meetness for it the regenerating grace of the spirit; and that all that believe in Christ shall have it: *whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the father said unto me so I speak*; and no otherwise, and therefore ought to be received, and not rejected. This is to be understood not of what Christ spoke in common conversation, but in the ministry of the word, even of the doctrines of the Gospel, which were given him by his father, and which he knew were agreeable to his mind and will, and to his council and covenant, and to every thing done and agreed therein, to which he was privy: these he delivered as he received them, and both as to matter and manner, as it was his father's will and pleasure he should: he preached the righteousness of God, and hid it not; he declared his faithfulness, and his salvation, and concealed not his loving-kindness and truth, Psal. xl. 9, 10. Now, though it is a sufficient ground of faith to receive and believe the doctrines of the Gospel, because Christ has spoken them, who is truth itself; yet it is a further confirmation of them, that they are what his father,

the God of truth, said unto him: and his delivering them as he had them from him, is an instance of his faithfulness to him that sent him; and should be imitated by his ministers, who ought to declare the whole counsel of God, and keep back nothing they have received from Christ, and which may be profitable to the souls of men.

CHAP. XIII.

Ver. 1. *Now before the feast of the passover*, &c.] This feast was instituted as a memorial of the deliverance of the children of Israel out of Egypt, and was an eminent type of Christ; and this passover was what Christ had greatly desired, it being his last, and when he was to express his great love to his people, mentioned here, by dying for them. It was two days before this feast, so the Persic version reads this text, at Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, that the things recorded in this chapter were transacted; see Matt. xxvi. 2, 6. *when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world to the father.* The death of Christ is here signified by a departing out of this world, a way of speaking frequently used by the Jews as expressive of death; see the note on Phil. i. 23. Much such a phrase is made use of concerning Moses, of whom it is said[p], that the fourth song that was sung in the world, was sung by him, "when *his* "*time was come*, למפטר מן עלמא, *to depart out of the* "*world*;" an easy and familiar form of speech to express death by, as if it was only a removing from one place to another. The place from whence Christ was about to remove is called *this world*: this present world, into which he was come to save sinners, and in which he then was, and where he had already met with very ill usage, and barbarous treatment, and was to meet with more: where he was going is said to be *to the father*, in whose bosom he lay, by whom he was sent, from whom he came; to his God and father, and the God and father of all his people, to take his place in their nature at his right hand. A time or hour was fixed for this; for as there was a set time, called *the fulness of time*, agreed upon for his coming into the world, so there was for his going out of it: and now this *his hour was come*: the time was now up, or at least very near at hand; and he *knew* it, being God omniscient, which gave him no uneasiness: nor did it in the least alienate his affections from his people: for *having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them to the end.* The objects of his love are described by his property in them, *his own*: by whom are meant, not all mankind, who are his by creation; nor the Jews, who were his nation and countrymen according to the flesh; nor the twelve apostles only, whom he had chosen; but all the elect of God, who are his own, by his choice of them, by the father's gift of them to him, by the purchase he made of them with his blood, and by his effectual call of them by his grace: these are also described by their condition and situation, *which were in the world*; which is not said to distinguish them from the saints that were in heaven, or to express their former state of unregeneracy, but their present situation in this vain and evil world, which is no objection to Christ's love to them; for though whilst in this world they carry about with them a body of sin and death, are liable to many snares and temptations, and are involved in the troubles, and exposed to the hatred of the world, yet are, and always will be, the objects of the love and care of Christ. The acts of his love to them are expressed both in time past, and to come: *having loved* them; so he did from everlasting, with a love of complacency and delight, which he shewed as early by espousing their persons to himself, by undertaking their cause, by taking the charge of their persons, and the care of both their grace and glory, and in time by assuming their nature; and having done all this, *he loved them to the end*; and which he shewed by dying for them: and continues to shew by interceding for them in heaven, by supplying them with all grace, and by preserving them from a final and total falling away; and he will at last introduce them into his kingdom and glory, when they shall be for ever with him; and so that love to them continues not only to the end of his own life, nor barely to the end of theirs, but to the end of the world, and for ever; and so εις τελος signifies, and is rendered *continually*, Luke xviii. 5. and in the Septuagint on Psal. ix. 6, 18. and xliv. 23. answers to לנצח, which signifies *for ever*; and is so translated here by the Ethiopic version.

Ver. 2. *And supper being ended*, &c.] Or rather *supper being*, or *it being supper-time*, for it was not ended; not the paschal supper, nor the Lord's supper, but the supper in Simon's house at Bethany, two days before the passover. There is no mention made in this whole chapter of the passover-supper, or of any of its rites: the washing of the disciples' feet was a peculiar action of our Lord's, and had no manner of regard to any usage among the Jews at such a time; nor was it ever usual with them, at the passover, to wash the feet of those that ate of it; there is not the least trace of any such custom in any of their writings: besides, it is said in so many words, in ver. 1. that this was *before the feast of the passover*: and by comparing it with Matt. xxvi. 2, 6. it appears to be two days before it; and so much time seems necessary to be allowed, for Judas to do what he did after this supper, in which he was first instigated to it: and that the feast of the passover was yet to come, when this supper was ended,

[p] Targum in Cant. i. 1, 7. Vid. Bereshit Rabba, sect. 96. fol. 84. 1. & Debarim Rabba, sect. 11. fol. 245. 2.

and Judas had taken the sop, and was bid to do quickly what he did, is manifest from the sense the disciples put upon those words of Christ, who thought he ordered him to get the necessaries for the feast, ver. 29. which can be understood of no other than the feast of the passover, which was at hand, and for which many things were to be got ready; to which may be added, that Satan's entering into Judas, and putting it into his heart to betray his master, and his covenanting with the high-priests to do it for such a sum, were before the passover-supper, as is clear from Luke xxii. 1, 3, 4, 7. Nor is it reasonable to suppose that Judas could meet that night, after the supper, with the chief priests, captains, and all the council, the great sanhedrim, who could not be together; since by the law of the passover, every head of a family was to be with his respective family: and if this could be supposed, yet there seems to be some time between this agreement, and the execution of it, in which he sought for a proper opportunity, Matt. xxvi. 16. Nor can it be thought there was time enough to do all he did, as to covenant with the chief priests, form his scheme for apprehending Christ, and get such a number of men together for that purpose, between the supper, and the time of night in which Christ was betrayed. Besides, certain it is, that Christ and his disciples arose from the place where he ate his supper, and went from thence elsewhere, John xiv. 31. which can't be understood very well of any other departure than his going from Bethany to Jerusalem, and not of his going from Jerusalem to the garden, which is afterwards spoken of as a distinct thing, John xviii. 1. And to say no more, there is not in this chapter the least hint of the institution of the Lord's supper, which all the other evangelists make mention of, when they relate the last passover of our Lord. The reader may be more fully satisfied of the truth of this by consulting Dr. Lightfoot on Matt. xxvi. 6. *The devil having now put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him;* the person Satan influenced and acted upon, for his purpose, was Judas Iscariot, Simon's son: whether this was Simon the Pharisee, or Simon the leper, in whose house Christ and his disciples were, or who he was, is not certain: was there any reason to think it might be Simon the tanner that was the father of Judas, or that either he or his father were tanners, I would venture to add one conjecture more to what has been made on Matt. x. 4. and xxvii. 5. concerning Judas's surname, Iscariot, as that it may come from *Iscortia*, which signifies a tanner's coat: for so it is said in the[*] Talmud, "what is איסקורטיא, *Iscortia?* says Rabba "bar Chanah, it is כיתונא דצלא, *a tanner's coat;*" a sort of a leathern garment, as the gloss says, which tanners put over their clothes. However, this man was an apostle of Christ's whom Satan tempted to betray him; so that we see that the highest office, and greatest gifts, can't secure men from the temptations of Satan: the manner in which he tempted him was, he *put*, or *cast* it *into his heart*: it was a dart, and a fiery one, he threw into him, into his very heart; which shews the access Satan has into, and the influence he has upon the minds of men: his end in this temptation was to work upon him *to betray* Christ, his Lord and master, who had chosen him to be an apostle of his, and had invested him with this high office, into the hands of his enemies, in order to be put to death. This was an affair determined by God, known by Christ, and which he foretold to his disciples; yet all this did not in the least excuse the malice of Satan, and the wickedness of Judas: it was an action devilish indeed, and which, one would think, could never have entered into his heart, had not the devil put it there; and this was at supper-time, whilst they were at table together, that this thought was darted into his mind; which is mentioned to shew, that no place and company can preserve persons from the evil suggestions of the devil, and to aggravate the sin of Judas, who when, and while he was eating bread with Christ, first thought of, and determined to lift up his heel against him: moreover, it was when the ointment was poured on the head of Christ, and whilst Judas was fretting at it, that Satan took the opportunity of his choler and wrath, to stir him up to so vile an action. This account is prefaced to Christ's washing the feet of his disciples, to shew the great composure of mind Christ was in, though he knew what was doing; and his wonderful condescension in washing the feet of so vile a creature, into whose heart Satan had already put it to betray him; and also his care of, and love to the rest of the disciples, when Satan had got possession of one of them.

Ver. 3. *Jesus knowing that the father,* &c.] These words express the sense Christ had of his own greatness and dignity as Mediator: *that the father had given all things into his hands;* all the persons of the elect, all blessings both of grace and glory for them, and power and authority over all other persons and things, to make them subservient to his purposes: and that he was *come from God;* had his mission and commission, as man, from God; did not come of himself, but he sent him: *and went to God;* or was going to him in a very little time, to sit at his right hand, to have a name above every name, and to have angels, authorities, and powers subject to him; which, as it shews his high esteem with his father, and his exalted character as Mediator, so it greatly illustrates his wonderful humility, that in the view, and under a sense and consideration of all this, he should condescend to wash the feet of his disciples; of which an account is given in the following verses.

Ver. 4. *He riseth from supper,* &c.] In the midst of the entertainment, and which no doubt was considerable, his mind being intent on something else; and it being his meat and drink to do his father's will, he rises and leaves his disciples sitting to finish their meal; and whilst they were murmuring at the waste of the ointment poured on his head, and were filled with indignation at it, as they all of them were, see Matt. xxvi. 8. he rises up to wash their feet; amazing patience and humility! *And laid aside his garments;* not all his garments, only his upper ones, that he might better dispatch the business he was going about; and which was an emblem of his laying aside, as it were for a while, his glory and dignity as the son of God,

[*] T. Bab. Nedarim, fol. 55. 2. Vid. Maimon. & Bartenora in Misn. Celim. c. 16. sect. 4. & Oholot, c. 8. sect. 1.

and of his appearing in the form of a servant. *And took a towel;* or *linen cloth*, λέντιον, the same with לונטית, in the Jerusalem Talmud [r]: *and girded himself;* with the towel, or linen cloth, which served both for a girdle, and after he had washed his disciples' feet, to wipe them with. This was a servile habit; so servants used to stand at the feet of their masters, girt about with a linen cloth [s]; and shews, that the son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister.

Ver. 5. *After that he poureth water into a bason*, &c.] This also was a servile work, and what properly belonged to servants to do; see John ii. 5, 6, 7. The bason to wash the feet in, called by the Jews עריבת רגלים, was fixed by their doctors to hold, *from two logs to nine kabs* [t]; not *from two logs to ten*, as Dr. Lightfoot has rendered the passage referred to. A *kab* held about a quart of our measure, and a *log* was the fourth part of a *kab*. *And began to wash the disciples' feet.* This custom of washing the feet was not used by the Jews at their passover, nor at their private entertainments, or common meals, but at the reception of strangers or travellers, which were just come off of a journey, whereby they had contracted dirt and filth, and was a servile work, never performed by superiors to their inferiors, but by inferiors to superiors; as by the wife to the husband, by the son to the father, and by the servant to his master; and was an instance of great humility in any others, as in Abigail, who said to David, *let thine handmaid be a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my Lord*, 1 Sam. xxv. 41. upon which place some Jewish Rabbins [u] have this note: "this she said, על צד הענוה, *by way of humility*, to shew, that it would have been sufficient "to her, if she became a wife to one of the servants "of David, and washed his feet, as was the custom "of a wife to her husband." But what a surprising instance of humility and condescension is this, that Christ, the Lord and master, should wash the feet of his disciples, when it was their proper work and business to have washed his? Though Dr. Lightfoot says, he does not remember that this was expected from the disciple toward his master, unless included in that rule, *that the disciple is to honour his master, more than his father;* whereas it was a fixed point [w] with the Jews, "that all works which a servant does "to his master, a disciple does to his master, except "unloosing his shoe." Since therefore it was the work of a servant to wash his master's feet, a disciple was obliged to do this to his master likewise: *and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded;* as he began he went through with his work; and having washed their feet, he wipes them clean; which may design the purity of the lives and conversations of the saints in general, and of the ministers of the Gospel in particular, whose feet are beautiful when shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace, and their conversations are as become the Gospel they preach; both which they have from Christ.

Ver. 6. *Then cometh he to Simon Peter*, &c.] After having washed the feet of some of the disciples, as is thought by some interpreters, and particularly the feet of Judas, without any repulse; though others are of opinion that he began with Peter, who modestly, and out of reverence to him, refuses to be washed by him: *and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet?* he speaks as one surprised and astonished that Christ should offer to do any such thing to him; that he, who was the son of the living God, should wash the feet of such a sinful man as he was; that those hands, with which he had wrought such miracles, as the opening the eyes of the blind, cleansing lepers, and raising the dead, should be employed in washing his defiled feet, the meaner and inferior parts of his body: this he thought was greatly below his dignity and character, and too much to be done by him to such a worthless creature as he was.

Ver. 7. *Jesus answered and said unto him*, &c.] Christ replies, *what I do, thou knowest not now:* Peter knew that he was about to wash his feet, and the rest of his disciples, but he did not know the meaning and mystery of it, what Christ designed by it, and what instruction they were to receive from it, *but thou shalt know hereafter;* as he did, when he had performed this service, and explained it to him. This may teach us, under dark providences, the meaning of which is not yet known by us, to wait the Lord's own time, to make things clear and plain to us, and in the mean time patiently submit to the divine will.

Ver. 8. *Peter saith unto him, thou shalt never wash my feet*, &c.] Before he had behaved with modesty, but now with obstinacy and perverseness; and though these expressions might arise from great reverence to Christ, yet they were wrong and rashly spoken. Peter ought to have been satisfied with Christ's reply, and have submitted, since though he then did not know the reason of such surprising conduct, he should hereafter. In order therefore to bring him to a compliance, *Jesus answered him, if I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me;* he does not say, if I wash not thy feet, but *thee*, meaning not with water, but with his blood, and by his spirit; for Christ uses the word *wash* here, not literally, but in a mystical and figurative sense, and takes an occasion, as he sometimes does, from things natural, to discourse of things spiritual: moreover, he does not say, thou hast no part *in* me, but thou hast no part *with* me, that is, no fellowship and communion with me; see 2 Cor. vi. 14, 15. and it is as if he should say, Peter, if I had not washed thee with the washing of regeneration by my spirit, and if I should not shed my blood for thee, and wash thee in it from thy sins, sad would be thy case; thou couldst have no communion with me in this world, nor any part and portion with me in the heavenly inheritance hereafter. Hence it may be observed, that unless a man is washed by Christ, he can have no part with him in this, or the other world. God's elect have a part, an interest in Christ through eternal, electing, and covenant grace, and in consequence of this are washed by Christ both with his blood, and with the washing of regeneration: and this is done in order that they may have a part with Christ, spiritual

[r] Sabbat, fol. 3. 1. & 12. 1.
[s] Suetonius in Caligula, c. 26.
[t] Misn. Yadaim, c. 4. sect. 1. Vid. Misn. Celim, c. 20. sect. 2.
[u] R. Levi ben Gersom & R. Samuel Laniado in 1 Sam. xxv. 41. Vid. T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 96. 1. & Maimon. Hilch. Ishot, c. 21. sect. 7.
[w] T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 96. 1.

fellowship with him now, and possess with him the undefiled inheritance, when time shall be no more.

Ver. 9. *Simon Peter saith unto him*, &c.] Being convinced of his mistake in not submitting to Christ, fearing he should be deprived of communion with him, than which nothing was more desirable to him, or more highly esteemed of by him, says, *Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head*; which shews the sense he had of the general pollution of his nature, and the need he stood in particularly of having his feet, hands, and head washed both as a minister, and a believer. By his *feet* may be meant, either the grace of faith, which is the foot of the soul, by which it goes to Christ, and walks on in him, and was not without its imperfections; or the affections of the mind, which are that to the soul, as feet are to the body; and when they move right, move heavenward, Godward, and Christward; but sometimes they are inordinate, and cleave to the things of this world: or the outward life and conversation is meant, which is attended with daily infirmities; and each of these need washing in the blood of Christ. His *hands* may design all his actions, works, services, duties, and performances, the hand being the instrument of action; and not only the hands of wicked men, but even of saints, need washing, their best righteousnesses being as filthy rags. By his *head* may be meant doctrines and principles imbibed in the mind, and expressed by the lips, which were not free from mistake and pollution, and needed purging and cleansing; for the disciples were not as yet clear from the prejudices of the Jewish nation, especially relating to the nature of the Messiah's kingdom.

Ver. 10. *Jesus saith to him, he that is washed*, &c.] Not he that is baptized; for every such person is not wholly clean, but he who is regenerated by the spirit of God, or rather, who is washed in the blood of Christ: such an one *is clean every whit*; is all over clean; not that he has no sin in him, nor commits any; but as he is washed in the blood of Christ, and justified by his righteousness, he's wholly and entirely clean in the sight of God; for he's justified from all things he could not be justified from by the law of Moses; all his sins are pardoned, and he is perfectly righteous before God; and so is perfectly clean through the word or sentence of justification and absolution pronounced on him, which must be understood in a forensic or law sense. And such an one *needeth not, save to wash his feet*; the feet of his life and conversation, which are continually gathering dirt, and need daily washing in the blood of Christ; and therefore recourse must be constantly had to that fountain to wash in, for sin and for uncleanness. The allusion is either to persons washed all over in a bath, who have no need to wash again, unless their feet, which may contract some soil in coming out of it; or to travellers, who have often need to wash their feet, though no other part, and such is the case of the children of God in this life; or rather to the priests, who having bathed themselves in the morning, needed not to wash again all the day, except their hands and feet, on certain occasions[x]. *And ye are clean, but not all*; which shews, that justifying and regenerating grace are common to all the true disciples of Christ; they are equally born again, alike justified, and are as clean one as another in the sight of God; not only Peter, but all the apostles, were clean, excepting one; there was one of them, Judas, who was not clean; and therefore he says, *but not all*: whence it may be observed, that among the purest societies, there are some unclean persons; there was a Judas, an unclean person among the pure disciples of Christ; there are chaff and tares among his wheat, goats among his sheep, and foolish virgins along with the wise ones.

Ver. 11. *For he knew who should betray him*, &c.] That is, Jesus, as Beza's ancient copy, and the Syriac and Persic versions read. This he knew from the beginning; not only from the beginning of his ministry, when he chose his twelve apostles, but from the beginning of time, yea, from everlasting; this being fixed by the determinate counsel of God, which he, as the omniscient God, was privy to; he knew what preparations were making, and how things were then working, in order to bring it about; he knew that Satan had already put it into Judas's heart, and that he had consented to it; *therefore, said he, ye are not all clean*: he does not mention his name, though he could have done so, it not being as yet proper to make so full a discovery of him, before the matter was ripe for execution; and also to put all the disciples upon examination of themselves.

Ver. 12. *So after he had washed their feet*, &c.] Not Peter's only, but the rest of the disciples also: some have thought, that he washed only the feet of some of them, and not all; but it seems, by this expression, that he performed this service to each of them: and when he had gone through it with every one of them: *and had taken his garments*, and put them on, *and was sat down again*; at the table with his disciples, supper not being yet ended; when having done his work as a servant, he re-assumes the air and authority of Lord and master, and begins to teach and instruct, into the design and use of what he had been doing, which he introduces by putting this question; *he said unto them, know ye what I have done to you?* They knew the outward action he had done to them, that he had washed their feet; but, as yet, they did not know the mystery of it, Christ's design in it, and what he would have them learn from it.

Ver. 13. *Ye call me Master and Lord*, &c.] רבי and מר, *Master* and *Lord*, were dignified titles among the Jews, which they frequently[y] gave to their doctors and men of learning, and are often to be met with in their writings: hence the disciples called Christ by these names, not out of flattery, but reverence of him, and esteem for him; nor are they blamed, but commended for it: *and ye say well, for so I am*; though he had acted the part of a servant in such a surprising manner, by washing their feet; yet he had not dropped and lost, but still maintains his place and authority as a *Master* to teach and instruct them, and as a *Lord* to rule and govern them.

[x] Misn. Yoma, c. 3. sect. 3.

[y] Vid. T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 8. 1. Derech Erets, c. 6. fol. 18. 2.

Ver. 14. *If I then your Lord and Master,* &c.] Christ argues from these titles and characters, which his disciples rightly gave him, and from what he had done to them, though he stood in such a superior relation to them, to their duty one towards another; that since, says he, *I have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet:* by which he does not mean barely, that they should perform this single action; but as this was an instance of humility and condescension, and doing a good office to strangers and travellers, and was afterwards an expression of love to the saints, see 1 Tim. v. 10. so he would teach them hereby, to behave in a spirit of humility and condescension to one another, to do every kind and good office, and by love to serve one another in all things.

Ver. 15. *For I have given you an example,* &c.] Christ is an example to his people, in many things; not in his miraculous performances and mediatorial work, but in the exercise of grace, of meekness, humility, love, patience, and the like; and in the discharge of duty, in submission to ordinances, and in attending on them; and in the several duties, both to them that are without, and to them that are within; and also in his sufferings and death; not that he died merely as an example, but likewise in the room and stead of his people; but here he is spoken of as an example, in a particular instance: *that ye should do as I have done to you;* wash one another's feet, as he had washed theirs; which is not to be understood literally and singly of this action, as though this was an ordinance binding upon all persons, in all places, and to be attended to at certain stated times, as has been the practice of some: it was so understood by the church at Milain, and there practised; and this custom was continued and defended by St. Ambrose, even though not received by the church of Rome; in some places the bishop used to wash the feet of those that were baptized, which in process of time being thought sufficient, instead of baptism, was forbidden by the council at Eliberis. In imitation of this, the pope every year, on Thursday in the passion week, washes the feet of twelve men; and it is an anniversary ceremony performed by the kings of England and France, to wash the feet of twelve poor people, in commemoration of this action of Christ's: but our Lord is not to be understood literally, nor of any thing that was to be done once a year, but of what was daily and constantly to be practised; and which was to be done not by one only, to all the rest, but what they were mutually to do; what they were to do to one another; for the thing signified, reaches to, and is obligatory upon all Christians. Our Lord's meaning is, that as he had, by this action, given them an example of humility, condescension, and love; so they should exercise these graces, and perform such kind offices to one another, and to all their fellow-Christians.

Ver. 16. *Verily, verily, I say unto you,* &c.] This is a strong way of asseveration, and is used when any thing of moment and importance, and worthy of attention and observation is delivered. *The servant is not greater than his Lord;* it is enough that he be as his Lord, which was a common phrase among the Jews; see the notes on Matt. x. 24, 25. and as it is there made use of, to inform the disciples they must expect persecution, and to encourage them to bear it with patience; here it is designed to engage to humility; for if a master condescends to perform such an action, much more may a servant: *neither he that is sent, is greater than he that sent him.* This is also a way of speaking in use among the Jews; "R. Meir says[z], who is greatest, he that keeps, or he that is kept? from what is written in Psal. xci. 11. he that is kept, is greater than he that keeps: says R. Judah, which is greatest, he that carries, or he that is carried? from what is written in ver. 12. he that is carried, is greater than he that carries: says R. Simeon, from what is written, in Isa. vi. 8. הוי המשלח גדול מן המשתלח, *he that sends, is greater than he that is sent.*" Which is the very phrase here used by Christ; and his meaning is this, that if it was not below him, who had chose and called, and sent them forth as his apostles, to wash their feet, they who were sent by him, should not disdain to wash one another's.

Ver. 17. *If ye know these things,* &c.] The duties they owed to him, and one another; those kind offices of love and respect to each other; the humility, condescension, and brotherly love, which ought to be in them, and of which he had given them an example; *happy are ye if ye do them;* for the bare theory, or a mere speculative knowledge of these things, is not sufficient; not he that knows and does not, but he that knows and does his master's will, is blessed; he's blessed with communion with his Lord, and shall hereafter enter into his joy, with *well done good and faithful servant.* There's an happiness *in* doing well, and which follows *on* it, though not *for* it, in a way of merit; on the other hand, persons who know and do not, are very unhappy: the Jews have a saying[a], "שהלמד שלא לעשות, *he that learns but not to do,* it would have been better for him, if he had never been created; and says R. Jochanan, he that learns but not to do, it would have been better for him if his secundine had been turned upon his face, and he had never come into the world."

Ver. 18. *I speak not of you all.*] What he had before said on the one hand, *ye are all clean,* for one of them was not; and on the other hand, when he put an *if* upon, or seemed to doubt of their knowing and doing these things; or what he was about to say concerning his being betrayed, this he did not speak of them all: *I know whom I have chosen;* not to apostleship, for they were all chosen to that, Judas as well as the rest, but to grace and glory, to everlasting salvation and happiness; of these he was well assured, that they were all clean, pure, and spotless, in the sight of God; were truly regenerated by the spirit of God, and had an experimental and practical knowledge of the things he recommended by his example, and would be the happy persons he spake of; *but* he observes, so it is, and will come to pass, that there is one of you which will betray me: *that the Scripture may be fulfilled* Psal. xli. 9. as it literally[b] was in

[z] Bereshit Rabba, fol. 68. 1.
[a] Hieros. Beracot, fol. 3. 2.
[b] See my Book of the Prophecies of the Messiah, &c. p. 168, &c.

Judas's betraying Christ. The passage is by many interpreted either of Ahitophel, or of some other counsellor of Absalom's, or of Absalom himself; and is applied to their conduct, with respect to David, at the time of their rebellion against him; and which is thought to be typical of the treatment Christ met with from an apostle of his: but we don't find that, at the time of that rebellion, David was sick, or had any disease upon him, from whence they might hope for his death; it does not seem, as though it could be literally understood of David at all, and of the behaviour of any of his servants; but most properly of David's son, the Messiah, Jesus, with whom every thing in the psalm agrees; and particularly this verse, which so plainly describes Judas, and expresses his base ingratitude, hypocrisy, and malice: the former part of the text is not cited, *yea, mine own familiar friend*, or *the man of my peace, in whom I trusted;* though it fully agrees with him, he being admitted to great familiarity with Christ, and lived peaceably with him; and who was intrusted by him with the bag, into which the money was put, which was ministered, either for the sustenance of him and his apostles, or for the use of the poor: but our Lord thought fit to cite no more of it than what follows, that being sufficiently descriptive of him; and especially at this present time, when he was at table with his Lord. *He that eateth bread with me, hath lift up his heel against me;* he sat down with him at table frequently, and ate bread with him; and was doing so, when Satan put it into his heart to betray him; which is strongly expressed, by *lifting up* his *heel against* him; and sets forth the ingratitude, wickedness, and cruelty of him; who, like an unruly horse, that has thrown his rider, spurns at him, to destroy him; and also the insidious manner in which he did it; he supplanted, he tripped him, as wrestlers do, in order to cast him down to the ground, and then trample upon him, and triumph over him: he first מארב, *laid snares for him*, as Jarchi explains the phrase used in the *psalm*, and then הגדיל, *he magnified his heel*, he behaved proudly and haughtily to him.

Ver. 19. *Now I tell you before it come*, &c.] That is, gave them notice of this before-hand, that one of them should betray him: *that when it is come to pass;* and they had seen it fulfilled exactly to a tittle, and according to this Scripture: *ye may believe that I am he;* the Lord God omniscient, who knows and declares things before they come to pass, just as they do come to pass, which none but the eternal God can do; and that he was the Saviour and Redeemer, the Messiah spoken of and promised, the very person prophesied of, in Psal. xli. For that whole *psalm* is applicable to Jesus Christ, the true Messiah; in ver. 1, 2, 3. the happiness of such is declared, who *consider the poor;* the Messiah, in his low estate of humiliation, who became poor for the sake of his people; in ver. 5. his enemies are represented as wishing for his death; their hypocrisy, perfidy, and vile designs upon his life, are aptly described in ver. 6, 7. which they executed by suborning false witnesses, bringing a wrong charge, דבר בליעל, *a wicked accusation against him*, ver. 8. which succeeded, to the taking away of his life; and then they are introduced as triumphing over him, lying dead in the grave, whom they believed would never rise more; but in this they were mistaken, for he was raised up again; for which he prays, ver. 10. that he might requite them, as he did, by destroying their city, temple, and nation; and the whole is concluded with thankfulness to God, for raising and exalting him, and setting him before his face for ever, ver. 11, 12, 13. There is but one passage in it, which has any difficulty in applying it to Christ, and that is, ver. 4. where he is spoken of as having sinned against the Lord; but the words may be rendered thus, *heal my soul, i. e.* deliver me out of my sorrows and afflictions, כי חטאתי לך, *because I have made an offering for sin unto thee;* and well agrees with Christ, who was to make, and has made his soul an offering for sin.

Ver. 20. *Verily, verily, I say unto you*, &c.] You may assure yourselves of the truth of what I am going to say, and which I say for your comfort and encouragement: *he that receiveth whomsoever I send, receiveth me, and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me;* I have sent you in my name to preach the Gospel; you are my ambassadors, and you will be honourably received by many; and which I shall regard and take notice of, and esteem, as though they had received me; even as my father has sent me into this world, as a Saviour and Redeemer, a prophet, priest, and King; and as many as have received me, are looked upon by my father, as having received him: in short, such as cordially receive and embrace the ministers of the Gospel, receive Christ, in whose name they come, and whom they preach; and such who receive Christ, as preached and held forth in the everlasting Gospel, receive the father of Christ; and partake of his love, grace, and kindness, shewn forth in the mission and gift of Christ to them: Christ, as Mediator, personated his father that sent him; and the ministers of Christ personate him; so that what is done to them, either in a way of reception or rejection, he takes as done to himself: it is a common saying among the Jews[c], ששלוחו של אדם כמותו, *that the messenger of a man is as himself.*

Ver. 21. *When Jesus had thus said*, &c.] Having spoken of the mission of his disciples by him, of their reception among men, and the notice that would be taken of it by him: *he was troubled in spirit;* in his soul, which shews him to be truly and really man, and to have an human soul, which some have denied; and that to be of like passions with ours, only without sin: he was troubled, not at what he had said, but at what he was about to say concerning the betrayer; and that not so much on his own account, because of the danger, the sorrows, and sufferings he should be exposed to, as on account of the horrible blackness of the crime, and the vengeance that would fall upon the criminal; and being thus inwardly distressed at this affair, *he testified and said:* he spake out openly and plainly, what he had before secretly intimated, and that with the greatest certainty: *verily, verily, I say unto you;* 'tis truth, it may be believed, however un-

[c] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 34. 2. Kiddushin, fol. 41. 2. & 42. 1. & 43. 1. Bava Metzia, fol. 96. 1.

expected and strange it may seem to be: *that one of you shall betray me*: to the chief priests and elders, in order to be put to death.

Ver. 22. *Then the disciples looked one to another*, &c.] As persons surprised and astonished, and as scarce crediting what was said; not having had the least suspicion of any one among them, that could be guilty of such an action; and expressing by their looks their detestation of, and indignation at so horrible an iniquity: or they looked one to another, to observe if they could, whether the countenance of any one would discover who the person was; *doubting of whom he spake*; not being able to conceive and imagine, who the person was he had in view; from whence it appears, that Judas, to this time, had behaved outwardly as well as any of the other disciples; he had given no occasion, by his conduct, to suspect him more than any other: upon this broad intimation, or rather strong protestation which Christ made, that one of them should betray him, their eyes were not turned to him directly and particularly, but to one another.

Ver. 23. *Now there was leaning on Jesus's bosom*, &c.] Not pressing upon that part of Christ's body, which would have been irreverent in John, and troublesome to Christ; but leaning at table upon his bed or couch, on which he lay; and which was next to, and just before Christ; so that he was very near unto, and seemed to lie in the bosom of Christ; as such are said to do, who sit next at table to another. The posture of the Jews at table, was either *sitting* or *lying*, and a difference they make between these two; "if, "say they [d], היו יושבין, *they sat* to eat, every one asked "a blessing for himself; but if הסיבו, *they lay down*, "one asked a blessing for them all." This lying down was not on their backs, nor on their right side, but on their left; for they say [e], that "lying down on the back, "is not called הסיבה, *lying down*; and lying on the "right side, is not called lying down." And the reason given is [f], because they have need of the right hand to eat with; but as they elsewhere [g] observe, "they "used to eat lying along, leaning on the left side, their "feet to the ground, and every man on a single couch." Would you know the order in which they lay, take the account as they have given it [h]; "when there were "but two couches, the principal person lay first, and "the second to him above him; and when there were "three, the principal person lay in the middle, the se-"cond to him above him, and the third below him; "and if he would talk with him, he raised himself "upright, and sitting upright he talked with him; "that is, as the gloss explains it, if the principal per-"son was desirous to talk with him that was second "to him, he must raise himself up from his lying "down, and sit upright; for all the while he is lean-"ing, he can't talk with him, because he that is se-"cond to him, is behind the head of the principal "person, and the face of the principal person is turned "to the other side; and 'tis better for the second to "sit below him, that he may hear his words, whilst "he is leaning." The form in which Christ and his disciples sat or lay at table, we may conceive was this [i]; a table was placed in the middle, and as many beds or couches round it, as there were persons; Christ the principal and most worthy person lay first, with his head toward the table, his face somewhat turned from it, leaning on his left elbow upon the couch; in this posture lay Jesus, upon the first couch; in the same posture lay John, in the next to him, and just before him; the hinder part of his head being towards, and near the breast and bosom of Jesus; whence he is said to lean upon it: now to lie next to the principal person, was a very great honour, as well as a mark of great affection; and for John to lie next to Jesus, and as it were to lean on his bosom, shewed how much he was respected and honoured by him; and therefore John modestly conceals his name, and only says, *one of his disciples whom Jesus loved*; Christ, as the son of God, and surety of his people, loved his true disciples, as he does all his elect, alike; not one more than the other; but as man, he had a particular affection for this disciple, and therefore admitted him near his person, and was very familiar with him.

Ver. 24. *Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him*, &c.] Peter perhaps lay at a distance from Christ, or in some such position, that he could not whisper to him himself; and besides, knew that John might use more freedom, as he was admitted to more familiarity with him; and being at some distance also from him, he *beckoned* to him; which was usually done at meals, when they could not, by reason of their posture, discourse together: this being the case, מחוי ליה במחוג, *they made signs*, by nodding to one another [k]; that is, as the gloss explains it, they pointed with their hands and fingers, and by nodding or beckoning; such a method Peter took, signifying his desire, *that he should ask who it should be of whom he spake*: which he did not out of mere curiosity, but from an honest intention and pure zeal, that he, with the rest, might shew their abhorrence of such a person, and avoid him; and do all that lay in their power to hinder him from putting his designs into execution, and that the innocent might be free from all suspicion.

Ver. 25. *He then lying on Jesus' breast*, &c.] Being on the couch just before Jesus, with his back to him, he bends backwards, and falling on Jesus' breast, whispers in his ear: *and saith unto him, Lord, who is it?* using his interest in Christ, and making thus free with him, in compliance with Peter's request; and he was no doubt desirous himself of knowing who the person was.

Ver. 26. *Jesus answered, he it is*, &c.] Jesus replied, by whispering; for had he spoken out, the rest could not have been so ignorant, as they still continued, after the sign was given: Christ, I say, whispered to John, and told him by what sign he might know the person, and that it was he, *to whom*, says he, *I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it*. This was not the passover-sop, which was dipped into a sauce made of various things, called by the Jews חרוסת; for this was not the *paschal* supper, but a common supper at a private house,

[d] Misn. Beracot, c. 6. sect. 6.
[e] T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 108. 1.
[f] Gloss. in ib.
[g] Gloss. in T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 46. 2. & Bartenora in Misn. Beracot, c. 6. sect. 6.

[h] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 46. 2.
[i] Vid. Alstorphium de lectis veterum, p. 109, 110.
[k] T. Bab. Beracot ib.

two days before the feast of the passover; but this sop, or rather crust of bread, which whether dipped into a liquid, or only a piece of dry bread, which Christ dipped his hand into the dish for, and took, as some think, is not very material, was a piece of common bread, which Christ took up, without regard to any custom, or ceremony used at any feasts, and gave it to the betrayer, as a sign by which John might know him: *and when he had dipped the sop*: either into some sort of broth, or any other liquid, or had dipped his hand into the dish for it: *he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon*: so called, to distinguish him from another apostle, whose name was Judas, and was then present.

Ver. 27. *And after the sop, Satan entered into him,* &c.] After he had taken and eaten the sop, or crust of bread, by which he was pointed out to be the betrayer, *Satan entered into him*; possessed his body, and filled his mind, and stirred him up more eagerly to pursue with vigour his wicked design. The Jews have a saying[1], that "no man commits a transgression, "until נכנס בו רוח שטות, *a spirit of madness enters* "*into him.*" Such an evil spirit entered into Judas, which pushed him on to commit this horrid iniquity: *then said Jesus to him, that thou doest, do quickly*: this he said, not as approving his wicked design, and exhorting him to it as a laudable action, but rather as deriding him, having nothing to care about, or fear from him; or as upbraiding him with his perfidy and wickedness, and signifying that he should take no methods to prevent him, though he fully knew what was in his heart to do; and it seems also to express the willingness of Christ, and his eager and hearty desire to suffer and die for his people, in order to obtain salvation for them.

Ver. 28. *Now no man at the table,* &c.] Not one of those who lay upon the couches at the table, excepting John, to whom the signal was given: *knew for what intent he spake this unto him*; and perhaps he might not know the meaning of his last words, that he spoke concerning the act of betraying him; nor did not imagine that the thing was so near and so speedily to be done, as it was.

Ver. 29. *For some of them thought,* &c.] This was the thought of some of the disciples, it may be of all of them but John; *because Judas had the bag*; which was for the common supply of Christ and his disciples, and for the relief of the poor; see the note on ch. xii. 6. *That Jesus had said unto him, buy those things that we have need of against the feast*; the feast of the passover, which was to be two days after; and shews, that this was not the passover which Christ now ate with his disciples: *or that he should give something to the poor*: for whom Christ cared, and had a hearty concern, and for whom Judas had very little, notwithstanding his high pretensions.

Ver. 30. *He then having received the sop,* &c.] As soon as ever he received it, he *went immediately out*; fearing lest an entire discovery should be made, and he be prevented accomplishing his design; or being more violently stirred up to it by Satan, who after the sop entered into him, he directly went from Bethany to Jerusalem, to the chief priests there, in order to consult and agree upon the delivery of him into their hands: *and it was night*: this circumstance is added, to shew how eagerly he was bent upon it; that though it was night, it did not hinder or discourage him from setting out on his journey to Jerusalem; and as this was a work of darkness, the night was the fittest time for it, and was a proper emblem of the blackness of the crime he was going to perpetrate.

Ver. 31. *Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said,* &c.] Christ and his true disciples being together alone, he used a greater freedom of conversation with them, and entered into some discourse about his sufferings and death; with a view to give them some instructions about their future conduct and behaviour, and in order to support them under the loss of his presence; and tells them in the first place, *that now is the son of man glorified*: by *the son of man*, he means himself; a phrase he often uses, when speaking of himself; this was a title the Messiah went by in prophecy; was true in fact of Jesus, who was the son of Abraham, and the son of David, and expresses the truth of his humanity; and he the rather chooses to use it now, because he is speaking of a glorification, which he in his divine nature was incapable of, and which regards either time past, present, or to come: the meaning may be, either that he had been already glorified by his doctrines and miracles; or that he was now glorified, by discovering the traitor, before he made one single overt-act towards betraying him; or that in a very short time he should be glorified, meaning at his death; see John xvii. 1. But how was he then glorified, when it was an accursed one, and attended with so much ignominy and reproach? he was then glorified by his father, who supported him in it, and carried him through it; so as that he conquered all his enemies, and obtained eternal salvation for his people: moreover, the death of Christ was not only his way to glory, but was attended with many wonderful and surprising events; as the darkness, the earthquake, the rending of the rocks, and vails of the temple, and the like; and it was also glorious in the eyes of his father, because hereby his purposes were accomplished, his covenant-transactions brought about, his law and justice were satisfied, and the salvation of his people finished: *and God is glorified in him*. The glory of God was great, in the salvation of his elect by the death of Christ; for hereby his wisdom and power, his truth and faithfulness, his justice and holiness, as well as his love, grace, and mercy, were glorified.

Ver. 32. *If God be glorified in him,* &c.] Seeing this is a certain truth, is indisputably matter of fact, that all the perfections of God are glorified in Christ, by his sufferings and death: *God shall also glorify him in himself*; either *with himself*, with his own glory, which was promised to Christ, and which he had before the world was, and for which he prays, John xvii. 5. or *by himself*; by his own power, in raising him from the dead, setting him at his own right hand, and crowning him with glory and honour: *and shall straightway glorify him*; this he'll do very quickly, he'll not leave

[1] T. Bab. Sota, fol. 3. 1. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 112. 1. & 117. 2.

him in the grave, nor suffer him to see corruption; he'll raise him again the third day, and give him glory.

Ver. 33. *Little children, yet a little while I am with you*, &c.] Christ having removed the scandal of his death, by observing, that both he and his father would be glorified by it, begins more freely to open his mind to his disciples, and acquaint them with it; whom he addresses in the most kind, tender, and affectionate manner, *little children*, expressing the relation which subsisted between them, of which he was not unmindful; his great affection for them, his consideration of their weakness, and sympathy with them on that account; who were very ill able to bear his departure, which he now thought high time to acquaint them with, that it would be very shortly: it was but a little while he was to be with them, a few days more; the time of his departure was at hand, his hour was as it were come, and the last sands were dropping: *ye shall seek me*: as persons in distress, under great concern, not knowing what to do, or where to go: *and as I said unto the Jews*, ch. vii. 33, 34. *whither I go ye cannot come, so now I say unto you*: but with this difference, whereas the unbelieving Jews, who died in their sins, could never come whither he went, these his disciples, though they could not come now, yet they should hereafter, all of them, as well as Peter, ver. 36.

Ver. 34. *A new commandment I give unto you*, &c.] As parents, when they take their leave of their children, in their dying moments, give them proper instructions and orders, and lay their dying injunctions on them, so Christ taking his leave of his disciples, gives them his; which were, that they *love one another*: as brethren in the same family, children of the same father, and fellow-disciples with each other; by keeping and agreeing together, praying one for another, bearing one another's burdens, forbearing and forgiving one another, admonishing each other, and building up one another in faith and holiness: and this he calls *a new commandment*; that is, a very excellent one; as a *new name*, and a *new song*, denote excellent ones; or it is so called, because it is set forth by Christ, in a new edition of it, and newly and more clearly explained, than before; and being enforced with a new argument and pattern, never used before, *as I have loved you*; and to be observed in a new manner, not *in the oldness of the letter, but in the newness of the spirit*: besides, though this commandment, as to the matter of it, is the same with that of Moses, Lev. xix. 18. yet it takes in more, and *new* objects; since by *neighbour* there, seems to be meant *the children of their people*, the Jews; and so they understood it only of their countrymen, and of proselytes at furthest, whereas this reaches to any *other* person; see Rom. xiii. 8. and as the measure, as well as the motive is new, for it is not now *as thyself*, but *as I have loved you*, the Jew has no reason to object as he does [m], to its being called a *new commandment*: and its being *new*, carries in it a reason or argument, why it should be observed, as does also the following clause; *as I have loved you, that ye also love one another*; than which, nothing can, or should, more strongly engage to it: as Christ has loved his people freely, notwithstanding all their unworthiness and ungratefulness, so should they love one another, though there may be many things in them observable, which are disagreeable; as Christ loves all his children without any distinction, so should they love one another, whether poor or rich, weaker or stronger, lesser or greater believers; and as Christ loves them not in word only, but in deed and in truth, so should they love one another with a pure heart fervently, and by love serve one another.

Ver. 35. *By this shall all men know*, &c.] Not only by this you yourselves will know that ye have passed from death to life, that the true work of grace is begun upon your hearts; nor only by this will you know one another to be Christians; but by this all men, even the men of the world will know, *that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another*: and own and acknowledge it, as Tertullian [n] says the very Heathens did in his time; who would say, when they saw the Christians pass along the streets, and meet and express their affection to each other, *see how they love one another*: would to God the same was as observable now. The distinguishing badge and character of a disciple of Christ, is not any outward garb, or any austerities of life, by which the disciples of John and of the Pharisees were known; nor were the ordinary nor extraordinary gifts of the spirit, bestowed upon the disciples of Christ, what distinguished them as such; since those who were not truly his disciples, had these bestowed on them; but love to one another, brotherly love was the distinguishing character, and this is another reason or argument enforcing a regard unto it.

Ver. 36. *Simon Peter said unto him*, &c.] One might have expected that Peter would have taken some notice of what Christ said last, about love to one another; but he passes over it, and takes no manner of notice of it; which did not arise from inattention to it, or from any dislike of it, or disaffection to it; for it appears from his whole conduct and writings, that he had the utmost regard for it; he very frequently presses it, and most fervently practised it; but having observed some words which dropped from Christ's lips, *whither I go ye cannot come*, ver. 33. his mind was intent upon them, was uneasy about them, and very much wanted to know the meaning of them; and as soon as Christ had done speaking, took the opportunity to put the question: *Lord, whither goest thou?* imagining he was going to some distant place in the country, and which was difficult of access; whereby he betrayed his weakness and ignorance, as the Jews did, ch. vi. 35. *Jesus answered him, whither I go thou canst not follow me now*: which words imply, that Christ was going somewhere in a little time; he was going to the garden to surrender himself up into the hands of his enemies, and hither Peter could, and did follow him, and therefore is not here meant; he was going to die for his people, in order to take away the sting of death and the curse of the law, and work out salvation for them; he was going to his father in heaven, to receive gifts for men, and to send the Comforter; to open the way to heaven, take possession of

[m] R. Isaac Chizzuk Emuna, l. 2. c. 54. p. 444.

[n] Apolog. c. 39.

it, and prepare it for his saints; to plead the cause, and transact the business of his dear children; and to receive a kingdom for himself, and return: now hither, as yet, Peter could not follow him; for his time of suffering death was not yet come; Christ had some other work for him to do first; he must open the door of faith to the Gentiles, and preach the Gospel to them: *but thou shalt follow me afterwards;* when thy time is come, and thou hast done the work allotted for thee, thou shalt follow me by dying for me; and thou shalt follow me into my kingdom and glory, and be for ever with me: all the saints shall follow Christ to heaven, who is their forerunner for them entered; and as sure as he is there, so sure shall they be also; the counsels of God are unalterable, the covenant of grace is firm and sure, the blood of Christ can never be spilled in vain, his prayers and preparations cannot be fruitless, nor the work of the spirit be ever lost; wherefore not one of those who are given to Christ, and come to him, and follow him here, but shall follow him hereafter.

Ver. 37. *Peter said unto him,* &c.] Not understanding Christ's answer, and being dissatisfied with it, inquires: *Lord, why cannot I follow thee now?* is the place inaccessible? are the difficulties in the way to it insuperable? the roughness of the road, or the dangers of it, will not discourage me; I am ready to go through the greatest dangers and difficulties, to follow thee: yea, *I will lay down my life for thy sake;* whatever enemies I should meet with in following thee, would not dismay me; I would readily hazard my life, and cheerfully lay it down in defence of thee.

Ver. 38. *Jesus answered him, wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake,* &c.] Christ speaks these words as questioning, not Peter's sincerity, but his strength; or as deriding him, or rather pitying him; as if he should say, thou poor vain self-sufficient man, thou dost not know what thou talkest of: *verily, verily, I say unto thee, the cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice;* not that Peter should deny him three times, before the cock crowed once; for certain it is, that Peter denied Christ but once, before the cock crew, Mark xiv. 68. but the meaning is, that before the cock had done crowing, or within the time of cock-crowing, he should deny him thrice: whence it follows, that there is no necessity of concluding from hence, that this night was the passover night, and the night in which Judas betrayed Christ, and Peter denied him, but was two nights before; and therefore it is not said here, as by the other evangelists, *this day,* or *this night,* or *this day, even this night thou shalt deny me;* only in general *before the cock crow,* or within the time of cock-crowing: so that it appears, that Peter twice expressed his confidence, in laying down his life for Christ; once at the supper in Simon's house at Bethany, two days before the *passover,* and again at the passover-supper in Jerusalem; and as often Christ rebuked his confidence by this expression, only varying it as the different times required, and therein gave a full proof of his omniscience.

CHAP. XIV.

Ver. 1. LET *not your heart be troubled,* &c.] In some copies this verse begins thus, *and he said to his disciples;* and certain it is, that these words are addressed to them in general, Peter being only the person our Lord was discoursing with in the latter part of the preceding chapter; but turning, as it were, from him, he directs his speech to them all. There were many things which must needs lie heavy upon, and greatly depress the minds of the disciples; most of all the loss of Christ's bodily presence, his speedy departure from them, of which he had given them notice in the preceding chapter; also the manner in which he should be removed from them, and the circumstances that should attend the same, as that he should be betrayed by one of them, and denied by another; likewise the poor and uncomfortable situation they were likely to be left in, without any sight or hope of that temporal kingdom being erected, which they had been in expectation of; and also the issue and consequence of all this, that they would be exposed to the hatred and persecutions of men. Now in the multitude of these thoughts within them, Christ comforts them, bids them be of good heart, and exhorts them to an exercise of faith on God, and on himself, as the best way to be rid of heart-troubles, and to have peace: *ye believe in God, believe also in me;* which words may be read and interpreted different ways: either thus, *ye believe in God, and ye believe in me;* and so are both propositions alike, and express God and Christ to be equally the object of their faith; and since therefore they had so good a foundation for their faith and confidence, they had no reason to be uneasy: or thus, *believe in God, and believe in me;* and so both are exhortations to exercise faith alike on them both, as being the best antidote they could make use of against heart-troubles: or thus, *believe in God, and ye believe in me;* and so the former is an exhortation, the latter a proposition: and the sense is, put your trust in God, and you will also trust in me, for I am of the same nature and essence with him; I and my father are one; so that if you believe in one, you must believe in the other: or thus, and so our translators render them, *ye believe in God, believe also in me;* and so the former is a proposition, or an assertion, and the latter is an exhortation grounded upon it: you have believed in God as faithful and true in all his promises, though you have not seen him; believe in me also, though I am going from you, and shall be absent for a while; this you may be assured of, that whatever I have said shall be accomplished. The words considered either way are a full proof of the true deity of Christ, since he is represented as equally the object of faith with God the father, and lay a foundation for solid peace and comfort in a view of afflictions and persecutions in the world.

Ver. 2. *In my father's house are many mansions,* &c.]

This he says to draw off their minds from an earthly kingdom to an heavenly one; to point out the place to them whither he was going, and to support them with the views and hopes of glory under all their troubles. By his *father's house* is meant heaven; see 2 Cor. v. 1. which is of his father's building, where he has, and will have all his family. This Christ says partly to reconcile the minds of his disciples to his departure from them, and partly to strengthen their hope of following him thither; since it was his father's, and their father's house whither he was going, and in which *are many mansions*: abiding or dwelling places; *mansions* of love, peace, joy, and rest, which always remain: and there are *many* of them, which does not design different degrees of glory; for since the saints are all loved with the same love, bought with the same price, justified with the same righteousness, and are equally the sons of God, their glory will be the same. But it denotes fulness and sufficiency of room for all his people; for the many ordained to eternal life, for whom Christ gave his life a ransom, and whose blood is shed for the remission of their sins, whose sins he bore, and whom he justifies by his knowledge; who receive him by faith, and are the many sons he'll bring to glory. And this is said for the comfort of the disciples, who might be assured from hence, that there would be room not only for himself and Peter, whom he had promised should follow him hereafter, but for them all. Very agreeable to this way of speaking are many things in the Jewish writings: "says R. Isaack[o], how many מדורין "על מדורין, *mansions upon mansions*, are there for the "righteous in that world? and the uppermost mansion of them all is the love of their Lord." Moreover, they say[p], that "in the world to come every righteous man shall have מדור, *a mansion*, to himself." Sometimes they[q] speak of *seven* mansions (a number of perfection) being prepared for the righteous in the other world, though entirely ignorant of the person by whom these mansions are prepared: who here says, *if it were not so, I would have told you, I go to prepare a place for you*. This expresses the certainty of it, that his father had a house, and in it were many mansions, room enough for all his people, or he would have informed them otherwise, who must needs know the truth of these things, since he came from thence; and who never deceives with vain hopes of glory; and whatever he says is truth, and to be depended on; every thing he here delivers; both what he said before, and also what follows: *I go to prepare a place for you*: heaven is a kingdom prepared by the father for his saints, from the foundation of the world; and again, by the presence and intercession of Christ, who is gone before, and is as a forerunner entered into it, and has took possession of it in the name of his people; and by his own appearance there for them with his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, he is, as it were, fitting up these mansions for their reception, whilst they are by his spirit and grace fitting and preparing for the enjoyment of them.

Ver. 3. *And if I go and prepare a place for you*, &c.] Seeing I am going to prepare, and will prepare a place for you, of the truth of which you may be fully assured: *I will come again*; either by death, or in person a second time, here on earth: *and receive you unto myself*; I'll take you up with me to heaven; I'll receive you into glory: *that where I am there you may be also*; and behold my glory, and be for ever with me, and never part more.

Ver. 4. *And whither I go ye know*, &c.] They might have known, at least, whither he was going, since he had spoke of his father's house, and of his going to prepare a place for them there, and doubtless had some knowledge thereof, though very confused and imperfect: *and the way ye know*: this also they might have known from some expressions of his, that the way to his father's house lay through sufferings and death, in which way they also were to follow him to his kingdom and glory. Though these words may be with an interrogation, *and whither I go do ye know? and the way do ye know?* which best agrees with Thomas's answer, and removes all appearance of contradiction between Christ's words and his.

Ver. 5. *Thomas saith unto him*, Lord. *&c.*] Who was one of his apostles, and here betrays his ignorance, as elsewhere his unbelief; and not only speaks for himself, but for the rest of the apostles, of whom he judged by himself; and who, it may be, might understand things better than himself, though their knowledge at present was but small: *we know not whither thou goest*; though he had but just told them of his father's house, and of his going to prepare a place for them: *and how can we know the way?* for if we don't know the place, 'tis not reasonable to think we should know the way to it. Thomas seemed to have no other notion than that Christ was talking of some particular place in Judea, whither he was going, and of the road to it.

Ver. 6. *Jesus saith unto him, I am the way*, &c.] Our Lord takes the opportunity of this discourse about the place he was going to, and the way unto it, more fully to instruct his disciples concerning himself, saying, *I am the way*; Christ is not merely the way, as he goes before his people as an example; or merely as a prophet, pointing out unto them, by his doctrine, the way of salvation; but he is the way of salvation itself by his obedience and sacrifice; nor is there any other; he is the way of his father's appointing, and which is entirely agreeable to the perfections of God, and suitable to the case and condition of sinners; he is the way to all the blessings of the covenant of grace; and he is the right way into a Gospel church-state here; no one comes rightly into a church of Christ but by faith in him; and he is the way to heaven: he is entered into it himself by his own blood, and has opened the way to it through himself for his people: he adds, *the truth*; he is not only true, but truth itself: this may regard his person and character; he is the true God, and eternal life; truly and really man; as a prophet he taught the way of God in truth; as a priest, he is a faithful, as well as a merciful one, true and faithful to him that appointed him; and as a King, just and true are all his ways and administrations: he is the

[o] Zohar in Deut. fol. 113. 1.

[p] Præfat. ad Sepher Raziel, fol. 2. 1. Nishmat Chayim, fol. 26. 2. & 27. 1.

[q] T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 75. 1. Nishmat Chayim, fol. 32. 2. Midrash Tillim in Galatin. l. 12. c. 6.

sum and substance of all the truths of the Gospel; they are all full of him, and centre in him; and he is the truth of all the types and shadows, promises and prophecies of the Old Testament; they have all their accomplishment in him; and he is the true way, in opposition to all false ones of man's devising. And this phrase seems to be opposed to a notion of the Jews, that the law was the true way of life, and who confined truth to the law. They have a saying [r], that משה ותורתו אמת, *Moses and his law are the truth*; this they make Korah and his company say in hell. That the law of Moses was truth, is certain; but it is too strong an expression to say of Moses himself, that he was truth; but well agrees with Christ, by whom grace and truth came in opposition to Moses, by whom came the law: but when they say [s], אין אמת אלא תורה, *there's no truth but the law*, they do not speak truth. More truly do they speak, when, in answer to that question, מה אמת, *what is truth?* it is said, that he is the living God, and King of the world [t], characters that well agree with Christ. *The life*: Christ is the author and giver of life, natural, spiritual, and eternal; or he is the way of life, or *the living way*; in opposition to the law, which was so far from being the way of life, that it was the ministration of condemnation and death: he always, and ever will be the way; all in this way live, none ever die; and it is a way that leads to eternal life: and to conclude all the epithets in one sentence, Christ is the true way to eternal life 'Tis added by way of explanation of him, as the way, *no man cometh unto the father but by me;* Christ is the only way of access unto the father; there's no coming to God as an absolute God, not upon the foot of the covenant of works, nor without a Mediator; and the only Mediator between God and man is Christ: he introduces and presents the persons and services of his people to his father, and gives them acceptance with him.

Ver. 7. *If ye had known me,* &c.] Christ having made mention of his father's house, and of himself, as the way thither, and the way of access to the father, was willing to inform his disciples better concerning him before his departure from them, which he introduces, saying: *if ye had known me:* that is, more fully and perfectly; for that they knew Christ to be the son of God, the Saviour of the world, and true Messiah, is certain, though they were not so thoroughly acquainted, as afterwards, with his person, power, and office: *ye should have known my father also*; for the knowledge of the father, and of Christ, go together; he that sees the one, sees the other; he that believes in the one, believes in the other; and the knowledge of both is necessary to eternal life; and as a person increases in the knowledge of the one, so of the other. The disciples had some knowledge of them both, but what was very small and obscure, in comparison of what they afterwards had: *and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him*; some read these words, *henceforwards ye shall know him, and see him;* that is, in a very short time, when the spirit is poured down from on high upon you, and you have received the gifts of the Holy Ghost, you shall then have an enlarged knowledge both of me and my father. Others render them, as an exhortation, *henceforward know ye him:* acknowledge the father in all that I have done, believing that you see the father in me, and in all my works; though they are rather to be considered as an assertion, declaring, that they then had some knowledge of the father; *and now ye know him, and,* or *because ye have seen him:* in me, who am *the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person.*

Ver. 8. *Philip saith to him, Lord,* &c.] Another of his disciples addresses him in a reverend and becoming manner, as Thomas before had done, calling him Lord, and saying to him, *shew us the father, and it sufficeth us:* he speaks in the name of them all, seems to own their ignorance of the father, and expresses their desire of seeing him: *shew us the father*; it was a corporeal sight of him he asked for; such a sight of the glory of God as Moses desired, and the elders of Israel had at Mount Sinai; and signifies, that if this could be obtained, it would give them full satisfaction: *and it sufficeth us;* we shall be no more uneasy at thy departure from us; we shall have no doubt about thy father's house, and the many mansions in it; or of thyself, as the way unto it, and of our everlasting abode with thee in it; we shall sit down easy and contented, and trouble thee no more with questions about this matter.

Ver. 9. *Jesus saith unto him, have I been so long time with you,* &c.] Conversing familiarly with you, instructing you by my ministry, and performing so many miraculous works among you, for so long a time; see Heb. v. 11, 12. *and yet hast thou not known me, Philip?* Surely you can't be so ignorant as this comes to; as you have seen me with your bodily eyes, as a man, you must know that I am God by the doctrines I have taught you, and the miracles I have wrought among you: *and he that hath seen me;* not with the eyes of his body, but with the eyes of his understanding; he that has beheld the perfections of the Godhead in me: *hath seen the father;* the perfections which are in him also; for the same that are in me are in him, and the same that are in him are in me: I am the very image of him, and am possessed of the same nature, attributes, and glory, that he is; so that he that sees the one, sees the other: *and how sayest thou then shew us the father?* such a request is a needless one, and betrays great weakness and ignorance.

Ver. 10. *Believest thou not that I am in the father?* &c.] This surely is, as it must needs be, and ought to be, an article of your faith, *that I am in the father, and the father in me;* phrases which are expressive of the sameness of nature in the father and the son; of the son's perfect equality with the father, since the son is as much in the father, as the father is in the son; and also of the personal distinction there is between them; for nothing with propriety can be said to be in itself. The father must be distinct from the son who is in him, and the son must be distinct from the father, in whom he is; the father and son, though of one and the same nature, cannot be one, and the same person:

[r] T. Bab. Bava Bathra. fol. 74. 1. Bemidbar Rabba, fol. 223. 2.
[s] T. Hieros. Roshhashanah, fol. 59. 1. Præfat. Echa Rabbati, fol. 36. 2.
[t] Ib. Sanhedrin, fol. 18. 1.

the words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself. The doctrines which I preach among you are a proof of what I assert, and to them I appeal; for these are not of myself, as man, *but* the father that *dwelleth in me;* and so prove that I am truly God, of the same nature with my father; that he is in me, and I in him; since they are such as none but the only-begotten, who is in the bosom of the father, could ever have declared and made known unto you. Likewise, the works which I do, as man, I do not of myself; but *he doth the works:* for so this passage must be understood and supplied, in which Christ proceeds to another argument, taken from his works, proving the father to be in him, and that he is in the father, which is enlarged on in the next verse.

Ver. 11. *Believe me that I am in the father, and the father in me,* &c.] Take my word for the truth of this; you may assure yourselves that nothing is more certain; but if you will not believe upon my saying so, either believe for the sake of the doctrines I have preached unto you, which are such as never any mere man spoke, and which have been delivered in such a manner, and with such authority, as never were by man. Some copies read, by way of interrogation, and so the Ethiopic version; and the Vulgate Latin version reads, *believe ye not? or else believe me for the very work's sake:* meaning his miraculous works, such as raising the dead, cleansing the lepers, causing the deaf to hear, and giving sight to the blind; and which were such as none but a divine person could ever perform.

Ver. 12. *Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me,* &c.] Having mentioned his miracles as proofs of his deity, he assures his disciples, in order to comfort them under the loss of his bodily presence, that they should do the same, and greater works; for we are not to understand these words of every one that believes in Christ, of every private believer in him, but only of the apostles, and each of them, that were true believers in him: to whom he says, *the works that I do shall he do also;* he shall raise the dead, heal all manner of diseases, and cast out devils; things which Christ gave his apostles power to do, when he first gave them a commission to preach the Gospel, and when he renewed and enlarged it: and which they did perform, not in their own name, and by their own power, but in the name, and by the power of Christ: *and greater works than these shall he do:* meaning, not greater in nature and kind, but more in number; for the apostles, in a long series of time, and course of years, went about preaching the Gospel, not in Judea only, but in all the world; *God also bearing them witness with signs and wonders, and divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost,* wherever they went: though perhaps by these *greater works* may be meant the many instances of conversion, which the apostles were instrumental in, and which were more in number than those which were under our Lord's personal ministry: besides, the conversion of a sinner is a greater work than any of the miracles of raising the dead, &c. for this includes in it all miracles: here we may see a sinner, dead in trespasses and sins, quickened; one born blind made to see; one who was deaf to the threatenings of the law, and to the charming voice of the Gospel, made to hear, so as to live; and one that had the spreading leprosy of sin all over him, cleansed from it by the blood of the Lamb: yea, though a miracle in nature is an instance and proof of divine power, yet the conversion of a sinner, which is a miracle in grace, is not only an instance of the power of God, and of the greatness of it, but of the exceeding greatness of it: and the rather one may be induced to give in to this sense of the passage, since 'tis added, as a reason, *because I go to my father;* and upon my ascension the spirit will be given to you, which shall not only enable you to perform miracles, as proofs of your apostleship, and the doctrine you preach, but which shall powerfully attend the Gospel to the conversion of multitudes of souls.

Ver. 13. *And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name,* &c.] Whether it be for assistance in preaching of the Gospel; or for the performance of miraculous operations in confirmation of it; or for success to attend it; or for any blessings whatsoever, whether for themselves or others: *that will I do;* he does not say, that he would be a Mediator between God, and them, an advocate with the father for them, and would intercede, and use his interest with him that it might be done, which would have been saying much, and all which he does; but he declares he'll do it himself, which is a proof of his deity, and an instance of his omnipotence: *that the father may be glorified in the son.* This may be referred either to the petition, which must be made with this view, that the father may be glorified by, or in the son, in whose name it is put up, and for whose sake it is made; or to Christ's promise to do it; who in doing it, seeks not his own glory, at least not singly; but as the good of his people, so the glory of his heavenly father.

Ver. 14. *If ye shall ask any thing,* &c.] These words are much the same with the former, and have been thought, by some, to have crept into the text from the margin; though they seem rather to be repeated by Christ, the more to strengthen and confirm the faith of his disciples in this matter; that whatsoever they asked *in* his *name,* either calling upon it, he being equally the object of prayer with the father, or making mention of it, pleading the merits of his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice; whatever was according to the will of God, was for his glory, and their real good, he would do it for them, as well when absent from them, as present with them.

Ver. 15. *If ye love me,* &c.] Not that Christ doubted of the love of his disciples to him; but he argues from it to their observance of his precepts, seeing ye do love me; as all do who are born again, who have had any spiritual sight of him, of his glory, suitableness, and fulness; who believe in him, and have received from him; who have had his love shed abroad in their hearts, having enjoyed communion with him, and know the relation he stands in to them; these love him above all others, and all of him, and that belong to him, unfeignedly, and in the sincerity of their souls, as did the disciples; and since they professed to love, and did love him, as they ought to do, he exhorts them, saying, *keep my commandments:* Christ is Lord over his people, as he is the Creator and Redeemer of them, and as he is an head and husband to them; and as such he has a right to issue out his

commands, and enjoin a regard unto them; and these are peculiarly *his*, as distinct from, though not in opposition to, or to the exclusion of, his father's commands; such as the new commandment of loving one another, and the ordinances of baptism, and the Lord's supper, which are to be observed and kept as Christ has ordered them, constantly, in faith, and with a view to his glory.

Ver. 16. *And I will pray the father*, &c.] Here Christ speaks as Mediator, and promises his disciples, that he would intercede for them with the father; which is designed as an encouragement to them to ask for what they want, in his name, and to comfort their hearts, which were troubled at the news of his departure from them; *and he shall give you another Comforter.* This is no inconsiderable proof of a trinity of persons in the Godhead; here is the father prayed unto, the son in human nature praying, and the Holy Ghost the Comforter prayed for; who is the gift of the father, through the prevalent mediation of the son, and is *another Comforter;* distinct from the Messiah; to whom reference is here had. One of the names of the Messiah, with the Jews, is מנחם[v], *a Comforter;* such an one Jesus had been to his disciples; and now he was about to leave them, and for their support under their sorrows, he promises to use his interest with his father, that he would give them another *Comforter*, meaning the spirit, who performs this his work and office, by taking of the things of Christ, and shewing them to his people; by shedding abroad the love of the father, and of the son, into their hearts; by opening and applying the precious promises of the Gospel to them; by being a spirit of adoption in them; and by abiding with them as the seal, earnest, and pledge of their future glory; and with this view Christ promises to pray for him, *that he may abide with you for ever:* not a few years only, as I have done, but as long as you live; and with all those that shall succeed you in the work of the ministry, and with the church, and all true believers unto the end of the world: this is a proof of the saints' final perseverance. When we consider these words, in connexion with the preceding exhortation, to keep the commands of Christ, and as an encouragement so to do, it brings to mind a saying of R. Eliezer ben Jacob[w]; "he that does one commandment gets for himself פרקלים אחד, ενα παρακλητον, "the very word here used, *one advocate*, or *comforter*; "and he that transgresses one command, gets for "himself one accuser." But though the word signifies both an advocate and a comforter, the latter seems to be the meaning of it here, as being more suited to the disconsolate condition of the disciples.

Ver. 17. *Even the spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive*, &c.] These words explain who is meant by the Comforter, *even the spirit of truth:* the true spirit of God, the dictator of the Scriptures of truth, who leads men into the truths of the Gospel, confirms them in them, and gives boldness and freedom to own, and confess them before men: *whom the world cannot receive;* the men of the world, who are as they came into the world, carnal and natural men, can neither receive the spirit nor the things of the spirit, the truths and doctrines of the Gospel; they can neither receive them into their understandings, nor into their affections; and indeed, because they can't understand them, therefore they don't love them, but despise and hate them: *because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him:* the world, and the men of it, can neither see him with their bodily eyes, because he is a *spirit:* nor know him with their understandings, because he is the *spirit of truth*, which they are ignorant of, for want of a spiritual discerning. *But ye know him;* as a spirit of illumination, regeneration, and conversion: *for he dwelleth with you:* he is an inhabitant in your hearts, he has taken up his residence in you as his temples: *and shall be in you;* as a Comforter, when I am gone from you; and as a spirit of truth to guide you into all truth, to stand by you, and assist you in preaching it, and to enable you to bear a faithful and glorious testimony for it.

Ver. 18. *I will not leave you comfortless*, &c.] *Gr. orphans*, or *fatherless.* Christ stands in the relation of a father to his people, and they are his children, his spiritual seed and offspring; and so the disciples might fear, that as Christ was going from them, they should be left as children without a father, in a very desolate and comfortless condition: to support them against these fears, Christ promises that he would not leave them thus, at least not long: *I will come to you:* in a very short time, as he did; for on the third day he rose again from the dead, and appeared to them, which filled them with great joy. So among the Jews, disciples, and the world too, are represented as fatherless, when their doctors and wise men are removed by death. Says R. Aba[x], and so sometimes others, concerning R. Simeon ben Jochai, "woe to the world "when thou shalt go out of it, woe to the generation "that shall be in the world when thou shalt remove from them, וישתארון יתמין, *and they shall be* "*left fatherless* by thee." And in another place[y]; "afterwards R. Akiba went out and cried, and his "eyes flowed with water, and he said, woe Rabbi, "woe Rabbi, for the world is left, יתום, *fatherless* by "thee."

Ver. 19. *Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more*, &c.] The men of the world now see me with their bodily eyes, which is all the sight they have of me; and this they'll be deprived of in a very little time; they'll see me no more until the time that I shall come in the clouds of heaven to judge the world; and then every eye shall see me: *but ye see me;* ye see me now, and shall see me after my resurrection, as they did; for then he appeared alive and conversed with them for forty days; and when he ascended into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God, they saw him by faith crowned with glory and honour; and will see him as he is when he comes a second time to take them to himself in glory. *Because I live, ye shall live also;* Christ lives as God, as man, and as Mediator: as God, he lives the same life his father does, partaking of the same nature, and possessing the same perfections; so he lived from everlasting, and will live to everlast-

[v] T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 5. 1. T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 98. 2. Echa Rabbati, fol. 50. 2.
[w] Pirke Abot, c. 4. sect. 11.
[x] Zohar in Num. fol. 96. 2. & in Lev. fol. 42. 3. & in Exod. fol. 19. 3. & 28. 3.
[y] Midrash Hanneelam in Zohar in Gen. fol. 65. 4.

ing; as man, he lived first a private, and then a public life, attended with meanness, reproaches, sorrows, and sufferings; a life which was filled up with acts of devotion and piety to God, and with doing good to the bodies and souls of men; he lived in all obedience to the law of God, and at last endured the penalty of that law, in the room and stead of his people; when his life was taken away for a while, and then taken up by him again; and now, as man, he lives, and lives for evermore. As Mediator, he has his life from the father, which is dependent upon him, by whom he was set up in an office-capacity from everlasting; and as such will live to everlasting, to see the travail of his soul, the fruit of his sufferings, to make intercession for his people, and to rule until all enemies are made his footstool. And his people *live also;* which is to be understood, not of the preservation of his disciples from dying with him, when he died; for then it should rather have been said, *because I die, ye shall live:* nor of the continuance of their natural life in this world; for the saints are not to live always here; nor do they desire it, nor is it proper they should; death is for their advantage; 'tis a blessing to them. Though these words may be understood of a corporeal life, which they shall live after the resurrection; for though they die, they shall live again, and never die more; they shall not only live and reign with Christ a thousand years, but to all eternity. They also live a spiritual life now; a life of grace and holiness from Christ; a life of faith on him, and sometimes of communion with him, and desire to live to his honour and glory; and shall hereafter live an eternal life of perfection and pleasure, with Father, Son, and Spirit, for evermore. Now between these two lives, the life of Christ, and his people, there is a close connexion; the one is dependent on the other, and secured by the other: *because I live, ye shall live also;* the spiritual life of a believer is from Christ, and is maintained by him; the same which is in the head, is in the members; yea, 'tis not so much they that live, as Christ that lives in them, and therefore their life can never be lost; 'tis bound up in the bundle of life with Christ, and is hid safe and secure with him in God, and so out of the reach both of men and devils. The corporeal life of the saints after death, in the resurrection-morn, springs from, and is secured by the life of Christ: his resurrection from the dead is the pattern and pledge of theirs; he undertook to raise them from the dead, and will do it; as sure as his dead body is raised and lives, so sure shall theirs; their bodies, as well as their souls, are united to Christ; and by virtue of this union, which death does not, and cannot dissolve, they shall be raised and live again. They are in Christ whilst they are dead; and because they are *the dead in Christ,* they shall *rise first.* Their eternal life is in the hands of Christ, and when he, who is the true God, and their eternal life, shall appear, they shall appear with him in glory.

Ver. 20. *At that day ye shall know,* &c.] The things they should know, or the objects of knowledge are, *that I am in my father;* in his bosom, in union with him, partaker of the same nature, perfections, and glory with him, and equal to him: *and you in me:* that they were in union with him as the branches in the vine, and as the members are in the head, and how they were loved in him, chosen in him, righteous in him, risen with him, and made to sit together in heavenly places in him: *and I in you:* formed in their hearts, living in them, dwelling in them, as in his temples, and filling them with grace and glory. The knowledge of these things promised, designs a more clear and distinct knowledge of them; something of them was known already, but not so perfectly as should be hereafter; and this does not suppose that these unions between the father and Christ, and between Christ and his people, shall then begin to be; for as the union between the father and the son is as eternal as themselves; so the union between Christ and his people, as he is the head and representative of them, is as early as his investiture with the office of a Mediator, and his suretyship-engagements for them, which were from eternity; and are the ground, and foundation of his being in them, and they in him in effectual vocation; nor does it suggest that they shall begin to be known; only that they shall be known in a more perfect manner: the time when this will be, is *at that day;* meaning either when he should *live* in the body again, be raised from the dead, when he should be declared to be the son of God with power, when it would appear, that he had the same power with the father, by raising himself from the dead, and when he would rise as a public head representing them, for their justification, and they should see themselves justified and discharged in him; or the day of *Pentecost,* when *the spirit of truth,* he promises to pray for, should come to them in an extraordinary manner, and lead them into the knowledge of these things; or the last day, the resurrection-morn, when, by virtue of union to Christ, the saints shall rise and *live* with him for ever, and shall have a perfect knowledge of these several unions; see John xvii. 21, 23, 24.

Ver. 21. *He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them,* &c.] He that has not merely the external revelation of them in the Bible; but has them written on his heart, by the finger of the spirit of God, and keeps them under the influence of grace and strength received from him: *he it is that loveth me;* others may talk of loving Christ, but this is the man that truly does love him: for his observance of Christ's commands is a proof and evidence that he loves him not in word only, but in deed and in truth: and to encourage souls to love and obedience, Christ adds, *he that loveth me, shall be loved of my father:* not that love to Christ is the cause, condition, or motive of the father's love to his people; nor does his love to them begin when they begin to love Christ; but this expression denotes some further and greater manifestation of the father's love to such persons, and shews how grateful to the father are love and obedience to the son: *and I will love him;* which must be understood in the same manner; Christ does not begin to love his people when they begin to love, and obey him; their love and obedience to him, spring from his love to them; which love of his towards them was from everlasting: but this phrase designs a clearer discovery of his love to them, which passeth knowledge; and some fresh mark and token of his affection for them; and which is explained in the next clause: *and will manifest myself to him;* not in a visible way, or in a corporeal form, as he did to his

disciples after his resurrection; but in a spiritual manner, as when he makes himself known to his people in ordinances, and favours them with communion with him, and they see his beauty, his fulness, his grace and righteousness, his power, and his glory.

Ver. 22. *Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, &c.*] This was Judas Lebbeus, whose surname was Thaddeus, the same with Jude the apostle, the author of the epistle which bears his name; and is said to be *not Iscariot*, to distinguish him from the betrayer. The question put by him, *Lord, how is it*, τι γεγονεν, which answers to מאי דא, or מאי דאי, or מהו, with the Talmudists, *what is this* thou sayest; what is the meaning of it? how can it be? or what is the reason of it, *that thou wilt manifest thyself to us, and not unto the world?* arises either from ignorance of what Christ was speaking, imagining he meant a spectre, or some apparition of himself after his death, which should be visible to his disciples, and not to others; and how this could be, he wanted to know; or from that national prejudice which Judas and the rest of the apostles had given into, of a temporal kingdom of the Messiah, the glory of which should be visible to all the world; and therefore he wonders that he should talk of the manifestation of himself, only to some, or from an honest hearty desire that the glory of Christ might not be confined to a few only; but that the whole world might see it, and be filled with it: or rather from his modesty, and the sense he had of his own unworthiness, and of the rest of the apostles, to have such a peculiar manifestation of Christ to them, when they were no more deserving of it than others: the question is put by him with admiration and astonishment; and as not being able to give, or think of any other reason of such a procedure, but the amazing grace of Christ, his free favour and sovereign will and pleasure.

Ver. 23. *Jesus answered and said unto him, &c.*] This answer is returned, and these words are spoken, for the further confirmation and explanation of what was before said: *if a man love me, he will keep my words*; by his *words* are meant not his doctrines, but his ordinances; the same with his commandments, ver. 21. which he has said, ordered, and commanded to be observed, and which are observed by such who truly love him, and that from a principle of love to him, and with a view to his glory: and for the encouragement of such persons as before, he says, *and my father will love him*; which is to be understood not of the love of the father, as in his own heart, which is not taken up in time, but was in him from all eternity; nor of the first discovery of it to his people, but of greater manifestations of it to them, and a quicker sense of it in their hearts, and also of some other effects of it, to be enjoyed by them in an higher manner; such as larger measures of grace, more communion with him here, and eternal honour and glory hereafter: *and we will come unto him*; I who am now going away, and my father to whom I am going, and the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, I have promised to pray for: hence a proof of a plurality of persons in the Godhead, of a trinity of persons, of there being neither more nor fewer than three; since neither more nor less can be collected from the context; and of their distinct personality, or it could not be said with any propriety, *we* each of us *will come unto him*; not locally and visibly, but spiritually, by affording our gracious and comfortable presence, the continuance of which is promised next: *and make our abode with him*; which denotes habitation; for the saints are the dwelling-places or temples of the living God, Father, Son, and Spirit; and the constancy and perpetuity of their residence in them, not as a wayfaring man, but always, though this may not be always discerned by believers; and is a wonderful instance of the grace and condescension of God to dwell on earth with sinful men; and a far greater one it is, than if the most mighty potentate on earth should take up his abode in a poor despicable cottage with the meanest of his subjects.

Ver. 24. *He that loveth me not, keepeth not my sayings, &c.*] These words may have respect both to external professors of religion, who being destitute of true love to Christ, though they outwardly observe his ordinances and commands; yet inasmuch as this does not spring from a principle of love to him, and is done only to be seen of men, or to obtain life for themselves, may be said, not to keep his words or commands, because they don't keep them aright; and to the profane world, who, as they have no affection to Christ, pay no regard to any orders or ordinances of his: and they may be considered as having in them a reason or argument, justifying the conduct of Christ, in manifesting himself to his disciples, and not unto the world; as the following words give a reason why the father takes so much notice of, comes and makes his abode with such as keep the words of Christ: *and* or *for the word which you hear, is not mine, but the father's which sent me*; that is, it is not only mine, but my father's also: it is not mine as man; it is not a scheme of things of my own devising; it is not from earth, but from heaven; my father has a concern in it, and therefore regards such who hear, receive, and keep it: and this is said by him partly to engage a greater regard and attention to his word, his truths, and ordinances, by his disciples; and to expose and aggravate the sin of those who despised and rejected them; since it was not barely casting contempt on him, but on his father likewise.

Ver. 25. *These things have I spoken unto you, &c.*] Concerning his father, and his father's house, and the way to both; concerning his being in the father, and the father in him; concerning keeping his commandments, and the advantages and benefits following upon it: *being*, says he, yet *present with you*; which is a strong intimation that in a little time he should not be present with them; and that whilst he was present with them, he was desirous of saying such things to them in a brief compendious manner, as they were able to bear; which might be of future use and instruction to them.

Ver. 26. *But the Comforter*, which is *the Holy Ghost, &c.*] Before spoken of, ver. 16. for whom Christ promised to pray the father that he might be given to them. The word used there, as here, signifies an *advocate*, and is so rendered, 1 John ii. 1. a patron, one that pleads and defends the cause of another, before kings and princes; so the Jewish writers [1] use the word פרקליט.

[1] Maimon. & Bartenora in Pirke Abot, c. 4. sect. 11

the same with παράκλητος here, and give this as the sense of it: and which agrees well enough with the work and office of the spirit of God, who has promised to the apostles to speak in them and for them, when they should be brought before kings and governors for Christ's sake; and would so thoroughly plead his cause and theirs, as to convince the world of sin, righteousness and judgment; and who acts the part of an intercessor, or advocate, for private believers, in prayer to the King of kings: but inasmuch as it also signifies a *comforter*, and this being agreeably to the present condition of the apostles, as before observed; it may be most proper to retain that sense of it here, who is explained to be *the Holy Ghost;* which is a more clear and explicit account of him than before, and very distinctly points out the third person in the Trinity, who is in his nature holy, equally with the father and son, and the author of holiness in all the saints: *whom the father will send in my name.* The mission of the spirit is here ascribed to the father, but not to the exclusion of the son, who is also said to send him, ch. xv. 26. and xvi. 7. which was not so proper to be mentioned here, because he speaks of his being sent, *in his name;* that is, at his request, through his mediation and intercession, in his room and stead, acting the same part, and bearing the same name of an advocate or comforter, and for the glory and honour of his name: which act of sending does not suppose any local motion, which cannot agree with an infinite and immense spirit; nor inferiority in him to the other two persons, since he who is sent by Christ, and in his name, is also the sender of Christ; but it denotes the joint consent and agreement of Father, Son, and Spirit, in this affair: *he shall teach you all things:* this is the proper work and business of the spirit, to teach, interpret, and explain all things which Christ had said to them; to make them more plain and easy to their understandings; to instruct them in all things necessary to salvation, and to be known by them, that they might teach them others: *and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said to you;* which through inattention, or want of understanding in them, had slipped their minds, and were forgotten by them. This accounts for it, how the evangelists some years after the death of Christ, at different times and places, and without consulting each other, could commit to writing the life, actions, sayings, and sermons of Christ, with all the minute circumstances attending them.

Ver. 27. *Peace I leave with you,* &c.] Christ being about to die and leave his disciples, makes his last will and testament, and as the best legacy he could leave them, bequeaths peace unto them; *my peace I give unto you:* he left the Gospel of peace with them, to be preached by them to all the world; which is a declaration and publication of peace made by his blood; is a means of reconciling the minds of men to God and Christ, to the truths, ordinances, and people of Christ; of relieving and giving peace to distressed minds; and which shews the way to eternal peace: and as Christ had kept his disciples in peace one with another, so he left them in peace; and left orders with them to maintain it, one among another: but what seems chiefly designed here, is peace with God, which Christ is the sole author of; he was appointed in the council and covenant of peace to effect it; he became incarnate with that view, and did procure it by his sufferings and death; and as it was published by angels, when he came into the world, he left it, and gave it to his disciples when he was going out of it: or else that peace of conscience is meant, which follows upon the former, which arises from the sprinklings of the blood of Christ, and from a comfortable view, by faith, of an interest in his justifying righteousness, and is enjoyed in a way of believing, and commonly in the use of ordinances: *leaving* it supposes that Christ was about to leave his disciples, but would not leave them comfortless; he leaves a Comforter with them, and bequeaths peace unto them as his last legacy: *giving* it, shews that it is not to be acquired by any thing that man can do, but is a pure free-grace gift of Christ; and which being given as his legacy, is irrevocable; for the allusion is to the making of a will or testament when persons are about to die: though some have thought it refers to the custom of wishing peace, health, and prosperity, among the Jews; but Christ does not say *peace be to you;* which was the more usual form of salutation among them, and which was used by them when they met, and not at parting; especially we have no instance of such a form as here used, by dying persons taking their leaves of their relations and friends. It must indeed be owned that the phrase, *to give peace*, is with them the same as to salute, or wish health and prosperity. Take two or three of their rules as instances of it; "whoever knows his friend, that he is used "ליתן לו שלום [a], *to give him peace;* he shall prevent "him with peace (*i. e.* salute him first), as it is said, "*seek peace and pursue it;* but if he *gives* it to him, "and he does not return it, he shall be called a robber." Again, "[b] a man may not go into the house of a "stranger, on his feast-day, ליתן לו שלום, *to give peace* "*unto him* (or salute him); if he finds him in the "street, he may *give* it to him with a low voice, and "his head hanging down;" once [c] more, "a man "לא יתן שלום, *may not give peace to*, or salute his "master, nor return peace to him in the way that they "*give* it to friends, and they return it to one another." Likewise it must be owned, that when they saluted persons of distinction, such as princes, nobles, and doctors, they repeated the word *peace* [d], though never to any strangers; however, certain it is, that it was another sort of peace which Christ left, and gave to his disciples, than what the Jews were wont to give, or wish to one another; *not as the world giveth, give I unto you.* The peace Christ gives is true, solid, and substantial; the peace the world, the men, and things of it give, is a false one; and whilst they cry, *peace, peace, sudden destruction is at hand;* the peace of the world is at best but an external one, but the peace Christ is the giver of, is internal; the peace the world affords is a very transient, unstable, and short-lived one, but the peace of Christ is lasting and durable; the peace of the

[a] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 6. 2.
[b] T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 62. 1. Maimon. Obede Cochabim, c. 10. sect. 5.
[c] Maimon. Talmud Tora, c. 5. sect. 5.
[d] T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 62. 1. Maimon. Hilch. Melacim. c. 10. sect. 12.

world won't support under the troubles of it, but the peace which Christ gives, cheerfully carries his people through all the difficulties and exercises of this life: and as these differ in kind, so likewise in the manner of giving, and in the persons to whom they are given; the world gives peace in words only, Christ in deed; the world gives feignedly, Christ heartily; the world gives it for its own advantage, Christ for his people's sake; the world gives its peace to the men of it, to the ungodly, none to the godly, whom it hates; Christ gives his, not to the wicked, for there's no peace to them, but to the saints, the excellent in the earth. Wherefore says Christ, *let not your heart be troubled;* at my departure from you, since I leave such a peace with you: *neither let it be afraid;* at the dangers you may be exposed unto, and the trouble you may be exercised with; for in the midst of them all, *in me ye shall have peace.*

Ver. 28. *Ye have heard how I said unto you,* &c.] Christ had not only told his disciples that he should depart from them in a little time, but also that he should return again to them, and comfort them with his presence, and receive them to himself, to be with him in his father's house for ever: and this he again suggests, *I go away, and come again unto you;* so that they had not so much reason to be troubled and afraid, as they were: had he only said to them that he should go away, without giving any hint of his coming again, they might well have been uneasy; what made the friends of the Apostle Paul so sorrowful at his departure, was most of all, because he had signified to them they should see his face no more; but Christ assured his disciples that in a little time they should see him again, to their unspeakable joy and comfort: *if ye loved me,* adds he, *ye would rejoice;* not but that the disciples did truly love Christ, and their concern for the loss of his bodily presence is a proof of it; nor was their love unknown to him, nor does he call it in question, only corrects it, or rather uses means to increase it, to draw it forth aright, that it might move and run in a proper channel; they loved him, and therefore were unwilling to part with him, but this was not a pure expression of love to him, it shewed too much a regard to themselves, than to the object loved; whereas had they considered things aright, since it was to his greater advantage to remove, they should rather have discovered a willingness to it, and have rejoiced at it; this would have shewn pure love and unbiassed affection to him: two reasons our Lord gives why they should have rejoiced at his remove; one is, *because,* says he, *I said, I go unto the father,* who was not only his, but their father also; at whose right hand he was to sit, an honour which no mere creature ever had; where he was to be glorified and exalted above all created beings; and besides, his glorification would secure and bring on theirs; as sure as he lived in glory, so sure should they; yea, they should immediately sit down in heavenly places in him, as their head and representative, and therefore had good reason to rejoice at his going away: the other is, *for my father is greater than I;* not with respect to the divine nature, which is common to them both, and in which they are both one; and the son is equal to the father, having the self-same essence, perfections, and glory: nor with respect to personality, the son is equally a divine person, as the father is, though the one is usually called the first, the other the second person; yet this priority is not of nature, which is the same in both; nor of time, for the one did not exist before the other; nor of causality, for the father is not the cause of the son's existence; nor of dignity, for the one has not any excellency which is wanting in the other; but of order and manner of operation: these words are to be understood, either with regard to the human nature, in which he was going to the father, this was prepared for him by the father, and strengthened and supported by him, and in which he was made a little lower than the angels, and consequently must be in it inferior to his father; or with regard to his office as Mediator, in which he was the father's servant, was set up and sent forth by him, acted under him, and in obedience to him, and was now returning to give an account of his work and service; or rather with regard to his present state, which was a state of humiliation: he was attended with many griefs and sorrows, and exposed to many enemies, and about to undergo an accursed death; whereas his father was in the most perfect happiness and glory, and so in this sense *greater.* That is, more blessed and glorious than he; for this is not a comparison of natures, or of persons, but of states and conditions: now he was going to the father to partake of the same happiness and glory with him, to be glorified with himself, with the same glory he had with him before the foundation of the world; wherefore on this account, his disciples ought to have rejoiced, and not have mourned.

Ver. 29. *And now I have told you before it came to pass,* &c.] This is a strong proof of his true and proper deity, for none but the omniscient God can tell of things before they come to pass; this is peculiar to him, and distinguishes him from the gods of the Gentiles; see Isa. xli. 22, 23. and xlv. 21. and xlvi. 9, 10. *that when it is come to pass, ye might believe:* that is, that when he was removed from them, and gone to his father, they might then believe that he was truly God, the son of God, the promised Messiah; and that he was then in glory, and at the right hand of God.

Ver. 30. *Hereafter I will not talk much with you,* &c.] Meaning before his death; for after his resurrection he talked much with them, about the things pertaining to the kingdom of God; being seen of them and conversing with them, for the space of forty days; *not much,* he says, chiefly what is delivered in the two next chapters: the design of this was, to observe to them that his time of departure was near at hand, and to quicken their attention to what he did say to them; since they could not expect to hear him long, or much more from him; he would be otherwise engaged; *for the prince of this world cometh:* by *the prince of this world,* is meant the devil; why he is so called, see the note on ch. xii. 31. the reason why Christ chooses to use this circumlocution, rather than to say Satan or the devil cometh, is partly to point out what a powerful adversary he had, and was about to engage with, and partly to observe to his disciples, what they must expect from the world, even hatred and persecution; since Satan was the prince of it, and had such powerful influence over the minds of the men of it. When it is

said that he *cometh*, it is to be understood of his coming to Christ, though it is not expressed, and that with an intent agreeably to his character, as a thief, to kill and to destroy; and not of his coming merely by Judas, into whom he had already entered, and had put it into his heart to betray him; and by the armed soldiers, who would accompany him to apprehend him; and by the chief priests, rulers, and people of the Jews, who with united voices would cry, Crucify him, Crucify him; nor only invisibly by his angels, his principalities and powers, he was now employing in different ways, to bring about his purposes; but of his coming himself personally, and visibly: as he visibly appeared to Christ in the wilderness, tempting him, where he left him for a season; so this season or opportunity being come, he takes it, and visibly appears to him in the garden, where a sharp agony and combat was between them; what success he had in this conflict, is next mentioned; *and hath nothing in me*; or as some copies read it, *shall find nothing in me*; or as others, *hath nothing to find in me*; Christ had no sin in him, which can be said of none but him. The Jews say [e], that Samuel, by whom they mean the devil, when he wrestled with Jacob, שלא מצא בו עון, *could not find any iniquity in him*, he had committed; but this is only true of Jacob's antitype: for though his emissaries sought diligently for it, they could find none in him; though he had sin upon him, he had none in him; the sins of his people were imputed to him, but he had no sin inherent in him; hence, though he the Messiah was *cut off*, according to Dan. ix. 26. *but not for himself*; which by the Septuagint is rendered και κριμα ουκ εστι εν αυτω, *but there is no judgment* or *condemnation in him*, i. e. no cause of condemnation; which agrees with what is here said: though the accuser of men sought to have something against him, to accuse him of, he could find none; some pretences indeed were made, and charges brought, but could not be made good, insomuch that the judge himself said, *I find in him no fault at all*: so that the devil had no power over him, no rightful power, nor any but what he had by permission, nor indeed did he prevail over him; for though according to the first prophecy of the Messiah, Satan bruised the heel of Christ; yet Christ bruised his head, destroyed him and his works, spoiled him, and his principalities and powers; whence it appears that the death of Christ was not owing to any sin of his own, for he had none, nor could any be found in him; nor to the superior power of the devil over him; he submitted to death, not through the power of Satan over him, and complied with all the circumstances leading to it, not out of fear of him, but in love to his father, and obedience to his command; as is clear from the following verse.

Ver. 31. *But that the world may know, &c.*] Not the wicked and unbelieving world, but the world of God's elect, such as are brought to believe in Christ: *that I love the father*: Christ must needs love the father, as being of the same nature and essence with him, and as standing in the relation of a son to him; he loved all that the father loves, and approved of all his purposes, counsels, and determinations, concerning himself and the salvation of his people; and therefore he voluntarily laid down his life for them: *and as the father gave me commandment, so I do*: as a son is obedient to a father, so was Christ in all things obedient to the commands of his heavenly father, in preaching the Gospel, obeying the law, and suffering death; all which he did and suffered, as the father gave commandment to him, as man and Mediator: and that it might fully appear how much he loved his father, and agreed with him in all his designs of grace; how much his will was resigned to his, and what respect he paid to whatever he said or ordered; he said to his disciples, *arise, let us go hence*: not from the passover, or the supper, for the passover was not as yet, and the Lord's supper was not instituted; nor in order to go to Mount Olivet, or to the garden, where Judas and his armed men would be to meet him, and lay hold on him, as is generally thought; but from Bethany, where he and his disciples now were, in order to go to Jerusalem and keep the passover, institute the supper, and then surrender himself into the hands of his enemies, and die for the sins of his people; for between this and the sermon in the following chapters, was the Lord's supper celebrated; when Christ having mentioned the fruit of the vine, he should drink new with his disciples in his father's kingdom, he very pertinently enters upon the discourse concerning the vine and branches, with which the next chapter begins: the phrase is Jewish; so R. Jose and R. Chiyah say to one another as they sat, קום וניהך, *arise, and let us go hence* [f].

CHAP. XV.

Ver. 1. *I AM the true vine, &c.*] The fruit of which he had been just speaking of at supper with his disciples; and then informs them, that he himself is the vine from whence that fruit must be expected, which should be partook of by them in his father's kingdom; for though Christ may be compared to a vine for its tenderness, weakness, and being subject to cuttings and prunings; all which may express his outward meanness in his birth, parentage, and education, which exposed him to the contempt of men; the weakness of the human nature in itself, his being encompassed with the infirmities of his people, and his sufferings and death for their sakes; yet he is rather called so with respect to his fruitfulness: for as the vine is a fruitful tree, brings forth and bears fruit in clusters, so Christ, as man and Mediator, is full of grace and truth, of all spiritual blessings, and exceeding great and precious promises; from him come the wine of divine love, of Gospel truths and Gospel ordinances, the various blessings of grace, and the

[e] Tzeror Hammor, fol. 44. 2.

[f] Zohar in Exod. fol. 74. 1.

joys of heaven, which are the best wine reserved by him till last: Christ is the *true* vine; not that he is really and literally so, without a figure; but he is, as the Syriac renders it, גפנא דשררא, *the vine of truth*. Just as Israel is called *a noble vine, wholly a right seed*, זרע אמת, *a seed of truth*, Jer. ii. 21. right genuine seed; or, as the Septuagint render it, *a vine*, bringing forth fruit, πασαν αληθινην, *wholly true*; to which the allusion may be here. Christ is the noble vine, the most excellent of vines, wholly a right seed, in opposition to, and distinction from, the wild and unfruitful, or degenerate plant of a strange vine: to him agree all the properties of a right and real vine; he really and truly communicates life, sap, juice, nourishment, and fruitfulness to the several branches which are in him. The metaphor Christ makes use of was well known to the Jews; for not only the Jewish church is often compared to a vine, but the Messiah too, according to them: thus the Targumist explains the phrase in Psal. lxxx. 15. *the branch thou madest strong for thyself*, of the King Messiah; and indeed, by comparing it with ver. 17. it seems to be the true sense of the passage[g]. The Cabalistic doctors say[h], that the Shekinah is called, גפן, *a vine*; see Gen. xlix. 11. where the Jews observe[i], the King Messiah is so called. The Jews[k] say, there was a golden vine that stood over the gate of the temple, and it was set upon props; and whoever offered a leaf, or a grape, or a cluster, (that is, a piece of gold to the temple, in the form of either of these,) brought it, and hung it upon it. And of this vine also Josephus[l] makes mention, as being in Herod's temple; of which he says, that it was over the doors [of the temple], under the edges of the wall, having clusters hanging down from it on high, which filled spectators with wonder as for the largeness of it, so for the art with which it was made. And elsewhere he says[m], the inward door in the porch was all covered with gold, and the whole wall about it; and it had over it golden vines, from whence hung clusters as big as the stature of a man: now whether our Lord may refer to this, being near the temple, and in view of it, and point to it, and call himself the true vine, in distinction from it, which was only the representation of one; or whether he might take occasion, from the sight of a real vine, to compare himself to one, may be considered; since it was usual with Christ, upon sight or mention of natural things, to take the opportunity of treating of spiritual ones: though it may be rather this discourse of the vine and branches might be occasioned by his speaking of the fruit of the vine, at the time he ate the passover, and instituted the ordinance of the supper. And *my father is the husbandman*; or vine-dresser. So God is called by Philo the Jew[n], γεωργος αγαθος, *a good husbandman*; and the same the Targumist says of the word of the Lord[o], "and "my word shall be unto them, כאכרא טבא, *as a good* "*husbandman*." Now Christ says this of his father, both with respect to himself the vine, and with respect to the branches that were in him: he was the husbandman to him; he planted the vine of his human nature, and filled it with all the graces of the spirit; he supported it, upheld it, and made it strong for himself, for the purposes of his grace, and for his own glory; and took infinite delight in it, being to him a pleasant plant, a plant of renown. The concern this husbandman has with the branches, is expressed in the following verse.

Ver. 2. *Every branch in me that beareth not fruit*, &c.] There are two sorts of branches in Christ the vine; the one sort are such who have only an historical faith in him, believe but for a time, and are removed; they are such who only profess to believe in him, as Simon Magus did; are in him by profession only; they submit to outward ordinances, become church-members, and so are reckoned to be in Christ, being in a church-state, as the churches of Judea and Thessalonica, and others, are said, in general, to be in Christ; though it is not to be thought that every individual person in these churches were truly and savingly in him. These branches are unfruitful ones; what fruit they seemed to have, withers away, and proves not to be genuine fruit; what fruit they bring forth is to themselves, and not to the glory of God, being none of the fruits of his spirit and grace: and such branches the husbandman *taketh away*; removes them from that sort of being which they had in Christ. By some means or another he discovers them to the saints to be what they are; sometimes he suffers persecution to arise because of the word, and these men are quickly offended, and depart of their own accord; or they fall into erroneous principles, and set up for themselves, and separate from the churches of Christ; or they become guilty of scandalous enormities, and so are removed from their fellowship by excommunication; or if neither of these should be the case, but these tares should grow together with the wheat till the harvest, the angels will be sent forth, who will gather out of the kingdom of God all that offend and do iniquity, and cast them into a furnace of fire, as branches withered, and fit to be burnt. *And every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit*. These are the other sort of branches, who are truly and savingly in Christ; such as are rooted in him; to whom he is the green fir-tree, from whom all their fruit is found; who are filled by him with all the fruits of his spirit, grace, and righteousness. These are purged or pruned, chiefly by afflictions and temptations, which are as needful for their growth and fruitfulness, as the pruning and cutting of the vines are for theirs; and though these are sometimes sharp, and never joyous, but grievous, yet they are attended with the peaceable fruits of righteousness, and so the end of bringing forth more fruit is answered; for it is not enough that a believer exercise grace, and perform good works for the present, but these must remain; or he must be constant herein, and still bring forth fruit, and add one virtue to another, that it may appear he is not barren and unfruitful in the knowledge of

[g] Vid. R. Mosem Hadersan in Galatin. de Arcan. Cathol. verit, l. 6. c. 4.
[h] Zohar in Exod. fol. 70. 2. & Cabala denudata, par. 1. p. 241.
[i] Zohar in Gen. fol. 127. 3.
[k] Misn. Middot, c. 3. sect. 8. T. Bab. Cholin, fol. 90. 2. & Tamid, fol. 29. 1, 2.
[l] Antiqu. l. 15. c. 11. sect. 3.
[m] De Bello Jud. l. 5. c. 5. sect. 4.
[n] Leg. Allegor. l. 1. p. 49.
[o] Targum in Hos. 11. 4.

Christ, in whom he is implanted. These different acts of the vine-dresser *taking away* some branches, and *purging* others, are expressed by the Misnic doctors [p] by פיסולה and זירודה. The former, the commentators [q] say, signifies to cut off the branches that are withered and perished, and are good for nothing; and the latter signifies the pruning of the vine when it has a superfluity of branches, or these extend themselves too far; when some are left, and others taken off.

Ver. 3. *Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.*] These words being inserted in the discourse concerning the vine and branches, and the pruning and purging them to make them fruitful, are thought, by the learned Dr. Lightfoot, to be an allusion to the law in Lev. xix. 23. by which the fruit of trees, for the first three years, were accounted uncircumcised or unclean, and in the fourth year fit for use; concerning which the Talmudists have a whole tract, called ערלה, *Orla*: the apostles having enjoyed the ministry of Christ, and been his disciples about such a time. Though the *now* seems to refer to the removal and taking away of that withered and unfruitful branch, Judas. Christ, in a former chapter, had told his disciples, that they were *clean, but not all*, because the betrayer was among them; but he being discovered by Christ, and ordered by him to be gone, went out from among them about his wicked design; and now Christ could say of them all, that they were *clean*: which may be understood of their regeneration and sanctification, in which their hearts were sprinkled with clean water; were washed with the washing of regeneration; had their hearts purified by faith in the blood of Christ, and had pure principles of grace formed in their souls; of all which the Gospel of Christ was the instrumental means: or of their justification by the righteousness of Christ, by which they were justified from all sin; and were all fair, and without spot; which was through the Gospel of Christ revealing his righteousness to them, or through the sentence of justification he, by his spirit, passed upon their consciences.

Ver. 4. *Abide in me, and I in you*, &c.] The former of these is an exhortation to continue in the exercise of faith and love upon Christ, holding to him the head, cleaving to him with full purpose of heart, and so deriving life, grace, strength, and nourishment from him; the latter is a promise encouraging to the former; for as Christ is formed in the hearts of his people, he continues there as the living principle of all grace. And so, *as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me*: which strongly expresses the necessity of abiding in Christ by fresh repeated acts of faith: and it is easy to observe, that when believers depart from Christ, though it be but partially, and for a time, for they cannot finally and totally depart from him, in what a poor, withered, fruitless condition they are, both in their frames and duties.

Ver. 5. *I am the vine, ye are the branches*, &c.] Christ here repeats what he said of himself, *the vine*, for the sake of the application of *the branches* to his disciples: which expresses their sameness of nature with Christ; their strict and close union to him; and the communication of life and grace, holiness and fruitfulness, of support and strength, and of perseverance in grace and holiness to the end from him: *he that abideth in me, and I in him*: which is the case of all that are once in Christ, and he in them: *the same bringeth forth much fruit*; in the exercise of grace, and performance of good works; and continues to do so as long as he lives, not by virtue of his own free will, power, and strength, but by grace continually received from Christ: *for without me ye can do nothing*; nothing that is spiritually good; no, not any thing at all, be it little or great, easy or difficult to be performed; can't think a good thought, speak a good word, or do a good action; can neither begin one, nor, when it is begun, perfect it. Nothing is to be done *without Christ*; without his spirit, grace, strength, and presence; or as *separate from* him. Were it possible for the branches that are truly in him, to be removed from him, they could bring forth no fruits of good works, any more than a branch separated from the vine can bring forth grapes; so that all the fruitfulness of a believer is to be ascribed to Christ, and his grace, and not to the free will and power of man.

Ver. 6. *If a man abide not in me*, &c.] Christ does not say, *if ye abide not in me*; he would not suppose this of his true disciples; Judas now being removed, to whom he may have some respect in this verse; though it may be applied to any one who has made a profession of Christ, and denies the truths of the Gospel, neglects the ordinances of it, or walks unworthy of his profession: of whom the following things may be truly said, *he is cast forth as a branch*; that is unfruitful, and is therefore taken away from the vine, and cast forth out of the vineyard. This signifies the ejection of worthless and fruitless professors out of the churches; for such who are either unsound in their principles, or are remiss and negligent in their attendance on the worship of God, with the church, or are loose and vain in their lives and conversations, are to be removed from communion with the people of God. *And is withered.* Some versions, as the Arabic, Syriac, and Persic, read this as an epithet of the word *branch*, thus; *the branch that is withered*; expressing the condition the branch is in before it is cast forth out of the vineyard, and the reason of its being cast forth: but others read it as a new and distinct predicate of the branch, shewing the case it is in, immediately upon its being cast forth: it may be cut off, and cast out with its leaves upon it, though without fruit; but as soon as ever it is ejected, it withers away. So mere external professors of religion, when they are cast out of the communion of the church, presently the leaf of profession, which once seemed green, decays, loses its verdure, and that seeming fruit which grew upon them shrinks to nothing, and they become *trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit*: their shew of life, zeal, religion, and holiness, disappears, and all their external gifts, light, knowledge, and understanding, even in a speculative way, vanish: *and men gather them*; or, as some copies have it, αὐτὸ, *it*, which best agrees with the word *branch*. This was a common

[p] Misn. Sheviith, c. 2. sect. 3.

[q] Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

thing, when branches were thrown out of a vineyard, for men to come and gather them up for an use hereafter mentioned. So when unworthy members are put out of a church of Christ, the men of the world gather them into their society: or they are taken into the congregations of false teachers, who being sensual, and without the spirit, separate themselves; or it may be read impersonally, *they are gathered*, or *it is gathered*: so wicked men, and Christless professors, will be gathered by the angels at the last day, and severed by them from the righteous, whom they will place at Christ's left hand to receive their awful doom: *and cast them*, or *it*, *into the fire, and they are burned*, or *it is burned*; for nothing else is such a branch good for; see Ezek. xv. 2, 3, 4, 5. This may respect either the gnawings of conscience, that distress of mind, if not despair, that fearful looking-for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which attend apostates in this life; or their being cast into the everlasting burnings of hell-fire by angels at the last day, as will be the case of every unfruitful tree, of the chaff and tares.

Ver. 7. *If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you*, &c.] Abiding in Christ is here explained by his words or doctrines abiding in his disciples; by which are meant his Gospel, and the truths of it. This abides when it comes in power, and becomes the engrafted word; and may be said to do so, when such, in whose hearts it has a place, and has taken deep root, continue to have a relish and savour of it, a true and hearty affection for it, esteeming it above their necessary food; when they hold fast the profession of it, stand fast in it, steadfastly abide by it, and constantly attend on it; all which is a considerable evidence that they do, yea, there is a promise that they *shall continue in the son and in the father*, 1 John ii. 24. The blessing and privilege that such shall enjoy is, *ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you*; or, as some copies read it, *it shall be given you*: but this must be understood not of temporal things, as riches, honours, profits, pleasures, or whatever even the carnal mind of a believer himself may sometimes desire; but of things spiritual, and with such limitations and restrictions as these; whatever is according to the will of God, for the spirit of God himself asks for no other for the saints; whatever is for the glory of God, and for their own spiritual profit and edification; and whatever is agreeably to the words and doctrines of Christ, which abide in them. Every thing of this kind they ask in faith, and with a submission to the divine will, they may expect to receive.

Ver. 8. *Herein is my father glorified*, &c.] This does not so much refer to what goes before, concerning the disciples abiding in Christ, and he and his words abiding in them, and doing for them whatever they ask, though by all this God is glorified; as to what follows, the fruitfulness of the disciples: *that ye bear much fruit*: of doctrine, grace, and good works, which shew them to be trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, and the work of his hands; wherein the glory of his power, grace, and mercy, is greatly displayed. All the fruits of righteousness, with which they were filled by Christ, were by him to the praise and glory of God; yea, by the fruitfulness of grace, and of life and conversation, by the lively exercise of grace, and conscientious discharge of duty, as well as by light of doctrine, and usefulness in the ministration of the Gospel, the disciples and servants of Christ not only glorify God themselves, but are the means of others glorifying him. It follows, *so shall ye be my disciples*; or *disciples to me*; to my honour and glory also, as well as to my father's; not that their fruitfulness made them the disciples of Christ, but made them appear to be so, or made them honourable ones. Just as good fruit does not make the tree good; the tree is first good, and therefore it brings forth good fruit; but shews it to be good: as by continuing in his word, abiding by his Gospel they appeared to be *disciples indeed*, really and truly such; and as by loving one another, so by other fruits of righteousness, other men, all men know that they are the disciples of Christ.

Ver. 9. *As the father hath loved me*, &c.] As his own son, and as Mediator, from everlasting; and in time, in his state of humiliation, throughout the course of his obedience, and under all his sufferings; which he testified more than once by a voice from heaven; which he shewed by concealing nothing from him as Mediator, by giving all things into his hands, by shewing him all that he himself did, by appointing him the Saviour of the body, and making him the head of the church, by exalting him at his right hand, and ordaining him to be judge of quick and dead. *So have I loved you*: Christ loves his as his spouse and bride, as his dear children, as members of his body, as branches in him the vine, as believers in him, and followers of him; which he has shewn by espousing both their persons and cause, by assuming their nature, by suffering and dying in their room and stead, and making all suitable provision for them, both for time and eternity. And there is a likeness between the father's love to him, and his love to his disciples and followers: as his father loved him from everlasting, so did he love them; as his father loved him with a love of complacency and delight, so did he, and so does he love them; and as his father loved him with a special and peculiar affection, with an unchangeable, invariable, constant love, which will last for ever, in like manner does Christ love his people; and with this he enforces the following exhortation. *Continue ye in my love*; meaning either in his love to them, which, as he always continues in it without any variableness or shadow of turning, so he would have them continue in believing their interest in it, prizing and valuing it, in imitating and remembering it; or else in their love to him, to his person, to his people, to his Gospel, to his ordinances, ways, and worship, which he knew was liable to wax cold, though it could not be lost.

Ver. 10. *If ye keep my commandments ye shall abide in my love*, &c.] Not that their continuance in the heart's-love and affection of Christ depended upon their observation of his commands; for as the keeping of them is not the cause or reason of the saints having an interest in the love of Christ, so it is not the cause or reason of their abiding in it; but to such that observe the commandments of Christ he will continue to make further discoveries of his love, and let them see more clearly and largely what a value he has for them,

and how much he loves them: or the sense is, that by keeping the commandments of Christ, his disciples and followers shew that they love him, and continue in their affection to him: *even as I have kept my father's commandments, and abide in his love.* The commandments of the father kept by Christ were not only the precepts of the moral law, and the rites of the ceremonial one, which he strictly observed; but the preaching of the Gospel, and submitting to the ordinances of it, doing of miracles, and laying down his life for his people; in performing which, as his father testified his approbation of them, and how strongly he was affected to him, what an abiding he had in his love; so Christ hereby shewed his constant and continued love to his father; and which was done by him, that the world, as well as his disciples, might know how much he loved him; see ch. xiv. 31.

Ver. 11. *These things have I spoken unto you,* &c.] Concerning the vine and branches, his abiding in them, and they in him, their fruitfulness from him, and perseverance in him, his love to them, and their's to him: *that my joy might remain in you;* meaning either that joy with which he joyed in and over them, as united to him, and which is of the same nature as the joy of the bridegroom over the bride, and which will always remain and continue the same; or rather that joy which he is the author, object, ground, and matter of, for there's always reason to rejoice in him, even in the most afflictive circumstances of life: *and that your joy might be full;* that grace of joy which is implanted in the soul, by the spirit of God in regeneration, and arises from, and is increased by discoveries of the person, grace, blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ; and is *full of glory*, upon a clear sight of him in this life, and will be entirely full, completely perfected in the other world, when he will be seen as he is.

Ver. 12. *This is my commandment, that ye love one another,* &c.] Christ had been before speaking of his commandments; and he mentions this as the principal one, and to which all the rest may be reduced: for as the precepts of the second table of the moral law may be briefly comprehended in this one duty, love to our neighbour, so all the duties of Christianity, relative to one another, are reducible to this, by love to serve each other. This was the commandment which lay uppermost on Christ's heart, and which he knew, if attended to, the rest could not fail of being observed. The argument by which, and the manner in which, he presses it, is as before: *as I have loved you;* than which nothing can be more strong and forcible; see John xiii. 34.

Ver. 13. *Greater love hath no man than this,* &c.] By these words our Lord shews, how far love to another should extend, even to the laying down of our lives for the brethren; which is the highest instance of love among men; *that a man lay down his life for his friends;* and in which believers should not come short of them; and also his great love to his people, and explains what he had just said, *as I have loved you;* which in a little time would be seen, by his laying down his life for them: for he not only came down from heaven, and laid aside his glory and royal majesty, but he laid down his life; not his gold and silver, and the riches of this world, which were all his, but his life; than which, nothing is dearer to a man, is himself, his all: and besides, Christ's life was not a common one, it was not the life of an innocent person only, or the life of a mere man, but of a man in union with the son of God; it was the Lord of glory and Prince of life, who was crucified, and slain; a life that was entirely at his own dispose; it had never been forfeited by sin, nor could it have been forced away from him by men or devils; it was laid down of and by himself, freely and voluntarily; and that *for*, in the room, and instead of his people, as a ransom for them; he being their surety and substitute, and standing in their law-place and stead, he took their sins upon him, bore the curse of the law, sustained his father's wrath, and all the punishment due to sin; and so suffered death, the death of the cross; the just, in the room and stead of the unjust; the persons for whom he laid down his life, are described as *his friends*; not that they were originally so; being enemies and enmity itself to God, when he laid down his life for them, and reconciled them; they were not such as had carried themselves friendly, or had shewn any love and affection to him, but all the reverse: but they are so called, because he had chosen them for his friends; he had pitched upon them, and resolved to make them so; and by dying for them, reconciled them who were enemies; and in consequence of this, by his spirit and grace, of enemies makes them friends; so that his love in dying for his people, is greater than any instance of love among men: he laid down his life for his enemies, without any sinister selfish views, and that freely and voluntarily; whereas among men, when one man has laid down his life for others, either they have been very deserving, or he has been forced to it, or it has been done with the view of popular applause and vain glory.

Ver. 14. *Ye are my friends,* &c.] This is an application of the foregoing passage, and more clearly explains it. The character of *friends*, is applied to the disciples of Christ; and belongs not only to his apostles, but to all that love him, believe in him, and obey him; to whom he has shewed himself friendly, by laying down his life for them; for this clearly shews, that Christ had respect in the former words, to his own laying down his life for his people, in consequence of his great love to them; whereby he has made them friends, and who appear to be so by their cheerful obedience to him: *if ye do whatsoever I command you;* not that their doing of the commandments of Christ interested them in his favour; or made them his friends; or was the reason and motive of his laying down his life for them, and shewing himself in such a friendly manner to them: but the sense is, that by observing his commands from a principle of love, they would make it appear that they were his friends, being influenced by his grace, and constrained by a sense of his love in dying for them, to act such a part.

Ver. 15. *Henceforth I call you not servants,* &c.] As they and the rest of the people of God had been, under the legal dispensation; for though they were children, yet differed nothing from servants; and were very much influenced and impressed with a servile spirit, a spirit of bondage unto fear, being kept under tutors

and governors by a severe discipline; but now Christ being come in the flesh, and being about to lay down his life, and make reconciliation for them, henceforward he would not use, treat, or account them as servants: *for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth*; designs to do, or is about to do; he is not made privy to all his counsels and purposes; these are only opened to him as necessity requires; which was pretty much the case of the Old-Testament church, who, comparatively speaking, were used as servants; and had not the knowledge of the mysteries of grace, and of the counsels of God, as they are now laid open under the Gospel dispensation: *but I have called you friends*; that is, accounted, reckoned of them, and used them as his friends and familiar acquaintance; whom he told all his mind unto, and would go on to treat them as such; by leading them more and more, as they were able to bear it, into the designs of his grace, and the doctrines of his Gospel: just as Abraham was called the friend of God, and proved to be so, by his not concealing from him the thing he was about to do: *for all things I have heard of my father, I have made known unto you*: not all that he knew as the omniscient God, for there was no necessity that all such things should be made known to them; but all things which he had delivered to him as man and Mediator, by his father, respecting the salvation of men; all things which he himself was to do and suffer, in order to obtain eternal redemption; and the whole of the Gospel, as to the essential and substantial parts of it, they were to preach; for otherwise, there were some things which as yet they were not able to bear, and were reserved to another time, to be made known unto them by his spirit.

Ver. 16. *Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you*, &c.] Not but that they had made choice of him as their Lord and Master, Saviour and Redeemer; but not first, he was before-hand with them; he chose them, before they chose him; so that his choice of them was entirely free, did not arise from any character, motive, or condition in them: the allusion is to a custom of the Jews, the reverse of which Christ acted; with whom it was usual for disciples to choose their own masters, and not masters their disciples: hence that advice of R. Joshuah ben Perachiah, said[r] to be the master of Jesus of Nazareth, "עשה לך רב"[s], "*make*, provide, or chose *thyself a master*, and get "thyself a companion." Those words in Cant. ii. 16. *my beloved is mine, and I am his*, are thus paraphrased by the Jews[t]; "he hath chosen me, and I have chosen "him:" which is not amiss, provided the latter choice is thought to be by virtue, and in consequence of the former: if not, our Lord directly opposes the words and sense. This may be understood both of election to salvation, and of choice to the office of apostleship; in both which Christ was first, or chose them before they chose him, that good part, which shall never be taken away; for as they were chosen in him, so by him, before the foundation of the world; being as early loved by him, as by his father; and in consequence thereof, were chosen by him, for his people and peculiar treasure; he first chose and called them to be his disciples and apostles, to follow him, preach his Gospel, and become fishers of men; and clothed them with full power and authority to exercise their high office: *and ordained you*; which may design either ordination to eternal life, or apostleship, before the world began; as Jeremiah was ordained to be a prophet, before he was born; or else the investiture of them with that office, and with all gifts and graces necessary for the discharge of it; for when he called and sent forth his disciples to preach the Gospel, he is said to *ordain* them, Mark iii. 14. and the rather this may be meant here, because the former is designed by his choosing them; or he *set* them, or planted them in himself, a fruitful soil, that they might shoot up and bear much fruit, as it follows: *that ye should go and bring forth fruit*: go first into Judea, and then into all the world; and brings forth the fruits of righteousness and holiness in themselves, and be the happy means of the conversion, and so of bringing in a large harvest of souls to Jesus Christ: *and that your fruit should remain*; as it has done; for they not only persevered themselves in faith and holiness, in preaching the Gospel, and living according to it, but the persons, whose conversion they were instruments of, continued steadfastly in their doctrine, and in the fellowship of the saints; and the Gospel which was preached by them, has remained, though not always in the same place, yet in the world ever since: *that whatsoever ye shall ask of the father in my name, he may give it you*. This is added, to encourage their perseverance in the work he chose and called them to, which would be attended with many difficulties and discouragements; wherefore as they would stand in need of divine assistance, they might assure themselves of it; for be it what it would they should ask of his father, making mention of his name and righteousness; whether for a sufficiency of gifts and grace in the discharge of their duty; or for success in it; or for the confirmation of the truths delivered by them; or for liberty and boldness to speak in vindication of themselves, when called to it before kings and governors, it should be given them.

Ver. 17. *These things I command you*, &c.] The doctrines which Christ spake, as one having authority, concerning the vine and branches; his love to his disciples, in laying down his life for them, and in accounting and using them as friends, and not servants; in chosing, ordaining, and sending them forth, for the ends above mentioned; these were delivered by him with this view, to promote brotherly love among them: *that ye love one another*; this lay much upon his heart, he often mentions it; this is the third time 'tis expressed by him, in these his last discourses; and indeed, since he had declared such strong love and affection for them, it was but right and proper they should love one another; nor does any thing more tend to increase mutual love among the saints, than the consideration of their common interest in the unchangeable love of their Lord.

Ver. 18. *If the world hate you*, &c.] After our Lord had signified how much he loved his disciples, and

[r] Ganz Tzemach David, fol. 24. 2.
[s] Pirke Abot, c. 1. sect. 6.
[t] Zohar in Exod. fol. 9. 1.

what great things he had done for them, he faithfully acquaints them with the world's hatred of them, and what they must expect to meet with from that quarter, and says many things to fortify their minds against it; his words do not imply any doubt about it, but he rather takes it for granted, as a thing out of question; *if*, or *seeing the world hate you;* they had had some experience of it already, and might look for more, when their master was gone from them: wherefore, he, in order to engage their patience under it, says, *ye know that it hated me before it hated you:* which words are an appeal of Christ to his apostles, for the usage he had met with from the wicked and unbelieving world of the Jews; how they had expressed their hatred, not only by words, calling him a gluttonous man, and a wine-bibber, a sinner, a Samaritan, a madman, one that had a devil, yea, Beelzebub himself, but by deeds; taking up stones to stone him more than once, leading him to the brow of an hill, in order to cast him down headlong, consulting by various means to take away his life, as Herod did in his very infancy; which was done, before they shewed so much hatred to his disciples; and perhaps reference may be had to the original enmity between the seed of the woman, and the seed of the serpent, mentioned Gen. iii. 15. as well as to these instances. Moreover, the words πρῶτον ὑμῶν, rendered *before you*, may be translated *the first* or *chief of you*, your Lord and head; and denotes the dignity, excellency, and superiority of Christ; wherefore it is suggested, that if he, who was so much before them in personal worth and greatness, was hated by the world, they should not think it hard, or any strange thing, that this should be their case.

Ver. 19. *If ye were of the world*, &c.] Belonged to the world, were of the same spirit and principles with it, and pursued the same practices: *the world would love its own;* for every like loves its like; the men of the world love each other's persons, company, and conversation: *but because ye are not of the world;* once they were, being born into it, brought up in it, had their conversation among the men of it, were themselves men of carnal, worldly, principles and practices; but being called by Christ, and becoming his disciples, they were no more of it; and as he was not of the world, so they were not of it, though they were in it. The Jews distinguish the disciples of the wise men, from אינשי דעלמא, *the men of the world* [n], pretending that they were not; but this is a character that only belongs to the disciples of Christ, in consequence of their being called by him out of it: *but I have chosen you out of the world;* which designs not the eternal election of them, but the separation of them from the rest of the world in effectual vocation, and the designation of them to his work and service: *therefore the world hateth you;* and since it was upon that account, they had no reason to be uneasy, but rather to rejoice; seeing this was an evidence of their not belonging to the world, and of being chosen and called by Christ out of it.

Ver. 20. *Remember the word that I said unto you*, &c.] For their further consolation under the hatred of the world, he puts them in mind of a saying of his, which he had lately used, ch. xiii. 16. to teach them humility, self-denial, and brotherly love, and elsewhere, as in Matt. x. 24. for the same purpose as here; namely, to engage them patiently to bear the hatred of men, and all indignities and insults from them, for his name's sake: *the servant is not greater than the Lord;* nor so great, and consequently not more, nor so much deserving of respect, or to be treated in a better manner; suggesting, that Christ was their Lord and master, as he was, and they were his servants; and therefore were not greater than him, but much inferior to him, and could not expect better usage from men than he had: *if they have persecuted me;* as they did, both by words and deeds, as before observed: *they will persecute you;* and so they did in like manner, and from place to place: *if they have kept my saying;* which is either ironically spoken, or designs that insidious malicious observation of Christ's words, made by the Jews, with an intent to catch and lay hold on something to improve against him: *they will keep yours also;* that is, either they will attend to your doctrines, or they will make the same spiteful remarks, and put the same evil constructions on your words as on mine.

Ver. 21. *But all these things will they do unto you*, &c.] Christ here signifies, that all the hatred and persecutions raised against his people by the world, would not be on their own account, for any evil actions done by them; they would not suffer as thieves, murderers, and evil doers, but as Christians; or as he says, *for my name's sake:* because they were called by his name, and called upon his name; because they professed his name, and confessed him to be the Messiah and Redeemer; because they loved his name Jesus, a Saviour, believed in his name, and hoped in him for eternal life; and also preached him, and in his name salvation, and encouraged others to believe in him; and therefore they had no reason to be ashamed, but rather to rejoice; as they afterwards did, that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name: besides, this malice and hatred of theirs arose from ignorance of the father of Christ: *because they know not him that sent me;* they did not know that Jesus was the Christ, and sent of God; they did not acknowledge him to be so, or the father to be the sender of him; and because Christ and his disciples asserted this, therefore they were the objects of their hatred.

Ver. 22. *If I had not come and spoken unto them*, &c.] The ignorance of the Jews is represented as inexcusable, since Christ was come, and had preached unto them; if he had not come and told them that he was the Messiah, they might have pleaded an excuse for their ignorance of him, and his mission, and of the father that sent him: but inasmuch as he was come in the flesh, and came to them his own; and came also a light into the world, carrying along with him evidence, conviction, and demonstration, of his being the Messiah; speaking such words as never man did; preaching with such authority as the Scribes and Pharisees did not; declaring in plain terms he was the Christ of God, and that if they did not believe him

[n] T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 80. 2.

to be so, they would die in their sins; they could have no pretext to make for their ignorance and disbelief: if all this had not been done, *they had not had sin* or been guilty of the sin of unbelief, in the rejection of the Messiah; not that they would have been without sin in any sense, or without any kind of sin, but without this particular sin; at least they would have excused and wiped themselves clean, and would have looked like innocent and sinless persons, under all their ignorance and unbelief: *but now they have no cloak for their sin;* they could not say, had he come to us, and told us that he was the Messiah, and given evidence of his being sent by the father, we would have believed him, and received him as the Messiah: for he did do this, and so cut off all excuses and pretences from them.

Ver. 23. *He that hateth me, hateth my father also.*] The hatred the world bears to the followers of Christ, is interpretatively hatred to Christ himself; and hatred to Christ himself, is no other than hatred to his father; and indeed, all the hatred that is shewn by the men of the world to Christ, to his Gospel, and to his faithful ministers and followers, originally arises from that enmity, that is naturally in the heart of every unregenerate man against God: now since not only Christ, but the father also, is hated by the world, the children of God and disciples of Christ may sit easier under all the resentment, frowns, and malice of the world.

Ver. 24. *If I had not done among them the works,* &c.] This is another, and a new argument, evincing the inexcusableness of their ignorance, and infidelity, and sin, taken from the works that Christ did; such as healing the sick, raising the dead, giving sight to the blind, causing the dumb to speak, the deaf to hear, and the lame to walk, cleansing lepers, and casting out devils; which were clear proofs, and full demonstrations of his deity, and of his being the true Messiah: *and which none other man did;* in his own name, and by his own power; and which none of the men of God ever did; as Moses, Elijah, Elisha, or others; and particularly that of giving sight to one that was born blind: now if these works had not been done *among them,* openly, visibly, and publicly, *they had not had sin;* or so much sin; or their sin of unbelief would not have been so great, or attended with such aggravating circumstances; or they would not have been guilty of the sin against the Holy Ghost, as many of them were; who saw his works and miracles, and were convicted in their own consciences that he was the Messiah, and yet rejected him, against all the light and evidence which the spirit of God gave by them, and by whom Christ wrought his miracles: *but now have they both seen;* the works which were done, and the Messiah, whose mission from the father they proved; *and hated both me and my father:* for their rejection of him as the Messiah, notwithstanding the doctrines he taught, and the miracles he wrought, plainly arose from obstinacy, malice, and inveterate hatred against Christ, and against the father that sent him.

Ver. 25. *But this cometh to pass,* &c.] This hatred against Christ, and which is pointed at his people for his sake, and reaches to the father also on his account, is suffered to be, and therefore should be patiently borne: *that the word might be fulfilled which is written in their law:* either in Psal. xxxv. 19. or rather in Psal lxix. 4. which is a psalm of Christ, as appears by citations out of it in the New Testament, or references to it; see John ii. 17. and xix. 28. Matt. xxvii. 48. The whole Scripture is sometimes called the law, as here; for not the law of Moses is meant, or the five books of Moses, but the writings of the Old Testament; which the Jews had in their hands, to them being committed the oracles of God; and sometimes are so called, when the book of Psalms is particularly referred to as now; see John x. 34. and xii. 34. the words cited are, *they hated me without a cause;* without any reason for it, Christ having given them no provocation, or just cause of offence, anger, or hatred. This sin of hating without a cause, is represented by the Jews as a very heinous one, and as the reason of the destruction of the second temple; under which they observe, that men studied in the law, and in the commandments, and in doing of good; and therefore ask why it was destroyed? the answer is, because there was under it, שנאת חנם, *hatred without a cause:* to teach us, that hatred without a cause is equal to the three (capital) transgressions, idolatry, adultery, and murder, for which they say the first temple was destroyed*. This is a tacit acknowledgment that the sin here mentioned was a reigning one, or that it much abounded in the time of Christ.

Ver. 26. *But when the Comforter is come,* &c.] Or *advocate,* the spirit of God; who was to be, and has been an advocate for Christ, against the world, and for his people, against all their enemies; and who as he was to reprove, and did reprove the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment, in favour of Christ, so he was to assist his people, and plead their cause, and help them, in vindication of themselves, before the princes of the earth, as he did: and who also was to act, and has acted the part of a *comforter* to them, under all the hatred and violence they have met with from the world; by taking and applying the things of Christ to them; by shedding the love of God in them; by applying the promises of the Gospel to them; by witnessing their adoption, and sealing them up to the day of redemption: *whom I will send unto you from the father;* visibly, as on the day of Pentecost, in cloven tongues as of fire; and invisibly into their hearts, by the secret influence of his light and grace; which mission, as it suggests no inferiority in the spirit, either to the father or the son; since the same spirit with the father, was the sender of Christ; so it is expressive of the equal deity of Christ, and his joint power and authority with the father: *even the spirit of truth;* who is the true spirit, truth itself; yea, the true God, with the father and son; the spirit of him who is truth; the dictator of the Scriptures of truth; who leads his people into all truth; and is the spirit of truth, as he is a witness or testifier of Christ, hereafter promised: *which proceedeth from the father;*

* T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 9. 2. Hieros. Yoma, fol. 38. 3.

Christ is not content to describe him by his work and office, as an advocate and comforter, and as the spirit of truth; and from his mission by him from the father; all which shews his usefulness and authority; but also from his nature and essence, which is the same with the father's; and from his peculiar personal and distinctive character, expressed by his proceeding from the father; and which is mentioned, as what is distinct from his mission by Christ, from the father before spoken of; and designs no other, than the eternal, ineffable, and continued act of his procession, from the father and the son; in which he partakes of the same nature with them, and which personally distinguishes him from them. The ancient Jews [a] spoke of him just in the same language; *the spirit of God*, in Gen. i. 2. they say is the Holy Spirit, דנפיק מאלהים, *which proceedeth from God:* very pertinently does Christ take notice of this his character here, when he was about to speak of him as his testifier: *he shall testify of me:* of his deity and sonship, of his incarnation, of his being the Messiah, of his sufferings and death, of his resurrection and ascension, of his exaltation at the right hand of God, and of his ordination to be the Judge of quick and dead; all which he bore testimony to, by the gifts bestowed upon the apostles, and the great grace that was upon them all; by the signs, wonders, and divers miracles, by which the Gospel of Christ was confirmed; and by the power, influence, and success, which attended the preaching of it every where. Thus he testified of Christ, against the blaspheming Jews, and persecuting Gentiles, to the reproof and confusion of them; and he testified of him to the apostles, and all true believers, to their great joy and comfort, and to the support of them, under all the malice and hatred of the world.

Ver. 27. *And ye shall also bear witness*, &c.] That is, of Christ; of all the things he did in Jerusalem, and in the land of the Jews; being eye-witnesses, and ministers, or servants of the word, who constantly attended upon him; of all the good he did to the bodies and souls of men; of the various miracles he wrought, and of the several doctrines which were taught by him: what they saw with their eyes, heard with their ears, and with their hands handled of the word of life, that they could declare, and did declare, and bore a faithful testimony to; they were to be, and were witnesses of his sufferings and death, of his resurrection from the dead, and ascension to heaven; they were a company of select men, chosen before of God, for this purpose; they were the most proper to be concerned herein, having been for a considerable time his intimates and associates: *because ye have been with me from the beginning;* from the beginning of his ministry; for as soon as he entered on his public work, he called them to be followers of him; and who continued with him to the end, and therefore were the most capable of bearing a testimony concerning his person, doctrines, and works; of all he did and suffered, from first to last.

CHAP. XVI.

Ver. 1. *THESE things have I spoken unto you*, &c.] Concerning the world's hatred and persecution of them, and the little regard they would shew to their doctrine: these things Christ thought proper to give them notice of before-hand, that expecting them, they might be prepared for them, and be fortified against them; *that*, says he, *ye should not be offended:* his view in speaking of them, was not to discourage them, but to prevent their stumbling at them, and falling by them. Hardships coming upon persons at unawares, bear the harder upon their spirits, and they are more apt to take offence at them, and be impatient under them, which is prevented by previous intimation: had Christ said nothing of these things that should befall his disciples, they might have surprised them, and have been a stumbling to them; and might have tempted them to have relinquished their profession of him, and dropped their ministerial work; whereas being apprized of them before-hand, they were not so shocking to them. This shews the tender concern of Christ for his disciples, how careful he was to remove every occasion of stumbling, or what might be matter of offence to them; and may teach us to act in such like manner towards one another, in this, or any other case.

Ver. 2. *They shall put you out of the synagogues*, &c.] The Jews had made a law already, that he that confessed that Jesus was the Messiah, should be cast out of their synagogues; and they had put it in execution upon the blind man Christ restored to sight, for his profession of faith in him; which struck such a terror upon the people, that even many of the chief rulers who believed that Jesus was the true Messiah, durst not confess him, because of this law; for it was what they could not bear the thoughts of, to be deemed and treated as heretics and apostates, and the vilest of wretches: for this putting out of the synagogue, was not the lesser excommunication, which was called נדוי, *Niddui*, and was a *separation* from a particular synagogue for a while; but the greater excommunication, either by חרם, *Cherem*, or שמתא, *Shammatha;* when a person was cut off from the whole body of the Jewish church, called often the synagogue, or congregation of the people; and was devoted and consigned to utter destruction, which was the height of their ecclesiastical power, their rage and malice could carry them to; and this the apostles were to expect; nay, not only this, but to have their lives taken away by ruffians, under a pretence of zeal for the service of God, and interest of religion: *yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you, will think that he doth God service.* For this is not to be understood

[a] Zohar in Gen. fol. 1. 4.

of their being delivered up into the hands of civil magistrates, and of their being tried, judged, condemned, and put to death by their orders, but of their being murdered by a set of men called *zealots*: who, in imitation of Phinehas, as they pretended, took upon them, whenever they found any person guilty of a capital crime, as idolatry, blasphemy, &c. or what they judged so, to fall upon him at once, and without any more ado kill him; nor were they accountable to any court of judicature for such an action, and which was reckoned laudable and praiseworthy: in this way, and by the hands of such miscreants, Stephen the protomartyr lost his life; for though they had him before a council, and suborned witnesses against him, yet when in his own defence he said what these *zealots* interpreted blasphemy, they ran upon him at once, and cast him out of the city, and stoned him to death; and without any leave or authority from the sanhedrim, as appears: and these men were accounted good men, zealous, קנאתו של מקום[y], *with a zeal for God*, his honour and glory; and valued themselves much upon such butcheries and inhumanity, and thought, as our Lord here says, that they *did God service*; or as the Syriac renders it, דקורבנא מקרב, *offered a sacrifice to God*, and so the Arabic and Ethiopic: and indeed this is a rule with the Jews[z], and which they form upon the instance and example of Phinehas; "that whoever sheds the "blood of wicked men, (and such they reckoned the "apostles and followers of Christ to be,) כאלו הקריב "קרבן, *it is all one as if he offered a sacrifice*;" they looked upon this to be a sacrifice acceptable and well-pleasing to God: so the Apostle Paul, in his unregenerate state, thought he ought to do many things contrary to the name of Christ: and that he was doing God service, when he prosecuted the church, and gave his voice with these ruffians, to put the saints to death.

Ver. 3. *And these things will they do unto you*, &c.] Christ here opens the true spring and source of the furious zeal of the Jews, against the apostles, in putting them out of their synagogues, and taking away their lives; it was pure wilful ignorance of the father and himself; *because they have not known the father nor me*: though they boasted of their knowledge of God; yet they knew him not as the father and sender of Christ, at least they would not own him as such: nor Jesus as the true Messiah, and sent of the father, to redeem and save his people from their sins; and since they neither knew the father, nor Christ, it is no wonder they did not know, own, and acknowledge, the disciples of Christ, but used them in the ill manner they did; their zeal was not according to knowledge, it was a blind and misguided one: and this is mentioned, not to extenuate or excuse their sin, though it shews they were not out of the reach of mercy, because they, as the apostle says of himself, *did it ignorantly in unbelief*: but as an argument with the disciples to bear their ill usage with patience, and to pity them and pray for them.

Ver. 4. *But these things have I told you*, &c.] Christ enlarged on this disagreeable subject, and was the more particular in enumerating the evils his apostles were to endure for his name's sake: *that when the time shall come*; some copies read it, *their time*; so the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic render it; that is, the time when wicked men will be suffered to vent all their rage and malice: *ye may remember that I told you of them*; which might serve greatly to confirm them in the faith of him as the omniscient God, and the true Messiah, and encourage them to depend on his veracity and faithfulness in his promises; that since the evil things which he spoke of came upon them, so they might hope, believe, and expect, that all the good things he had assured them of, should be accomplished; and also to engage them to bear their sufferings with the greater patience, since they were appointed by God, and foretold by their Lord and master. *And these things*, adds Christ, *I said not unto you at the beginning*; when he first called them to be followers of him; for though when he ordained them, and sent them forth to preach the Gospel in the cities of Judea, which was some time after he had called them by his grace, he did acquaint them with some of the troubles and exercises they should meet with; as that they should be hated by all men, persecuted from city to city, beat in the synagogues, delivered up to councils, and brought before kings and governors; see Matt. x. yet he did not so fully and distinctly speak of these things, as here and at this time: his reason for such a conduct was this, *because*, says he, *I was with you*: wherefore he never spoke so fully and distinctly of their troubles, because he was with them, and took them upon himself; and indeed, whilst he was with them, the rage and malice of the Jews were not so much against his disciples, as himself; nor did he for the same reason speak so largely of the Comforter, and of the comforts they should receive from him, because as they had not the exercises they should afterwards have, so they had him to be their comforter.

Ver. 5. *But now I go my way to him that sent me*, &c.] These words seem to belong to the preceding verse, and to contain a reason why Christ spoke of the trials and afflictions of his disciples now, because he was going away from them to his father; when as they would be at the head of his affairs in this world, so they would the more become the butt of the rage of men: *and none of you asketh me, whither goest thou?* Peter indeed asked the question, ch. xiii. 36. but his meaning was, what part of the country he was going to? what private and inaccessible place he was about to betake himself to? he had no notion of his going out of the world, or to heaven to his father, and therefore inquired nothing about it: and when Christ had suggested to his disciples, that he was going to his father's house, to prepare mansions for them, they did not seem to understand him, ch. xiv. 2, 3, 5. Nor did they ask what he meant by his father's house, or what those mansions were he was going to prepare; and what the glory was he was going to possess for himself and them; they ask neither about the place he was going to, nor the way to it, nor the happiness to be enjoyed there.

Ver. 6. *But because I have said these things to you*,

[y] Jarchi & Bartenora in Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 9. sect. 6.

[z] Bemidbar Rabba, Parash. 21. fol. 229. 3.

&c.] Of being hated and persecuted by the Jews, of being put out of their synagogues, and of losing of their lives; and particularly of his departure from them, or the loss of his bodily presence: *sorrow hath filled your heart:* sorrow for his absence so possessed their minds, seized on all the powers and faculties of their souls, and engrossed all their thoughts, that it never entered into the heart of any of them, to inquire about the place he was going to, or the state he should enter upon; which had they had any right notions of, would have greatly contributed to have abated their sorrow, quieted their minds, made them easy under, and reconciled them unto, his departure from them.

Ver. 7. *Nevertheless, I tell you the truth,* &c.] Christ was truth itself, and could say nothing else; but he makes use of this way of speaking, to raise the attention of his disciples, and to engage their belief of what he was about to say, and of which they were not easily persuaded; which was, that however overwhelmed they were with grief and sorrow, because of his going away from them, a greater truth he could not tell them, than that this would be to their real good and advantage: *it is expedient for you that I go away:* Christ's death here, as in many other places in these discourses of his, is signified by going away, a departure, taking a sort of a journey, such an one as indeed is common to all mankind; death is the way of all the earth, and which Christ took by agreement with his father; a dark way is the valley of the shadow of death, and so it was to Christ, who went away in the dark, under the hidings of his father's face; it is a man's going to his long home, and a long journey it is, till he returns in the resurrection-morn; though it was a short one to Christ, who rose again the third day. The phrase supposes the place and persons he went from, this world and his disciples; and the place and persons he went unto, the grave, heaven, his father, the blessed spirit, angels, and glorified saints; and is expressive of the voluntariness of his death; he was not fetched, or thrust, and forced away, but he went away of himself; and is a very easy and familiar way of expressing death by, and greatly takes off the dread and terror of it; it is only moving from one place to another, as from one house, city, or country, to another; and shews, that it is not an annihilation of a man, either in body or soul, only a translating of him from one place and state to another. Now the death of Christ was expedient, not only for himself, which he does not mention; he being concerned more for the happiness of his people than of himself; but for his disciples and all believers; for hereby a great many evils were prevented falling upon them, which otherwise would; as the heavy strokes of divine justice, the curses and condemnation of the law, the wrath and vengeance of God, and eternal death, ruin, and destruction; as well as many good things were hereby obtained for them; as the redemption of their souls from sin, law, hell, and death; peace; reconciliation, and atonement; the full and free forgiveness of all their sins, an everlasting righteousness, and eternal life. Moreover, Christ's going away was expedient for his people; since he went to open the way for them into the holiest of all, by his blood; to take possession of heaven in their name and stead; to prepare mansions of glory for them; to appear in the presence of God for them; to be their advocate, and make intercession for all good things for them; to transact all their business between God and them; to take care of their affairs; to present their petitions; to remove all charges and accusations; and to ask for, and see applied every blessing of grace unto them. The particular instanced in, in the text, of the expediency of it, is the mission and coming of the spirit: *for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him to you.* The spirit of God in some sense had come, before the death of Christ; he had appeared in the creation of all things out of nothing, as a joint Creator with the father and son; he was come as a spirit of prophecy upon the inspired writers, and others; the Old-Testament saints had received him as a spirit of faith; he had been given to Christ as man, without measure, and the disciples had been partakers of his gifts and graces; but he was not come in so peculiar a manner as he afterwards did; as the promise of the father, the glorifier of Christ, the comforter of his people, the spirit of truth, and the reprover of the world: there are reasons to be given, why the spirit of God should not come in such a manner before, as after the death of Christ. The order of the three divine persons in the Trinity, and in the economy of man's salvation, required such a method to be observed; that the father should first, and for a while, be more especially manifested; next the son, and then the spirit: besides, our Lord has given a reason himself, why the spirit *was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified,* ch. vii. 39. And the coming of the spirit as a comforter, and the spirit of truth, was to be through the intercession, and by the mission of Christ; and therefore it was proper he should go away first, in order to send him; add to all this, that if Christ had not gone away or died, there would have been nothing for the spirit to have done; no blood to sprinkle; no righteousness to reveal and bring near; no salvation to apply; or any of the things of Christ, and blessings of grace, to have taken and shewn; all which are owing to the death of Christ, and which shew the expediency of it: the expediency of Christ's death for the mission of the spirit to his disciples, is very conspicuous; for hereby they were comforted and supported under a variety of troubles; were led into all truth, and so furnished for their ministerial work; and were made abundantly successful in it, that being attended with the demonstration of the spirit and of power.

Ver. 8. *And when he is come,* &c.] The coming of the spirit here, chiefly designs his descent upon the apostles, at the day of *Pentecost:* as the things ascribed to him, and which were then done by him, clearly shew; though it may also include his coming along with, and by the ministration of the Gospel, into the hearts of his people at conversion, in all after-ages of time: *he will reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment:* by *the world* is principally meant, the Jews; the world among whom Christ personally was, who knew him not, disbelieved him, rejected him as the Messiah, hated and persecuted him, even unto death; though not to the exclusion of the Gen-

tiles, the whole world that lies in wickedness; since both joined, and were concerned in these things, and reproved of them; which *reproving*, as it may respect different persons, may intend both such reproofs and convictions, as are not attended with conversion, and issue in salvation; and such as are powerful, spiritual, and to saving purposes: the several things the spirit of God is said to reprove of, being repeated in the following verses, with reasons or specifications annexed to them, will be there considered.

Ver. 9. *Of sin, because they believe not on me.*] The *sin* here primarily intended, is that of the Jews, in disbelieving, rejecting, and crucifying Christ; and which the spirit of God, by Peter, charged upon them on the day of *Pentecost*, and fully proved against them; gave such clear evidence, and wrought such strong convictions of in their minds and consciences, that being pricked to the heart, they cried out, *what shall we do?* Acts ii. 23, 36, 37. though as this passage may be applied to the ordinary work of the spirit of God upon the souls of men, through the ministry of the word; so it may take in convictions of sin of all sorts, as of original and actual sins, and particularly the sin of unbelief: for the spirit of God convinces of the sinfulness and corruption of nature, the wickedness and plague of a man's heart, the sin that dwells in him; how that has overspread all the powers and faculties of his soul, rendered both him and his services unacceptable to God, loathsome in his sight, and himself hopeless and helpless, and deserving of his wrath and displeasure: he also convinces of actual sins and transgressions, shewing that they are breaches of the law of God, and are committed against God himself; that they are deserving of death, even eternal death; that the wrath of God is revealed against them, and for them comes upon the children of disobedience; and that there is no atonement for them, or cleansing from them, but by the blood of Christ: he likewise convinces of the sin of unbelief, here particularly mentioned: shewing the evil nature and consequences of it, to persons enjoying a Gospel revelation; that such who disbelieve the Messiah, shall die in their sins; that whoever believes not in him shall be damned; and that faith in Christ is necessary to salvation, and that without it there is none.

Ver. 10. *Of righteousness, because I go to my father*, &c. The *righteousness* here spoken of, does, in the first sense of the word, design the personal righteousness of Christ. The Jews had traduced him as a wicked man, said he was a sinner himself, and a friend of publicans and sinners; that he was guilty of blasphemy and sedition, maintained a familiarity with Satan, yea, that he had a devil: now the spirit of God, by the mouth of Peter, on the day of *Pentecost*, proved, to the conviction of the Jews, that all this was slander; that Christ was an innocent, holy, and righteous person, and a man approved of God among them, as they themselves must be conscious of, Acts ii. 22. of all which, his going to the father, and being received by him, were a full proof and demonstration. The effusion of the spirit in that extraordinary manner upon the disciples, shewed that he was gone to the father, and had received from him the promise of the Holy Ghost, which he then shed abroad; and his going to the father, and being set down by him at his right hand, made it clear that he came from him, and was no impostor; that he had acted the faithful and upright part, and was free from all the charges the Jews had laid against him. Moreover, this may also be very well understood of the mediatorial righteousness of Christ, which he, as the surety and Saviour of his people, was to work out and bring in for them, in obedience to the law of God; which required holiness of nature, perfection of obedience, and bearing its penalty, death; all which were complied with by Christ, and so the whole righteousness of the law was fulfilled by him; and which is imputed by God as the justifying righteousness of all that believe in Jesus; and the proof of his having wrought out this, lies in his going to the father; for as this was the work he came about, the will of his father he came to do, had he not done it, 'tis reasonable to think he would never have met with such a welcome from him: besides, the donation of the spirit, in consequence of its being wrought out, most clearly demonstrates it: likewise in the ordinary work of the spirit of God upon the souls of his people, he always convinces them of the necessity of a righteousness to justify them before God, to render them acceptable in his sight, and to give them a right to the heavenly glory; for to admit them without a righteousness, or any unrighteous persons there, would be contrary to the justice of God, disagreeable to his pure and holy nature, and destructive of the comfort and happiness of the saints. He, the spirit of God, convinces men of the insufficiency of their own righteousness for such purposes; that they have no righteousness that deserves the name of one, and that what they have will not justify them before God, and entitle them to heaven: and this he does, by shewing them the corruption of their nature, their daily sins and infirmities, in thought, word, and deed; the purity of the divine perfections, and the spirituality and extensiveness of the law of God; which when a man is thoroughly apprized of, he can never hope for and expect justification before God by his own righteousness: hence the spirit of God proceeds to convince men of the glory, excellency, fulness, and suitableness of the righteousness of Christ; which he does, by revealing it to them in the Gospel, setting it before them, and working faith in them to lay hold upon it; when they desire to be found in Christ, not having on their own, but his righteousness; which convictions appear by the mean thoughts they have of their own righteousness, by hungering after Christ's, by disclaiming all but his, by their constant mention of it, dependence on it, and satisfaction in it; and thus to convince of it, is the peculiar work of the spirit, since naturally men are fond of their own righteousness, are ignorant of Christ's, and set against it. 'Tis added, *and ye see me no more;* not but that the disciples were to see Christ, and did see him after his resurrection, and will with the rest of the saints see him at his second coming: but the meaning is, that they should see him no more, in a mean and despicable condition on earth, in a state of humiliation, in the form of a servant, he having faithfully performed the whole work he came about, and particularly that of righteousness, he came to bring in.

Ver. 11. *Of judgment, because the prince of this*

world is judged.] This is to be understood of the judiciary power and authority of Christ, who has *all judgment* committed to him by the father, as Mediator; has all power in heaven and in earth; and as he is appointed, so he is a very fit person to judge the world at the last day. Now this being disputed and disbelieved by the Jews, the Holy Ghost, in the ministry of Peter, most clearly demonstrated to their full conviction, that he was raised from the dead, set upon his throne, and was made, or declared, Lord and Christ, Acts ii. 24, 34, 35, 36. of which the pouring forth of the Holy Ghost was an evidence; and the instance in the text proving it, and which is a very considerable one, is the judgment, or condemnation and destruction of Satan, the prince of the world; for Christ, by his death, has destroyed him and his works; has spoiled his principalities and powers; and by his resurrection from the dead, and ascension to heaven, has carried him and them captive, triumphing over them; and, through the effusion of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles, and the power of it attending their ministry, Satan was judged, condemned, and cast out of the Heathen world, their temples, and the souls of men; the prey was taken from the mighty, and the lawful captive delivered: but as this may refer to the ordinary work of the spirit in conviction and conversion, it may be differently applied; for he convinces of various things, which come under this name: he convinces of the wrong judgment which men in a state of nature form of God, whom they take to be such an one as themselves; of a crucified Christ, whom they esteem foolishness; of the doctrines of Christ, which they judge to be absurd and irrational; of the people of Christ, whom they reckon the filth of the world, and the offscouring of all things; of the ways and ordinances of Christ, which are thought to be grievous, unpleasant, and unprofitable; and of themselves, and their own state and condition, which they fancy to be good, and they in a fair way for heaven: he also convinces them of the excellency, truth, power, and usefulness of the Gospel, which is called *judgment*, Isa. xlii. 1, 4. and li. 4. so as to understand it truly, believe it cordially, receive it in the love of it, and feel the power of it: he convinces them of a future judgment; of the reality and certainty of it; that it will be universal, reach to all persons and things; that it will be carried on in the most righteous manner, and there will be no escaping it, of which the judgment and condemnation of Satan is a standing proof: and he moreover convinces of judgment or damnation; that men are under a sentence of condemnation in Adam; that they are liable to eternal damnation in themselves; that except they believe in Christ they will be damned, as sure as the prince of this world is.

Ver. 12. *I have yet many things to say unto you,* &c.] Not with respect to the main doctrines of the Gospel, for every thing of this kind he had made known unto them, ch. xv. 15. but what regarded the rejection of the Jews, and the calling of the Gentiles, the abrogation of the Mosaic economy, and settling the Gospel church-state, which were to come to pass after the death and resurrection of Christ, and the sending of the spirit: *but ye cannot bear them now;* because of their prejudices in favour of their own nation, the law of Moses, and the ceremonies of it, and the setting up of a temporal kingdom.

Ver. 13. *Howbeit, when the spirit of truth is come,* &c.] Of this character of the spirit, see ch. xiv. 17. His coming, as before, intends more especially his descent on the apostles at Pentecost; though what is here said of him is true of his office, and of his operations on other persons, and at other times: *he will guide you into all truth:* necessary to be known, useful to men, profitable to the churches, even the whole counsel of God; what relates to worship, the nature, form, and spirituality of it, as well as doctrine. He is as a guide, he goes before, leads the way, removes obstructions, opens the understanding, makes things plain and clear, teaches to profit, and leads in the way men should go, without turning to the right hand or left, which, without such a guide, they would be apt to do. The Jews[y] have a notion of the Holy Ghost being a guide into all wisdom and knowledge. "R. Phinehas says, "the Holy Spirit rested upon Joseph from his youth "to the day of his death, and *guided him into all* "*wisdom*, as a shepherd leads his flock, according to "Psal. lxxx. 2." *For he shall not speak of himself:* as Christ, the son, spoke not of himself in opposition to the father, so the spirit speaks not of himself in opposition either to the father, or the son, but in perfect agreement with both; being, as of the same nature and essence, power and glory, so of the same mind, understanding, and will; and as they agreed and wrought jointly and harmoniously, in the works of nature and providence, so in the economy of grace and salvation. *But whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak;* as Christ himself did, ch. xv. 15. and they are such things as ear has not heard besides; what were secretly transacted in the council and covenant of peace, and agreed upon by all the three persons; things which concern the salvation of men, the Gospel church-state, another world, and the glory of all the divine persons: *and he will shew you things to come:* which would come to pass after the death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ; things relating to the state and settlement of the Gospel church, the partition-wall being broken down, the law of commandments contained in ordinances abolished, and a new face of things appearing in the kingdom and interest of Christ, in consequence of the spirit being sent forth, and poured down: or this may respect the spirit of prophecy in the apostles, who shewed to them many things to come in after-ages; as the rise of the man of sin, the great departure from the faith, and decline of the power of godliness in the last days, the calling of the Jews, the destruction of antichrist, the burning of the world, and the making of new heavens and new earth; and, in short, what would be the state of the church of Christ, and religion, in all the several periods of time, quite down to the coming of Christ, when dead saints shall be raised, and living ones changed, as is declared throughout the book of the Revelations.

Ver. 14. *He shall glorify me,* &c.] In the ministration of the Gospel, which is *the ministration of the*

[y] Pirke Eliezer, c. 39.

spirit: and asserts Christ to be God over all, to have all that the father hath, to be possessed of all divine perfections, to have the fulness of the Godhead dwelling in him; ascribes the same works and worship to him as to the father; and, as in a glass, holds him forth to be beheld as the brightness of his glory, and his glory to be seen in it, as the glory of the only-begotten of the father, full of grace and truth: it declares him to be the only Saviour and Redeemer of lost sinners, that justification is solely by his righteousness, pardon by his blood, and atonement by his sacrifice; and which ministration the spirit makes effectual to the bringing of many souls to Christ to believe in him, profess his name, and expect life and salvation from him, by all which he is glorified. Moreover, the spirit of God glorifies Christ in the experience of the saints, by leading them to him for righteousness, peace, and pardon, for grace, and fresh supplies of it, for wisdom and strength, for food and rest, for life and happiness; and by enabling them to live by faith on him, on whom he has encouraged them to venture, and to whom they have committed their all; and by instructing them to glory in him, as their wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption; and by ascribing the glory of their salvation to him, and by making continual application to him, under his direction and influence; by leaning on him, and expecting every good thing from him both for time and eternity. The particular instance in which he glorifies Christ, follows, *for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you:* which is to be understood not of gifts Christ received from his father, and which he gives to men by his spirit; nor of internal grace, as faith, love, &c. which the spirit from Christ works in the hearts of men; but either of the doctrines of the Gospel, the deep things of God and Christ, which the spirit searches, and reveals in the ministration of the word. The Gospel is a sort of a *Kabala*, though of a different kind from the oral law of the Jews. Christ received it from the father, the spirit received it from Christ, the apostles received it from the spirit, and the churches of Christ from them in succeeding generations: or this may be understood of the blessings of grace held forth in the Gospel, such as justification, pardon, adoption, &c. which are in Christ; and which the spirit from Christ takes and shews to the saints, and witnesses their special and particular interest in, and so comforts them, and glorifies Christ.

Ver. 15. *All things that the father hath are mine,* &c.] Though it is true that the same divine nature the father is possessed of, the son is; and the same divine perfections belong to the one, as to the other; and the son shares in the same glory and felicity the father does; so that in the utmost extent of the phrase, all that the father hath are his; yet since Christ is speaking of things received of him by the spirit, and shewn unto his people, it rather seems that the blessings of grace, which the father has in store for his chosen ones, and the doctrines of grace, those deep things of his, are here more especially meant; which to reveal and apply, is the peculiar work of the spirit; and in these Christ is equally concerned with the father: *therefore, said I, he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you;* he does not mention the things of the father, only his own; nor was there any necessity for it, because whatever is his, is the father's, and whatever the father has is his: they are jointly concerned in every thing relating to the salvation, benefit, comfort, and happiness of the saints; so that when the spirit of God takes of the things of the one, he takes of the things of the other, and discovers, and applies them.

Ver. 16. *A little while and ye shall not see me,* &c.] Meaning, that he should be quickly taken from them by death. And in a very little time after this, having put up a prayer for them, recorded in the next chapter, he went into the garden, where he was met by Judas with his band of men, who laid hold on him, bound him, and led him first to Annas, then to Caiaphas, and from him to Pilate, when all the disciples forsook him and fled, and saw him no more in this mortal state, except Peter and John. He took his trial, was soon condemned, and crucified, and laid in the dark tomb, and silent grave, where, for a while, he was out of sight. *And again, a little while and ye shall see me:* referring either to his rising again the third day from his death, as was prophesied of, Hos. vi. 2. and was typified by Jonas's lying three days and three nights in the whale's belly, when he appeared to, and was seen by his disciples, to their great joy; or else to the short time in which he was to be, and was seen by them; namely, forty days between his resurrection and ascension; a longer stay it was not necessary he should make, for he had other work to do, for himself and them: *because I go to the father:* to give an account of the work he had finished on earth; to carry in his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice; to present himself to his father on behalf of his people; to appear in the presence of God for them; to be their advocate, plead their cause, and make intercession for them, and take possession of heaven in their name; to take his place at the right hand of God in their nature; to receive a kingdom for himself, and then return.

Ver. 17. *Then said some of his disciples among themselves,* &c.] It may be, some of them might better understand the meaning of Christ than others, or they might all be ignorant of it; for before the effusion of the spirit on them, they were attended with a great deal of ignorance; and what through their being overwhelmed at this time with sorrow, and what with their national sentiments they retained about a temporal kingdom, they understood very little of what Christ said to them concerning his death, the nature, use, and end of it. Wherefore some might make the motion first, and inquire, *what is this that he saith unto us, a little while and ye shall not see me?* they knew not what he meant by it, though he had so often and so clearly spoken of his death unto them: and as ignorant were they what he should design by saying, *and again a little while and ye shall see me;* though he had expressly told them, in so many words, some time ago, that whereas he should die, he should rise again the third day: and as much at a loss were they to guess what he should intend by the reason he gives, *and because I go to the father;* though he had often mentioned it already, and as what might be matter of joy unto them.

Ver. 18. *They said therefore,* &c.] One, and all of

them; the inquiry became universal; *what is this that he saith, a little while?* it seems as if this phrase was the most intricate and perplexing to them; for whatever conceptions they might have of not seeing, and seeing him again, as expressive of his going from them, and returning to them, yet had no notion at all what he should mean by *a little while:* and therefore add, *we cannot tell what he saith:* they knew his words, but not his meaning.

Ver. 19. *Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask him,* &c.] This is a proof of Christ's deity, that he is the omniscient God who knows all things, what is in man, even the secrets of the heart; for he not only knew the whisperings of the disciples, and their inquiries among themselves about the sense of his words, but also their secret desires to ask him concerning it: *and said unto them, do ye inquire among yourselves of that I said, a little while and ye shall not see me, and again a little while and ye shall see me?* which he said before they could put the question to him, they being bashful, and backward, through fear or shame; and which not only confirms what is before observed of his omniscience, but also shews his readiness to open his mind and meaning, and explain himself to his disciples, as he does in the following words.

Ver. 20. *Verily, verily, I say unto you,* &c.] A strong asseveration, a way of speaking often used by him, when he solemnly affirms any thing, and would assure of the truth of it, as here: *that ye shall weep and lament;* meaning at his death, when he should be removed from them, so that they should not see him; when they should be filled with inward grief on account thereof, and express it by mournful gestures, and a doleful voice; and which was fulfilled in them, Mark xvi. 10. and how pensive the two disciples were that were going to Emmaus, 'tis easy to observe from the account given of them; *but the world shall rejoice;* the unbelieving Jews; and not only the common people, but the chief priests, with the Scribes and elders, mocked at him, insulted him, and triumphed over him when on the cross, being glad at heart they had got him there; imagining now, that it was all over, the day was their own, and they should be no more disturbed by Christ and his followers: *and ye shall be sorrowful;* Christ repeats it again, and uses a variety of words to express the greatness of their sorrow, and the many ways in which they would signify it: *but your sorrow shall be turned into joy;* as it was, when he was raised from the dead, which was so wonderful and surprising to them, that for joy they could scarce believe their own eyes; it being a mercy unexpected, though they had been told of it, and too great for them to enjoy; yea, that very thing which was the occasion of their sorrow, became the foundation of their joy; namely, the death of Christ, salvation, and all the benefits and blessings of grace coming to them in this way.

Ver. 21. *A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow,* &c.] As was said she should have, Gen. iii. 16. This is God's ordination and appointment for sin; *because her hour is come;* is at hand; the fixed time in nature is up, and there's no avoiding it: *but as soon as she is delivered of the child;* for though the sorrow is great, yet there is a deliverance, and she is saved in child-bearing: when *she remembereth no more the anguish;* the sharp pains she has endured in her travail; *for joy that a man is born into the world.* Much such a way of speaking is used by the Jews [z], who observe, "if a woman brings forth a male child, all is forgot, "and she repents (*i. e.* of her impatience, or any un-"becoming expression in the time of labour), בשמחת "הזכר, *for the joy of a man-child.*" And our Lord seems to have respect to a prevailing notion among them, as well as many others, of the felicity of male children: 'tis a common saying with them [a], "blessed "is he whose children are males, and woe to him "whose children are females:" for they say [b], "when "שבא זכר בעלם, *that a man-child comes into the world,* "peace comes into the world." Now our Lord, by this instance, illustrates the sorrow his disciples should have by his departure, and the joy that they should be possessed of upon his return to them; that as the pains of a woman in travail are very sharp and severe, and the distress of her mind, about the issue of things respecting herself and offspring, is very great, so would be the grief and trouble of the disciples on account of the death of their Lord and master: but as when a woman is safely delivered of a man-child, she is so filled with joy, that her sorrow is remembered no more; so should it be with them, when Christ should appear to them; all their trouble, concern, anxiety of mind, and fears, that attended them, would all vanish away, and they be distressed with them no more.

Ver. 22. *And ye now therefore have sorrow,* &c.] This is the application of the preceding case. As it is with a woman in travail, when her hour is come, so it was now with them, and would be when Christ was removed from them; and as it is with every believer, when Christ is absent: for though there are many things that cause sorrow now, as sin, Satan, and afflictive dispensations of providence, yet nothing more sensibly touches believers to the quick, and gives them more uneasiness, than when Christ is out of sight: the reasons are, because he is so nearly related to them, being their everlasting father, kind husband, loving brother, and faithful friend; and because they are so strongly affected to him, there's none like him in their esteem in heaven and in earth: he is the person whom their souls love; he is the very life of their souls; his favour, his gracious presence is life to them, and his absence is as death; nor can they be easy, but are restless, and upon the inquiry after him, until he returns to them, which he does in his own time; and therefore this sorrow is but *now,* for the present, it is not perpetual. *But I will see you again;* as he did see his disciples upon his resurrection once and again, for the space of forty days, at certain times, by intervals: and so, in a spiritual sense, he comes and sees his people, makes them a visit, manifests himself unto them, and abides with them: they are always under his omniscient eye; he always sees them as God; and they are always under his eye of love, grace, and

[z] Tzeror Hammor, fol. 98. 2.
[a] T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 65. 1. Kiddushin, fol. 82. 2. Bava Bathra, fol. 16. 2. Sanhedrin, fol. 100. 2.
[b] T. Bab. Nidda, fol. 31. 2.

mercy, as Mediator: but this means such a seeing of them, as that they see him as well as he sees them; and is expressive of a delightful intercourse between Christ and them, than which nothing is more desirable: *and your heart shall rejoice*: as did the hearts of the disciples, when they saw Christ risen from the dead; and as the hearts of believers do, when Christ so looks upon them that they can view him with an eye of faith: such a sight is a heart-rejoicing one. To see the glory and beauty of Christ's person, the fulness and suitableness of him as a Saviour; to have an appropriating view of him as such; or to see him so as to have sensible communion with him, must needs fill the heart of a believer with joy unspeakable, and full of glory: such a sight of Christ will rejoice the heart under a sense of sin, the pollution and guilt of it, when tempted by Satan, or under God's afflicting hand, and even in the view of death and eternity. *And your joy no man taketh from you*. The joy of the hypocrite is but for a moment, and the joy of the chief priests, Scribes, and Pharisees, was a short-lived one, on account of Christ's death; for Jesus was soon raised from the dead, and the apostles were filled with the spirit, and went forth boldly preaching in the name of Christ, to the great grief of these men. But the joy of the disciples was durable; their risen Lord would never die more; the blessings of grace, such as redemption, pardon, righteousness, and atonement, would, and do ever remain as the foundation of solid joy: nor could a stranger intermeddle with it; [illegible], *not one*, either man or devil could take it away, not by all the reproaches they could cast upon them, or persecutions they could follow them with: and so, though a believer's joy may be damped by sin, and Satan, and the world, it may not be always in lively exercise; yet the matter of it always remains in Christ, and the principle of it in themselves can never be destroyed, but will issue in everlasting joy in another world.

Ver. 23. *In that day ye shall ask me nothing*, &c.] Meaning, not the whole Gospel dispensation, so often called, in prophetic language, *that day*: and is, in the New Testament, opposed to the night of Jewish and Gentile darkness; and, in comparison of the former dispensation, is a time of great spiritual light and knowledge: nor the latter part of that day, when there will be no night of darkness and desertion, of error and security, of affliction and persecution, with the church; when the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord; when all the children of God shall be taught of him, and there will be no need to say, know the Lord, for all shall know him, from the least to the greatest: nor the day of judgment, which, by way of emphasis, is so frequently called *that day*: nor the state of ultimate happiness, the everlasting day of glory; when all imperfections shall be done away, when saints will know, as they are known, and see Jesus as he is, and need not ask any questions about him: but the time when Christ, and his apostles, should meet again, and see each other's faces with joy and pleasure, is meant; and the time following thereon, especially the day of Pentecost, when the spirit was poured down upon them, and, according to his promise, came to them, taught them all things, and led them into all truth. This asking is not to be understood of asking in prayer; for it appears, by what follows, that they should ask in his name then, and he encourages to it; but of asking him questions, and that not of any sort; for it is certain, that, within this time, they did ask many things. Peter asked what John, the beloved disciple, should do; and they all asked him, a little before his ascension, whether he would, at that time, restore again the kingdom to Israel; but it is to be restrained to such things they had been, or were, desirous of asking him; such as, whither goest thou? shew us the father? how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world? and more especially these last questions, they greatly desired to put to him, what is this, *a little while and ye shall not see me?* and what is this, *a little while and ye shall see me?* and what is the meaning of these words, *because I go to the father?* Now our Lord intimates, that at this time all these things would be so clear and evident to them, that they should ask him no questions about them. But he adds, *verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the father in my name, he will give it you*. Asking here signifies prayer, and a different word is here used than before. The object of prayer is the father, though not to the exclusion of the son and spirit, who were both separately, or in conjunction with the father, prayed unto after this; see Acts vii. 59. and xxii. 16. 2 Thess. iii. 5. Rom. i. 7. 1 Cor. 1, 2, 3. Rev. i. 4, 5. The medium of access to the father is the name of Christ; he is the Mediator between God and man, the way of access unto him; whatever is asked, is to be asked on account of his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, and then there is no doubt of success; whatever is asked will be given; his blood within the vail speaks loud for every blessing; his righteousness, God is always pleased with; his sacrifice is a sweet-smelling savour: his mediation is powerful; and his name is always prevalent.

Ver. 24. *Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name*, &c.] Not that they had never prayed as yet; for they had desired him to teach them to pray, which he did: they had prayed to him particularly for an increase of faith, and for many other things; but either they had only asked him, he being present with them, and not the father; or if they had asked the father any thing, yet not in the name of Christ: they had made no mention of his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, nor any use of his mediation: things they had not as yet such clear knowledge of; or they had not asked as yet any extraordinary thing, as they afterwards did; see Acts iv. 29, 30. *ask, and ye shall receive*: that is, in my name, and whatever ye ask for, ye shall have it, to fit you for your work, to carry you through it, and to give you success in it: see Matt. vii. 7. *that your joy may be full*; go cheerfully through your work, find much pleasure in it, and with great satisfaction see the Gospel spread, souls converted, Satan's kingdom weakened, and the interest of your Redeemer thrive and flourish: than which nothing can more contribute to complete the joy of the ministers of Christ.

Ver. 25. *These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs*, &c.] Concerning his father, and his father's house, and the many mansions in it, of his going to prepare a place for them there, and of the way unto it, all which they seemed not to understand; of the nature

of communion with him and his father, and of the manifestation of them to them, so as not unto the world, which they could not account for; of their union to him under the simile of the vine and its branches; and of his departure from them, and return unto them; and of the sorrow that should follow upon the one, and the joy that should attend the other, set forth in the case of a woman in travail, having sorrow, and being joyful when delivered. All which, one would think, were plain and easy to be understood; but such was the then present state and case of the disciples, that these all seemed as proverbs, parables, and dark sayings, which they did not clearly understand: wherefore our Lord says, *the time cometh;* meaning either the time of his appearing unto them, after his resurrection, or the day of Pentecost: *when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall shew plainly of the father;* by pouring forth his spirit upon them, who should not only take of his things, but of his father's also, and shew them unto them clearly and plainly; so as that they should have a clear understanding of them, as they were capable of; of the perfections of his nature, his distinct personality, his being the father of Christ, and of all the elect in him; of his everlasting love to their persons; of his choice of them in Christ; of his covenant with them in him; of his mind and will concerning them, and his gracious designs towards them; of his father's house, and the way to it; and of the nature, design, and usefulness of his going to him; of the distinction between speaking in parables and dark sayings, and speaking plainly, openly, and apparently; see Numb. xii. 8.

Ver. 26. *At that day ye shall ask in my name,* &c.] For when the spirit was poured upon them, they not only received his extraordinary gifts, and had a larger measure of his grace bestowed upon them; but were also blessed with him, as a spirit of grace and supplication, in a more remarkable manner than ever they had been before: they then better understood the throne of grace, and the advantages of it; had greater enlargements and assistances at it; and were better acquainted with the mediation of Christ, and the necessity of making use of his name, blood, and righteousness, in all their petitions and requests. *And I say not unto you, that I will pray the father for you.* This Christ had promised before, John xiv. 16. nor was there any occasion to repeat it now, of which they might be strongly assured: besides, at that day the spirit would be given to them by virtue of his intercession; so that there would be no need of praying to the father for them on that account. This is said, not as if the intercession of Christ for his people would then cease; for he is always their advocate with the father, and ever lives to make intercession for them; though it may not be carried on in the same manner, by prayer, as when he was here on earth, his personal appearance, and the presentation of his blood, sacrifice, and righteousness, being sufficient; but to declare the disposition and readiness of his father to hear them, and grant unto them whatsoever they should ask of him in his name.

Ver. 27. *For the father himself loveth you,* &c.] The father loved them as well, and as much as the son did, and of himself too, without any merit or motive in them: he loved them from everlasting, and had given proofs of it in time, in the gift of his son to them, and for them, and in calling them by his grace; and therefore being thus strongly affected to them, they might depend upon a ready and speedy answer from him, as might be best for his glory, and their good. *Because ye have loved me;* not that their love to Christ was the cause of the father's love to them; but, on the contrary, the father's love to them was the cause of their love to Christ; and therefore as the cause is known by its effect, they might be assured of the father's love to them by their love to Christ; for if the father had not loved them, they had never loved God, nor Christ; but since they did love Christ, it was a clear case the father loved them: and this their love is joined with faith; *and have believed that I came out from God;* being sent by him, and am no impostor, but the true Messiah that was to come: faith in Christ, and love to him, go together; where the one is, there is the other; faith works by love; they are both the gifts of God's grace, and the fruits and effects of his everlasting love; and those who are possessed of them may be firmly persuaded of their interest therein.

Ver. 28. *I came forth from the father,* &c.] This is the sum of what the apostle believed, and Christ, in these discourses of his, had been speaking of. This his coming forth from the father is to be understood, not of his eternal filiation; nor of his coming forth in a way of grace towards his own people in the council and covenant of grace and peace; nor of his constitution, as Mediator, from everlasting; but of his coming in the flesh in the fulness of time: which supposes that he was, that he existed as a divine person before; that he was with the father before; that he came forth from him with his knowledge, mind, and will; he came not of himself, but he sent him; and yet he came willingly, was not forced, or did not come against his will: and this does not suppose any local motion, or change of place, but only intends an assumption of the human nature into unity with his divine person, who fills heaven and earth with his presence; nor any separation from his father, with whom he was, and in whose bosom he lay when he was made flesh, and dwelt among men; nor any absence from heaven, for he was there when on earth. *And am come into the world;* where he was before, as the Creator and upholder of it, by his immensity and powerful presence; this designs his coming and manifestation in the flesh, which in general was to do the whole will of God, which he in council and covenant agreed to do, and for which he came down from heaven; and in particular to preach the Gospel, call sinners to repentance, give life and light to many, and to fulfil the law, by obeying its precepts, and bearing its penalty, and both to do and suffer in the room and stead of his people, and to save lost sinners, even the chief of them. *Again, I leave the world;* not that he relinquished the sustentation and government of it, as God, nor the care of his people in it, as Mediator, for whom he retains the same love as ever, and will not leave them fatherless and comfortless; nor was he leaving it as never to return more; for he'll descend, in like manner he ascended, and will come a second time and judge the world in righteousness; but he was about to depart from it by death, having done the work and business

for which he came about. *And go to the father;* to give an account of his work unto him, as his righteous servant, being faithful to him that had appointed him; and to transact the affairs of his people; to appear in the presence of God for them; to present their petitions, be their advocate, make intercession for them, take possession of heaven in their name, and prepare it for them; to take his place at the right hand of God in human nature, and to be glorified with the glory promised him before the world was.

Ver. 29. *His disciples said unto him,* &c.] Upon the above discourse of Christ, such rays and beams of light darted into the minds of the apostles, and things stood so clear in their view, and they so well understood what Christ had said, that they declare, *lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb:* what he had said before, were to them like proverbial, or parabolical expressions, not easy to be understood; they were like enigmas, riddles, and dark sayings, the meaning of which they could not apprehend; but now they observe, with admiration, that what he delivered was plain, and intelligible; which was not so much owing to Christ's different way of speaking now, from what it was before, as to their former dulness of hearing, and now having some further degree of light given unto them.

Ver. 30. *Now are we sure that thou knowest all things,* &c.] Not only all men, but all things, even the secrets of men's hearts, of which the apostles had now a convincing proof; for whereas Christ had delivered some expressions, ver. 16. which they did not understand, and were desirous to ask him the meaning of, ver. 19. which he knowing, being God omniscient, prevents their putting the question to him, and enters upon a discourse, in which he so clearly explained what they wanted to be informed of, without their asking him, that they were fully assured that he must know all things; and, as they add, *needest not that any man should ask thee:* the meaning is, that should Christ deliver any thing not so intelligible to any of his audience, and they were desirous of knowing the sense of it, there would be no need of putting the question in form to him, since he is privy to the first motion of desire rising up in the mind; and can, and will, if he thinks fit, explain himself on such an head, to the satisfaction of the person, without ever asking him; at least there's no need of putting the question to make him acquainted with his desire, this being before known unto him. *By this we believe that thou camest forth from God;* was the true Messiah, and had his mission and commission from God, as such; doubtless they believed this before, but this instance of Christ's omniscience was a strengthening proof of it. So Nathanael, by Christ's saying to him, that before Philip called him, and when he was under the fig-tree, he saw him when he thought no eye did but an omniscient one; it laid him under such full convictions of him, as at once to acknowledge him the son of God, the King of Israel. This is one of the signs and characters of the Messiah with the Jews, that he should have a discerning spirit of men and things, according to Isa. xi. 3[e].

Ver. 31. *Jesus answered them, do ye now believe?*] Not as calling their faith in question; or as denying they had any; or as despising it for the smallness of it; but as reproving them for their security, vain confidence and boasting, as if their faith was so very strong that it would never be moved; and perhaps for the lateness of it too: the words may be read affirmatively, without an interrogation, *ye do believe now;* they are in the Syriac and Arabic versions read imperatively, *believe ye now.* Though the *now* is left out by the former, which is not to be spared, for the emphasis lies on it; and a regard seems to be had both to time past and to come. The words carry in them a tacit reproof, that they believed no sooner, or were not before this time more established in their faith, when he had been so long with them, and they had heard so many discourses from him, and had seen so many miracles wrought by him: however, it was not too late, and they would do well to go on believing; but 'tis suggested to them they would meet with something that would try their faith: and it is as if Christ had said, ye believe in me now, while I am with you, and all things go according to your mind; but what will you do anon, when I shall be taken from you, be apprehended by mine enemies, be delivered into the hands of the Gentiles, be crucified, die, and be laid in the grave? will ye believe then? one of you will betray me, another deny me, and all will forsake me, and some express their doubts about me.

Ver. 32. *Behold the hour cometh, yea, is now come,* &c.] The time is at hand, yea, it may, in a sense, be said to be already come, it was within an hour; and indeed the following prayer might be delivered in less than an hour's time; when he went immediately into the garden, and was apprehended; or at least in a very little while it would come to pass, *that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own:* to his own friends, relations, and acquaintance; to his own house and home; to his own country, Galilee, whither they all went, and to their trade of fishing again; See John xxi. 1. and so was fulfilled the prophecy in Zech. xiii. 7. *and shall leave me alone;* as they did in the hands of his enemies; for they all forsook him and fled, some one way, some another; though one or two of them, Peter and John, followed him at a distance; and all came together again, but not to Christ, until his resurrection from the dead. *And yet I am not alone;* he was not alone at this time; and his meaning is, that he should not be alone then when they should be scattered from him: *because the father is with me:* not only as the son of God, by virtue of union to him, and as one with him; but as Mediator, in consequence of his promise to uphold him, and assist him in his human nature; and though he withdrew his gracious and comforting presence from him, he bearing the sins, and standing in the room and stead of his people, yet not his powerful and supporting presence.

Ver. 33. *These things I have spoken unto you,* &c.] As this is the conclusion of our Lord's sermons to his disciples, these words may well enough be thought to have regard to all that he had said in general; as concerning his departure from them; his going to

[e] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 93. 2.

prepare a place for them; his union to them, and their communion with him; and the various persecutions and afflictions they should endure for his sake; and the many blessings both of grace and glory they should enjoy; and particularly what he had said in the context, concerning their forsaking him, which supposed tribulation, and would be a prelude of what they were afterwards to have in the world; and concerning the presence of his father with him, and which they might also expect to have: *that in me ye might have peace;* not in the world, in which they were to have tribulation: there's no true, solid peace, to be enjoyed in the world, and the things of it; the world can neither give it, nor take it away; nor have the men of it any knowledge and understanding of it; and much less enjoy it: nor in themselves; spiritual peace does not arise from any duties, services, and performances of men; no, not from an attendance on the Gospel, and the ordinances of it; nor even from the graces of the spirit; for though peace may be enjoyed herein, and hereby, and through these, as means; yet does not come from them, but from Christ, in whose strength alone all duties are performed aright; who is the sum and substance of the Gospel, and the ordinances of it, and the object of all grace: it *is* in him, and in him only, in his person, blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, which speak peace, pardon, and atonement, that a soul finds any true, solid peace, rest, comfort, and joy; and here he may, and does find it, in opposition to the cry of sin, law, and justice, for wrath, ruin, hell, and damnation. There's a peace by Christ, which he has made for his people by the blood of his cross; and there's a peace in him, which is enjoyed through faith's looking to his blood for pardon, to his righteousness for justification, to his sacrifice for atonement and satisfaction; and by having communion with him, and discoveries of his love, and by seeing safety and security in him. *In the world ye shall have tribulation:* this is certain from this declaration of Christ, who is the omniscient God, and truth itself; from the instance and example of Christ, who was all his life a man of sorrows; from the conformity of the members to the head; from the divine appointment that has so determined it; from the natural enmity of the world to the saints; from the experience of the people of God in all ages; from the usefulness of tribulation to try the graces, and bring about the temporal, spiritual, and eternal good of believers: and though they have tribulation in the world, yet not by way of punishment for sin, but as fatherly corrections and chastenings for their good, that they may not be condemned with the world; and it is only in this present world they have it; as soon as they have done with the world, they'll have done with tribulation: *be of good cheer, I have overcome the world:* it is very observable how the phrase, *in the world ye shall have tribulation,* stands, and is encompassed, before, with these words, *that in me ye might have peace,* and behind, with these, *be of good cheer,* &c. Believers, of all men, notwithstanding their tribulations, have reason to be of good cheer, since their sins are forgiven, the love of God is shed abroad in their hearts, their redemption draws nigh, and they have hopes of glory; and particularly, because as Christ here says, for their encouragement under all their tribulations in the world, *I have overcome the world:* Satan, the god and prince of the world, with all his principalities and powers, which Christ has led captive, ransomed his people from, and delivers them from the power of; and all that is in the world, the lusts and sins of it, their damning power by the sacrifice of himself, and their governing power by his spirit and grace; and the men of the world with all their rage and fury, whom he has trodden down in his anger, restrains by his power, and causes the remainder of their wrath to praise him; in all which conquests he makes his people share, and even makes them more than conquerors, through himself: so that they have nothing to fear from the world; nor any reason to be cast down by the tribulation they meet with in it.

CHAP. XVII.

Ver. 1. *THESE words spake Jesus,* &c.] Referring to his sermons and discourses, his words of comfort, advice, direction, and instruction, delivered in the three preceding chapters: *and lift up his eyes to heaven;* the seat of the divine majesty, the throne of his father. This is a prayer-gesture. It is said [c] of R. Tanchuma, that הגביה פניו לשמים, *he lift up his face to heaven,* and said before the holy blessed God, Lord of the world, *&c.* and this is expressive of the ardency and affection of the mind of Christ, and of his confidence of the divine favour: it shews that his mind was filled with devotion and faith, and was devoid of shame and fear, and was possessed of great freedom, boldness, and intrepidity: *and said, father;* or *my father,* as the Syriac, Arabic and Persic versions read; and no doubt but he used the word Abba, which signifies *my father,* thereby claiming his interest in him, and relation to him: *the hour is come;* to depart out of the world, to suffer and die for his people, which was agreed upon between him and his father from all eternity; and it was welcome to him, on account of the salvation of his people, and therefore he spoke with an air of pleasure and satisfaction; and it would be quickly over, was but an hour, as it were, though a time of great trouble, distress and darkness, and so a fit time for prayer: *glorify thy son;* as man and Mediator; for as God, he needed no glory, nor could any be added to him: but it designs some breakings-forth of glory upon him at his death; by supporting him under all the sorrows and sufferings of it; and in carrying him through it; so that he conquered all his people's enemies, and his own, sin, Satan, the world, and death, and obtained eternal redemption for them: and at his resurrection; by not suffering him to remain so long in the grave, as to see

[c] Vajikra Rabba, sect. 34. fol. 174. 4.

corruption: and by raising him at the exact time that was foretold by the prophets and himself; and by sending an angel to roll away the stone; and by raising some of the saints along with him; and by putting such a glory on his body, as that it is the pattern and exemplar of the saints' resurrection: and at his ascension to heaven, when he led captivity captive; and at his session at the right hand of God, above all principalities and powers; and through the effusion of the spirit upon his disciples, and the divine power that attended his Gospel, to make it effectual to great multitudes, both to Jews and Gentiles; by all which he was glorified, pursuant to this petition of his; in which his end is, *that thy son also may glorify thee;* as he had done throughout the whole of his life and conversation, and by his ministry and miracles; so now at his sufferings and death, through the salvation of his chosen ones, in which the wisdom, grace, justice, holiness, power, and faithfulness of God are greatly glorified; and in the after-discharge of other branches of his mediatorial office, in making intercession for his people, in the ministry of his word and ordinances, by his servants, attended with his holy spirit, and by the administration of his kingly office.

Ver. 2. *As thou hast given him power over all flesh,* &c.] All men, in distinction from angels; and these as fallen, as weak, frail, sinful, and mortal creatures; men of every nation, Jew or Gentile, and of every character, elect or non-elect: not but that he has also a power over angels; nor is his power over men limited to their *flesh* or bodies, but reaches to their spirits or souls also: which power is a governing, disposing, and judicial one; he rules them with a sceptre of righteousness, he disposes of them in providence as he pleases, and will judge them at the last day: and this is a power that is *given* him by his father, and is not that original power over all things he has as God, and the Creator of them, which is natural, essential, and underived; but is a derived and delegated power, which he has as Mediator, as subservient to the ends and designs of his office: and as God glorified him as such, by giving him this power; so he glorifies him again, by acknowledging it, and by using it for the end for which it is given: *that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him;* eternal life is a gift, and not owing to the merits of men; indeed there is no merit in men's works, no, not in the best: for these are previously due to God, cannot be profitable to him, if done aright, are not done in the creature's strength, but through the grace of God, and bear no proportion to eternal life; which is in Christ's gift: not only the promise of it is in him, but that itself; it is put into his hands, and he came into this world, that his people might have it; he has procured it, and has removed what lay in the way of their enjoyment of it; he has a right to bestow it, and their right unto it comes by him, through his blood and righteousness: the persons on whom he confers this gift, are not all men, but such as the father in the everlasting covenant has given to him, as his people and portion, his spouse and children, his jewels and his treasure, to be saved and enjoyed by him; whom he has chosen and preserved in him, and made his care and charge: to these, and every one of these, Christ gives this great blessing; nor shall any of them come short of it; and 'tis for the sake of this, that all creatures and things, all power in heaven and in earth, are given to him.

Ver. 3. *And this is life eternal,* &c.] That is, the beginning and pledge of it, the way unto it, and means of it, and what will certainly issue in it: *that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.* The knowledge of God here spoken of, is not the knowledge of him by the light of nature, and works of creation; for a man may know God in this sense, and not know him in Christ, nor any thing of Christ; yea, may know God and profess him in words, and in works deny him, as the Heathens did; nor is eternal life known hereby, nor connected with it: nor is it such a knowledge of God as is to be obtained by the law of Moses, in which God is represented as a righteous and incensed Being; nor is there in it any discovery of God, as a God of love, grace, and mercy in Christ; nor any revelation of a Mediator, Saviour and Redeemer; nor can it either shew, or give to persons eternal life; and yet what is here said of the knowledge of God and Christ, the Jews say of the law [d], "one man said to his friend, let us dash them "against that wall and kill them, because they have "left חיי עלם הבא, *eternal life;* [the gloss upon it is "תורה, *the law*;) and employ themselves in a tempo-"rary life, the gloss says of this world, which is mer-"chandise." More truly does Philo the Jew say [e], that "fleeing to the Divine Being, *is eternal life;* and "running from him is death." But this is to be understood of an evangelic knowledge of God, as the God and father of Christ, as the God of all grace, pardoning iniquity, transgression and sin, and of Christ the Mediator; not a general, notional, and speculative knowledge; but a practical and experimental one; a knowledge of approbation and appropriation; a fiducial one, whereby a soul believes in Christ, and trusts in his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice for salvation; and which, though imperfect, is progressive. The Arians and Unitarians urge this text, against the true and proper deity of our Lord Jesus, and his equality with the father, but without success; since the father is called the only true God, in opposition to the many false gods of the Heathens, but not to the exclusion of the son or spirit; for Christ is also styled the one Lord, and only Lord God, but not to the exclusion of the father; yea the true God and eternal life; was he not, he would never, as here, join himself with the only true God; and besides, eternal life is made to depend as much upon the knowledge of him, as of the father. The reason of this different mode of expression, is owing to the character of Christ as Mediator, who is said to be sent by the only true God, about the business of man's salvation. Nor is it of any moment what the Jew [f] objects, that Jesus here confesses, that the true God is only one God; nor does he call himself God, only the Messiah sent by God; and that the Apostle Paul also asserts the unity of God, 1 Tim. i. 17.

[d] T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 21. 1.
[e] De profugis, p. 461.

[f] R. Isaac Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 55. p. 445.

and therefore Jesus cannot be God: for Christ and his father, the only true God, are one; and that he is the one true God with his father, he tacitly suggests here by joining himself with him; and what the Apostle Paul says of the one and only wise God, may as well be understood of Christ, the son of God, as of the father; since all the characters in the text agree with him, and of him he had been speaking in the context.

Ver. 4. *I have glorified thee on the earth*, &c.] This is made use of as a reason and argument, why the father should glorify him: Christ glorified his father personally, as he held forth and expressed the glory of his person; and verbally, by ascribing, on all occasions, praise and glory to him; and really, or by deeds, and that by various ways: as in and by his ministry; by asserting he had his mission, qualifications, and doctrine, from him as a prophet; his principal work was to declare his father's mind and will, his love and grace; nor did he seek his own, but his father's glory: and by his miracles: for though these were proofs of his deity and Messiahship, and displays of his own glory; yet the glory of his father, especially of his power, was eminently seen in them, for he referred them to him; and these were often the means of men's glorifying the God of Israel: and by his whole life and conversation, which was entirely according to the will of God; and every action of it was directed to his glory: particularly he glorified him by his early regard to his will, and the business he sent him about; by his zeal for his father's house; and by the exercise of the various graces of faith, hope, and love upon him: and as by his life, so at his death, even all the while he was *on the earth*; where God had been dishonoured by the sin of men; where Christ now was debased in human nature, and even that was for the glory of God; and this is said in distinction from heaven, where God is glorified by the angels, and where Christ would shortly be glorified in his human nature: *I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do*; by *the work* is meant obedience to the will of God; the destruction of all spiritual enemies, as sin, Satan, the world, and death; and the redemption and salvation of his people, which was *given* him to do: he did not take it upon himself, but being called to it he readily accepted of it; it was appointed, and cut out for him, in the council and covenant of grace; he was thoroughly acquainted with it; and though it was difficult, it was pleasant and delightful to him; nor did he leave it till he could say it is *finished*; as it was by himself alone, without the help of man; and is so complete that nothing can be added to it; and so firmly done, that it can't be unravelled by men and devils: he speaks of it as done, because the time was come to finish it, and he was sure of the accomplishment of it.

Ver. 5. *And now, O father, glorify thou me with thine own self*, &c.] Not with his perfections, these he had, they dwelt bodily in him; or with his nature, in which he was one with him; but as Mediator, with his glorious presence in heaven, by setting him at his right hand, and crowning him with glory and honour. The Jews have a notion that God will give to the King Messiah מן הכבוד של מעלה, *of the supreme glory*[g]; the glory Christ prays for is, as he says, *the glory which I had with thee before the world was*; the same phrase with לעולם, or קודם העולם, used by the Jews[h]. This is not to be understood of the glory of the human nature of Christ, abstractly considered; for that is no person of itself, but what is taken up into personal union with the son of God; and therefore can't be intended by this personal character I; nor did it exist from eternity; it was indeed written in God's book of predestination, even all its members, when as yet there were none of them in actual being; it was set up in God's thoughts and counsel, as the pattern and exemplar of human nature; it had a federal union with the son of God, or a covenant subsistence with him; and in the Old Testament Christ was often spoken of as man, because of his frequent appearances in an human form, and because of the certainty of his incarnation; but he did not really and actually exist as man, until he took flesh of the virgin; for Christ, as man, is the seed of the woman, the son of David, Abraham, and Adam; he is called the last and second Adam, and was not as man before the first: the Old Testament speaks of his incarnation as future, nor is it possible that a creature can exist before time; for as soon as a creature exists, time begins, which is nothing else than the measure of a creature's duration; nor was the human nature of Christ with the father from eternity, nor had it a glory before the world began, neither in whole, nor in part: nor is the glory of the divine nature abstractly considered here meant; this glory indeed Christ had from everlasting; he had it with his father, in common with him, being in union to him; and it is true that it was in some measure veiled and covered in his state of humiliation; for though there were some breakings-forth of it in that state, these were seen but by a few; wherefore he is thought by some, to pray here for the manifestation of this glory; but this glory was essential to him, was his natural right, and not to be prayed for, and which he then had as much as ever, and of which there could be no suspension: but this designs the glory of him as God-man, and Mediator; he was not only predestinated to be a Mediator, but was really set up as such from everlasting, and had a mediatorial fulness of grace put into his hands, and had the honour and glory of that office given unto him by the other two persons; and now that he might appear to be what he was, to be made, that is, made manifest that he was both Lord and Christ, he here prays; which was to be done, upon his ascension to heaven, and session at the right hand of God, by the pouring down of the Holy Ghost.

Ver. 6. *I have manifested thy name*, &c.] Not the *Nomen Tetragrammaton*, the name of four letters, the name *Jehovah*, and which the Jews call *Shemhamphorash*, and say is ineffable, and to be pronounced by Adonai; who also speak of other names, and say[i], "truly the former wise men had holy names, which "they received from the prophets, as the name of

[g] Midrash Tillim in Psal. 20. apud Galatin. de Arcan. Cathol. ver. l. 3. c. 9.

[h] Gloss. in T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 54. 1.

[i] Shaare ora, fol. 1. 2.

" seventy-two letters, and the name of *forty-two* letters, " and the name of *twelve* letters, and many other holy " names; and by which they could do new signs " and wonders in the world; but they did not make " use of them, only in case of necessity, as in a time " of persecution and distress." The name of twelve letters, Galatinus[1] pretends, is Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the words for which in the Hebrew language consist of twelve letters; and that of forty-two letters he makes to be this, the Father God, the Son God, the Holy Ghost God, yet there are not three Gods, but one God: or thus, the Father God, the Son God, the Holy Ghost God, three in one, one in three; the Hebrew words for which contain forty-two letters; but the authorities by which he would support all this are insufficient. However, it is none of these names, nor any other scriptural ones, that are here meant; but either God himself, or the perfections of his nature, or his will of command, or rather his Gospel; unless Christ himself, or his name Jesus, God by the angel gave him, and in whose name there is salvation, and no other can be thought to be meant; and which, as it was manifested to his disciples, so it is to all whom God has chosen and given to Christ: *unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world*; which is to be understood, not merely of their being given to him as apostles, nor of their being given and brought to him in effectual vocation only, but of an eternal act of God's in election, and in the covenant of grace; when these persons were given to Christ as his spouse, his spiritual seed and offspring, the sheep of his pasture, and his portion and inheritance, to be saved and preserved by him; which as it is an instance of love and care on God's part to give, and of grace and condescension on Christ's to receive, so of distinguishing goodness, to the persons given; since not all the world, but some of it, share in this favour: *thine they were, and thou gavest them me*; the persons given were not the father's merely by creation, for so others are his also; nor would they be peculiarly his, for they are the son's likewise in this sense; but they are his by electing grace, which is the peculiar act of the father in Christ, and is unto salvation by him, through the sanctification of the spirit; these are chosen to be his peculiar people, and given to Christ as such: *and they have kept thy word*; the Gospel, not only in their memories, but in their hearts; and having publicly professed it, they defended it valiantly against the enemies of it, and kept it pure and incorrupt: this shews that the Gospel is meant by the name of God manifested to these persons.

Ver. 7. *Now they have known, &c.*] The Syriac version reads it ידעת, *I have known*; and so the Persic and Gothic versions, contrary to most copies and other versions, which read, as we render, *they have known*; that is, the disciples and apostles of Christ: *that all things whatsoever thou hast given me*; all temporal things; the world and the fulness of it; all power in heaven, and in earth, or a power of disposing of all things for his own service, as Mediator; all spiritual things, the covenant of grace, with all its blessings and promises, the spirit of God, with all his gifts and graces, a fulness of all grace for his people, yea, eternal life and glory; and every thing relating to his mediatorial office and character, power to perform miracles, knowledge and wisdom to preach the Gospel, strength to procure the salvation of his people, every thing to qualify him for the government of the church and the judgment of the world: *are of thee*; owing to his good will and pleasure, by his appointment and constitution, as an instance of love to him, and that he might, as man, and Mediator, be honoured, and in all things have the pre-eminence, and all for the good of his chosen ones: now the knowledge of this by his disciples, must greatly confirm the mission of Christ, render him very suitable to them, cause them to entertain a greater esteem for him, lead them into some admiring views of the grace of God, in giving so much into Christ's hands for them, and engage them the more cheerfully to obey his commands.

Ver. 8. *For I have given unto them the words, &c.*] Not commands, but doctrines; and these not the doctrines of men; nor any of the divers and strange doctrines; but what are called in Scripture the doctrine of God, of Christ, of the apostles, are agreeably to the Scriptures, and according to godliness; and are styled the word of truth, of faith, of righteousness, of peace and reconciliation, of life and salvation, and of the Gospel; and which Christ gave to his disciples, and gifts along with them to preach them, and abilities to [illegible] *gavest me*; for the words and doctrines which Christ, as the great prophet in Israel spoke, were not his own, but his father's; and these were given him to speak and deliver to others, and in which he was faithful; so Jonathan ben Uzziel[1] paraphrases the text in Deut. xviii. 18. concerning that prophet, the Messiah, God would raise up, after this manner; " a prophet will I raise up unto them from " among their brethren, in whom the Holy Spirit shall " be, like unto thee; ואתן פתגמי, *and I will give the* " *words*, of my prophecy into his mouth, and he shall " speak with them all that I have commanded." And so the Messiah Jesus did: *and they have received them*; willingly and gladly, with reverence and meekness, with love, and thankfulness; so as to understand them, and believe them; and so as to be affectionately and closely attached to them: *and have known surely that I came out from thee*; which is meant, not of his eternal filiation, but of his constitution and commission, as Mediator by his father: of which they had certain knowledge, full assurance of faith, and sincerely owned and confessed being fully persuaded he was the true Messiah, and no impostor: *and they have believed that thou didst send me*; into this world, to seek and to save lost sinners, to redeem all the chosen ones, and perform every thing necessary to their salvation.

Ver. 9. *I pray for them, &c.*] This is to be understood of Christ, not as God; for as such he is the object of prayer; nor need he pray to any other; nor is there any superior to him under this consideration to pray unto; but as man and Mediator; nor is his praying any argument against his deity; nor proof of inferiority to his father with respect to his divine na-

[1] De Arcan. Cathol. Ver. l. 2. c. 10, 12.

[1] Targum Jon. in Deut. xviii. 18.

ture; since 'tis not in that, but in his human nature, that he prayed; though this may be ascribed to his whole person as God-man; hence he had the greatest qualifications and abilities for this work, and his prayers were always heard: praying, as attributed to Christ, must be restrained to his state of humiliation; prayer is never spoken of Christ but whilst he was here on earth; his intercession in heaven is never expressed by prayer; and the saints when they come thither, will have done praying. Christ whilst on earth, was an excellent pattern of prayer; of private and solitary prayer; of social prayer; for and with his disciples; of frequent and fervent prayer; of submission to the will of God in prayer; and of praying even for enemies: the persons he is here said to pray for are his apostles; which shews their danger and their wants, his care over them, and concern for them, and his love unto them: *I pray not for the world:* the inhabitants of it, the carnal unbelieving part of the world, which lie in sin, and will be condemned; as he died not for them, so he prayed not for them; for whom he is the propitiation, he is an advocate; and for whom he died, he makes intercession; and for no other in a spiritual saving way: *but for them which thou hast given me:* out of the world, as distinct from them, to be saved with an everlasting salvation by him; and to be preserved safe to his kingdom and glory; for these he prays, for the conversion of them, the application of pardon to them, their final perseverance and eternal glory: *for they are thine:* not merely by creation, and as the care of his providence, but by eternal election, and special grace in vocation; which is a reason why Christ prayed for them, and an argument why the father should, and would regard his prayers.

Ver. 10. *And all mine are thine, and thine are mine,* &c.] Christ is speaking not of things but of persons; otherwise all the perfections of his nature as God, and all the works he did, and doctrines he taught as man, were of his father; as all the perfections of his father, his nature, his names, his works, his worship, were his; the same that belongs to the one belongs to the other: but persons are here meant, and these the elect of God, particularly the apostles, who were his and his father's; belonged to them both by election, covenant-transactions, redemption, and efficacious grace in conversion; which mutual interest arises from an union in nature, an agreement in covenant, and a conjunction in operation: *and I am glorified in them:* or by them, they ascribing all divine perfections, works and worship to him; attributing the whole of their salvation to him, and giving him all the glory of it; believing in him; walking worthy of him, in their lives and conversations; suffering patiently and cheerfully for his sake; and abiding by his Gospel and ordinances; and he will be glorified by them, and in them hereafter, and that to all eternity.

Ver. 11. *And now I am no more in the world,* &c.] In the earth; which is no contradiction to his resurrection from the dead, and stay with his disciples for a while; nor to his return to judge the world at the last day; nor to his reigning on earth with his saints a thousand years; since it will not be the world as it now is, but it will be a new earth, renewed, purified and refined, and clear of the wicked inhabitants of it; and in which will only dwell righteous persons: besides, Christ was to be, and will be no more in the world, in such circumstances, and doing such work as he then was: the meaning is, that whereas he had been in the world, and had done, or as good as done the work he came about, he was now just going out of it; it was but a very little while he had to stay in it; nor should he continue long with his disciples when he rose from the dead; and whereas his bodily presence had been a guard unto them, a protection of them, and he had bore the heat and burden of the day for them, and had took all reproaches and persecutions upon himself, now he was going from them: *but these are in the world;* and will continue for some time, they having much work to do, and be exposed to the evils, snares and temptations of it; where they were hated, and were liable to great hardships, afflictions and persecutions; which shews that Christ was not so intent on his own glory, as to neglect the good of his people, and to be unconcerned for them: *and I come to thee;* signifying his death; the deposition of his soul into his father's hands; his ascension in soul and body to him; his entrance into heaven, and session at the right hand of God; and therefore had nothing to ask for on his own account: but his disciples he was parting with lay near his heart, and therefore he prays; *holy father, keep, through thine own name, those whom thou hast given me:* the person prayed unto is God the father, the father of Christ, and of his people; a very proper relation to consider God in, and under in prayer to him: since it must give freedom, boldness, and hope of success: the epithet *holy* is exceeding suitable, as it perfectly agrees with him who is essentially so; and since it was holiness and an increase of it Christ prays for; and that there his disciples might be kept from the evil of sin: the persons prayed for are those that were given to Christ in election, and in the covenant, to be kept by him, and therefore he is the more solicitous for their preservation: his request is, that his father would keep them from the evil of the world; from sinking under temptations and afflictions; faithful to him and to his Gospel, and in unity among themselves; and that *through* or *in* his own name; in it, in the doctrine of the Gospel, and in the worship of God, and profession of him: *through* it, through himself, as a wall of fire about them, and by his power through faith unto salvation: *that they may be one as we are:* in nature, will, affection and understanding; which must be understood not of equality, but of likeness; and designs not their union to Christ, but to one another; abiding together, cleaving to each other, standing fast in one spirit, having the same designs, and the interest of a Redeemer in view, and at heart.

Ver. 12. *While I was with them in the world,* &c.] This does not imply that Christ was not in the world now, for he was; but signifies that he was just going out of it; and that his continuance in it was very short: nor that he was, and would be no longer with his disciples; for this is to be understood of his bodily, not of his spiritual presence; in which respect Christ is with his people whilst they are on earth, and they are with him when he is in heaven: *I kept them in thy name;* by his father's authority and power, in his doc-

trine: *those that thou gavest me I have kept;* that is, those that were given him to be his apostles; these he kept close to himself, and from the evil of the world, and from temporal and eternal ruin: *but the son of perdition;* Judas, a child of Satan, whose name is Apollyon the destroyer, who was now about to betray his Lord and master; and was one that was appointed to eternal ruin and destruction, of which he was justly deserving; and which is no instance of the apostacy of saints, since though he was given to Christ as an apostle, yet not in eternal election, to be saved by him: *that the Scripture might be fulfilled;* this respects either Christ's keeping of his people, and their final perseverance, whereby the Scriptures that speak of it are fulfilled; or rather the destruction of Judas, whereby such passages as speak of that, have their accomplishment, particularly Psal. cix. 8. Some have thought that this only refers to the general sense of the Scriptures, both the law and prophets; that some are chosen to everlasting life, and others are appointed to wrath; that some are saved, and others lost; some sons of God, and others sons of perdition; but it rather seems to regard some particular passage or passages of Scripture relating to Judas, his character, condition and end, and which are very manifestly pointed at, in the psalm referred to; see 2 Esdras ii. 26.

Ver. 13. *And now come I to thee,* &c.] As in ver. 11. which he repeats as a very great happiness to himself, and with much pleasure and joy, but not without concern for those he was parting from: *and these things I speak in the world;* which he had expressed in this prayer concerning the nature of eternal life, and his power to give it to all the father had given him; concerning the work of redemption finished by him, and the glory due unto him on that account; concerning his chosen ones, particularly the apostles, and the mutual interest he and his father had in them; and what he had done for them, in revealing the Gospel to them, keeping them by the powerful influence of his grace, and the great concern he had for their future preservation: and these things he took notice of in his prayer, whilst he was in the world, before he took his leave of them; *that,* says he, *they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves;* either the joy which Christ had in them, which was of an early date, is still continued towards them, and will be more fully expressed, when they shall all be brought safe home to glory, and be for ever with him; or else the joy of which Christ is the author and object, which comes from him, and centres in him: saints rejoice in the person of Christ; in the greatness and dignity of his person, as God over all; hence they know that what he did and suffered answered the purpose, that he must have great interest in heaven, and they must be safe in his hands; and in the fitness of it, to be a Mediator, he being God and man in one person; and in the fulness of it, which is all theirs, 'tis with delight they view it, with joy they receive from it, and believe they shall not want; and in the beauty of it, he being fairer than the children of men. The offices Christ bears as prophet, priest, and King, the relations he stands in as father, husband, brother and friend; his Gospel and communion with him, the blessings of grace in him, as peace, pardon, righteousness and salvation, lay a foundation for solid joy in them that believe; as do also his death, resurrection, exaltation and intercession. This joy in him is a grace of the spirit, and is attended with faith in Christ; it should be constant, but is frequently interrupted; though the ground and foundation of it is always the same; it is therefore at present imperfect, but may be increased; it is unknown to the world, and inexpressible by the saints; and may be said to be *fulfilled in them,* when it abounds in them more and more; when they are full of it, and that is full of glory, and which will be fulfilled in glory.

Ver. 14. *I have given them thy word,* &c.] The Gospel, and a commission and abilities to preach it, and which is a reason of what follows, namely, the world's hatred of them; because this word is not of men, nor agreeably to carnal reason; it magnifies the grace of God, and destroys boasting in men; it is against the carnal interest, worldly views and lusts of men: *and the world hath hated them:* the inhabitants of the world, worldly men, such as are what they were when they first came into the world; are under the influence of the god of the world, and led by the spirit of it, and are wholly taken up with the things thereof: the unbelieving Jews are chiefly designed, who bore an implacable hatred to Christ and his apostles; and the same fate do the faithful ministers of Christ and his members share, in all ages and places, more or less: the men of the world gnash their teeth at them, secretly plot against them, and inwardly curse them; rejoice at any evil that befalls them; greedily catch at any thing to reproach them; stick not to say all manner of evil of them, and to do all manner of evil to them: *because they are not of the world;* they were of the world by their natural birth, and had their conversation with the men of it, whilst in a state of unregeneracy; but now they were called out of it, and were guided and led by another spirit; and were separate from the world in their lives and conversations, and which brought the hatred of the world upon them; inasmuch as they had been of them, but now had left them, and professed they did not belong to them; and because their religious lives put a distinguishing mark on them, and reproved and condemned them: *even as I am not of the world;* not that Christ and his people are alike in their original; they are of the earth earthly, he is the Lord from heaven; nor are they so perfect in their walk and conversation in the world, and separation from it as he; yet there is some likeness between him and them, and some conformity in them to him, which makes the world hate them.

Ver. 15. *I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world,* &c.] Either in an unusual manner, by a translation, as Enoch and Elijah were; or by death in its common form, before their time, and purely to be rid of afflictions: this he prayed not for; for he had much work for them to do, by preaching the Gospel, for the conversion of sinners and comfort of saints; and it was for his interest they should live longer; and it would make most for his glory, and be best for his chosen people and churches: *but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil;* either of sin, which

is an evil and bitter thing, being committed against a good God, and a righteous law, and brings ruin and destruction upon men; from this the apostles were kept, and all the saints are; not from in-dwelling sin, nor from the commission of sin, but from the dominion of it, and from falling into it and by it, so as to perish eternally: or from the evil of the world; not from afflictions in it; nor from the reproach and persecution of it; but from its wickedness and lusts, and from the evil men of it: or from Satan the evil one, who is eminently, originally, and immutably so; not from being tempted by him, but from sinking under his temptations, and from being devoured by him. Christ's praying for this, after this manner, shews that evil is very abhorrent, pernicious and powerful; the danger saints are in by it; their incapacity to keep themselves from it; and that the Lord alone is the keeper of his people; but does not suggest that Christ has dropped the charge of them, or is unequal to it; but by so doing he expresses his great love to them, how dear they are to him, and what care he takes of them, and what concern he has for them.

Ver. 16. *They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.* These words are repeated from ver. 14. where they are given as a reason of the world's hatred to them; and here, as shewing that they are exposed to the evil of it; and in both are used as an argument with his father, that he would take notice of them, and preserve them.

Ver. 17. *Sanctify them through thy truth*, &c.] The Syriac version introduces this petition, with the appellation אבא, *Abba, father:* and the sanctification prayed for regards the apostles, either as ministers of the word, and may intend their separation for their work and office; for which though they were sanctified or separated from their mother's womb, and by Christ when he sent them forth, yet were to have a fresh commission and unction after our Lord's resurrection, and upon his ascension to heaven; and also their qualification for it, with the truth of grace and doctrine, with holiness of heart and life, and with a preservation in the truth, by being kept faithful to it: or it may also regard them as Christians and believers, and intend a greater degree of the sanctification of the spirit, which is imperfect in this life; for though sanctification in Christ is perfect, and so it is in the saints, as to parts, yet not as to degrees; which appears from the imperfection of faith, hope, love, and knowledge, from in-dwelling sin, being in the best of saints, from their necessities, from their disclaiming perfection, and their desires after it. Sanctification is a progressive work, which is carried on gradually; as is clear from the characters of regenerate ones, who are first newborn babes, then young men, and afterwards fathers in Christ; from the similes, by which it is expressed as seed which opens and grows up by degrees, and light which shines more and more unto the perfect day; from exhortations to a concern for the growth of it, and prayers for it: and it is indeed continually carrying on, as may be concluded from the hand in which it is; and the progress and finishing of this work, as well as the beginning of it, are entirely the Lord's; and the way and means in which this is done, are by or through the truth of the Gospel: *thy word is truth;* it is *peculiarly* so, as the Arabic version reads it. The Gospel is here meant, and is so called on account of its original, it comes from the God of truth; and because of the concern which Christ, who is the truth, has in it, he being the author, preacher, and sum and substance of it; and because the spirit of truth has dictated it, leads into it, qualifies men to preach it, and makes it effectual: and because it contains all truth necessary to salvation, and nothing but truth, and particularly that eminent truth, salvation alone by Christ; and because it is opposed to the law, which is but a shadow, of which the good things in the Gospel are the substance: now this is the means both of the beginning, and increasing, and carrying on the work of sanctification in the hearts of God's people, as well as of an experimental knowledge of it; and an increase of that knowledge does more and more qualify the ministers of it for their ministerial work and service, which seems here chiefly designed.

Ver. 18. *As thou hast sent me into the world*, &c.] Which does not suppose inequality of nature, nor change of place, nor any force upon him, nor disrespect unto him, or a state of separation from his father; but that he was before he was sent; that he was a person, a divine distinct person from his father; and designs the manifestation of him in human nature; and shews, that as Mediator, he had a divine warrant and authority, and was no impostor: what he was sent into the world to do, was in general the will of God, particularly to preach the Gospel, and chiefly and most especially to work out the salvation of his people: *even so have I also sent them into the world:* to preach the Gospel likewise: he had already sent them forth on this errand, and in a little time they were to receive a new and enlarged commission for this service; which mission of them to such work, implies great honour put upon them, authority in them, and qualifications with them; and hence success attended them: the place into which they were sent is, *the world;* first the Jewish and then the Gentile world, and every part of it; out of which he would not have them taken; and where they were sure to meet with reproach and persecution; and where God's elect lay, who were to be converted through their ministry; for the work they were sent thither for, was to open blind eyes, turn men from darkness to light, from the power of Satan unto God, that they might receive forgiveness of sin, and an inheritance among them that are sanctified: now though there is not an equality between the mission of Christ by his father, and of the apostles by him, yet there is a likeness; there's an agreement in their original, both are divine and of authority; in the place they were sent, the world; and in their work to declare the mind and will of God: all which carries in it a strong argument with his father to regard these persons; for inasmuch as they were in a world that hated them, they needed divine power and protection; and being in a wicked world they needed sanctification and preservation; and having such work to do, they therefore needed divine assistance, and fresh supplies of grace.

Ver. 19. *And for their sakes I sanctify myself*, &c.] Which is to be understood, not of his making himself holy; for he never was a sinner, and so stood in no need of sanctification: he was made like unto us, yet

without sin; he looked like a sinner, but was not one; he was traduced, charged, and treated as such, but was perfectly holy, and free from all sin; he was essentially and infinitely holy as God; and as man, he was holy in his conception and birth; he was filled with the Holy Ghost, and was holy in his life and in his death: rather this may be meant of his being separated, and set apart for his office as Mediator, which, though done by the father, and is ascribed unto him, John x. 36. yet may also be attributed to himself; since he voluntarily devoted himself to this work, and cheerfully accepted of it: though it seems best to understand it of his offering himself a sacrifice for, and in the room and stead of his people, in allusion to the offerings under the law, the sacrificing of which is expressed by sanctifying, Exod. xiii. 2, 14, 15. and because his sacrifice was an holy one: what he sanctified or offered was *himself*; not his divine, but human nature, his body and his soul; and these as in union with his divine person; which gives his sacrifice the preference to all others, and is the true reason of its virtue and efficacy; and this is expressive of his great love. He himself is also the sanctifier or offerer, which shews him to be a priest, and that he had a power over his own life, and that he sacrificed it voluntarily; and this he is said to do at that present time, because the time was very near that he was to be offered up, and his present prayer and intercession were a part of his priestly office. This he did not for his own sake, nor for the sake of angels, nor for all men, but for his disciples, as distinct from the world; and not for the apostles only, but for all that the father had given to him; and that as their substitute and surety, in their room and stead: *that they also might be sanctified through the truth;* that is, have all their sins expiated, and they be cleansed from all the guilt and filth of them, through Christ himself and his sacrifice, who is the truth; or *in truth:* as it may be rendered, really and truly, in opposition to the legal sacrifices which atoned for sin, not really, only typically; or through the Gospel of truth, bringing the good news of atonement by the blood and sacrifice of Christ, and which the spirit of God seals to the conscience with comfort and joy.

Ver. 20. *Neither pray I for these alone, &c.*] Meaning his immediate apostles and disciples, for whose preservation and sanctification he had been particularly praying in the preceding verses; and now, that it might not be thought that these were his only favourites, and the only persons he had a regard for, and to whom his intercession and sacrifice were confined; he adds, *but for them also which shall believe in me through their word:* Christ is the object of true faith; which faith is not a mere assent of the mind to any truth concerning Christ, as that he is the son of God, the Messiah and Saviour of the world; but it is a spiritual sight of him, of the necessity, fulness, and suitableness of him as a Saviour, a going forth unto him, laying hold on him, and depending upon him for life and salvation; of which the preaching of the Gospel is the instrumental means: it is indeed a gift of God, and a fruit of electing grace, and which is secured by it; hence our Lord knew that there would be a number, in all successive generations, that would believe in him, through the ministry of the word; and for these persons, and their conversion, and the success of the Gospel, to the good of their souls, he prays.

Ver. 21. *That they all may be one, &c.*] Among themselves. This may regard their unity in faith, and in the knowledge of Christ; for there is but one faith which all truly experienced souls agree in: they are converted by the same spirit, and have the same work of grace wrought in them; and though they have not the same degree of light, and measure of spiritual knowledge, yet they agree in the main point of the Gospel, salvation alone by the Lord Jesus Christ; and such an agreement in the doctrine of faith, and the grand articles of it, respecting the person and offices of Christ, is absolutely necessary to their comfortably walking together in church fellowship, and the more honourable carrying on the worship of God together; and which will be more manifest in the latter day, when saints shall see eye to eye: likewise an unity in affection may be here designed, a being knit together in love to each other; which is the bond of perfectness, the evidence of regeneration, the badge of the Christian profession, the beauty of church communion, and the barrier and security from the common enemy; and without which, social worship and mutual service will be either neglected or coldly performed. Moreover, this petition may have respect to the gathering together all the saints at the last day, as one body united together in faith and love; as one general assembly and church of the first-born; as one fold of which Christ is the head, Saviour, and shepherd: *as thou, father, art in me, and I in thee.* There is a mutual in-being of the father and the son, who are one in nature and essence, in power and will, and in understanding and affection; which union, though it infinitely transcends any kind of union among men, or that can be conceived of by men, yet is the exemplar of the saints' union one with another, and to the divine persons; and which must be understood not of an equality, but a likeness: *that they also may be one in us:* there is an union of all the elect to God and Christ, which is already complete, and not to be prayed for; they are all loved by God with an everlasting love, by which they are inseparably one with him; they are all chosen in Christ, as members in their head, and are federally united to him, as their Mediator, surety, and representative; in consequence of which he has assumed their nature, stood in their place and stead, and brought them nigh to God. There is a manifestation of union in conversion, when persons openly appear to be in Christ; and as a fruit and effect of everlasting love, are with loving kindness drawn unto him; and which will be more gloriously seen, when all the elect shall be brought in, and God shall be all in all, and is what Christ here prays for: *that the world may believe that thou hast sent me:* either the rest of God's chosen people in the world, not yet called; or rather the wicked and reprobate part of the world, particularly Jews and Deists: they shall see the concord and agreement of the saints in doctrine, worship, and affection in the latter day; and when all the elect shall be gathered together, and not only their union to each other, but to the divine persons, shall clearly appear: they will then believe, and be obliged to own, that Jesus is the true Messiah, was sent of God, and is no impostor.

Ver. 22. *And the glory which thou gavest me, &c.*] Not the glory of his deity; this is the same with his father, what he has in right of nature, and not by gift; nor can it be communicated to creatures; this would be to make them one in the Godhead, as the three are one, which is not the design of the expression in the close of the verse: nor his mediatorial glory, which he had with the father before the world began; this indeed was given him by the father, but is not given to the saints: nor the glory of working miracles; which glory Christ had, and which, as man, he had from the father, and in which his own glory was manifested; this he gave to his disciples; but all that are his have not had it, and some have had it who are none of his: rather the Gospel is meant, which is glorious in its author, matter and subject, in its doctrines, in the blessings of grace it reveals, and promises it contains, and in the efficacy and usefulness of it to the souls of men. This was given to Christ, and he gave it to his disciples: *I have given them;* as he did the words that were given to him, ver. 8. *that they may be one, even as we are one;* for the Gospel was given to the apostles, and still is to the ministers of it, to bring men to the unity of the faith, for the perfecting of the saints, and the edifying of the body of Christ: or else the fulness both of grace and glory, which is in Christ's hands for his people, is here designed. This is one considerable branch of the glory of Christ, as Mediator, to be full of grace and truth; this was given him by the father, and is what he communicates to his; even the spirit, and all sorts of grace, and every supply of it; and which greatly contributes to the union of the saints among themselves: yea, eternal happiness is often signified by glory; and this is given to Christ; he has it in his hands to give to others; and he does give it, a view of it, a right unto it, a meetness for it, a pledge of it, some foretastes of it, and a kind of a possession of it; for the saints have it already, at least in him; and he will give them the actual enjoyment of it, and this in order to their consummate and perfect union together, as a glorious church without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing.

Ver. 23. *I in them, &c.*] Christ is in his saints; not as he is in all the world, being the omnipresent God; or as he is in every man, communicating the light of nature as Creator; or as he is in the human nature, which is united to his divine person; or circumscriptively to the exclusion of him elsewhere; for he is in heaven, his blood is within the veil, and his righteousness without us: but he is in them, in a gracious manner, in regeneration; when he is revealed to them, formed in them, enters into them, takes possession of them, communicates his grace, grants fellowship with himself, and dwells in them; not only by his spirit and grace, but in person, as the head in the members, as the master of the house, and the King of them; which is an instance of condescending grace, and is peculiar to God's elect: hence all their holiness and fruitfulness; nor shall they ever perish; their bodies shall rise from the dead, and being reunited to their souls, Christ will be in them in a glorious manner to all eternity: *and thou in me;* the father is in Christ, not only by union of nature, nor merely in him, as Mediator, in a way of grace: but as he will shew himself in and through him in glory for evermore, and is what is here prayed for: *that they may be made perfect in one;* this regards not their justification, which is already perfect; nor their sanctification, which will be; but either perfection in glory, when they will be perfect in knowledge, in holiness, in peace, joy and love: or rather the perfection of their numbers is meant, when the whole election of grace will be completed in regeneration, sanctification, and glorification: *and that the world may know that thou hast sent me;* as before, ver. 21. see the note there; *and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.* The Oriental versions, the Syriac, Arabic, Persic, and Ethiopic, all read the words thus, *and I have loved them, as thou hast loved me:* contrary to all the Greek copies, and other versions, which read as we do. The father loved Christ as his own son, and as Mediator: so he loved him when he assumed human nature, and became obedient to his will both in doing and suffering; when his father left him, and poured out his wrath upon him, and when he laid down his life for the sheep. The instances of his love to him as Mediator are, his putting all things into his hands, shewing him all that he does, and concealing nothing from him, and appointing him the only Saviour, the head of the church, and Judge of the world. The nature of this love is, that it is from eternity; is a love of complacency and delight; it is special and peculiar, unchangeable and inseparable, and will last for ever: now God has loved his people, as he has loved his son; he loves them not merely as creatures, as the descendants of Adam, or as considered in themselves, but as in Christ. The instances of his love to them are, his choosing them in Christ; making a covenant with them in him; the mission of him into this world, to obtain salvation for them; the quickening and calling of them by his grace; the care he takes of them afterwards in supplying their wants, supporting them under temptations, delivering them out of afflictions, and causing all things to work together for their good; to all which add the provisions he makes for them, both for time and eternity. The nature of this love is such as that he bears to Christ; it is from everlasting; a love of the utmost delight and pleasure; it is special and peculiar, unchangeable, and will continue for ever: there is not the same reason for his loving them as his son; and this *as* must not be thought to denote equality, but similitude and order.

Ver. 24. *Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, &c.*] Not all the world, but a select number; not apostles only, nor as such; nor believers, or as such, for as such they were not given to Christ; nor as considered in effectual vocation; but as the elect of God, and by that eternal act of his grace; when they were given to Christ as his children, as his spouse, as his church, as the sheep of his hand, as his portion, and to be preserved by him; which is known by their calling and conversion: the form in which these words are delivered, is not so much by way of entreaty, as demand; they are a declaration of Christ's will, in which he insists on it as his right, upon the foot of his purchase, and those covenant transactions which passed between him and his father, on the behalf of those that were given to him: *that they be where I am;* not where he was then, unless it may be

meant of him as the omnipresent God, and as such then in heaven; though he rather designs where he should be as man, after his resurrection, and where the souls of saints are after death; and where they will be, soul and body, when raised again; and which is desirable both to Christ, and to his people; this was the joy that was set before him, and what they comfort one another with, that they shall be for ever with him: *that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me*: not the simple abstract glory of his deity; which, as it was not given to him, is not to be seen by them; but his glory as Mediator: this was seen, though imperfectly by some, in the days of his flesh; and in the glass of the Gospel, a believer now has some views of it, and by faith sees, knows, and is assured that Christ is glorified in heaven; but hereafter the saints in their own persons, and with their own eyes, shall see him as he is, and appear in glory with him; which sight of his glory will be near, and not at a distance, appropriating and assimilating, rejoicing, satisfying, and for ever: *for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world*: this is mentioned both as a reason why such a glory was given him, because of his father's early love to him as Mediator; and as an argument why he might expect to be heard and answered, because of the interest he had in his affections, which had been strongly towards him, even from everlasting; and because the persons he asks, or rather demands these things for, shared in the same ancient love.

Ver. 25. *O righteous father*, &c.] God is righteous in all the divine persons: the Father is righteous, the Son is righteous, and the Holy Spirit is righteous: he is so in his nature; righteousness is a perfection of it; he is so in all his purposes and promises; in all his ways and works of providence and grace; in predestination, redemption, justification, pardon of sin, and eternal glory. Christ makes use of this epithet, as containing a reason why he might justly expect that all his petitions and claims, on behalf of himself and people, would be regarded: *the world hath not known thee*: the unbelieving Jews, and idolatrous Gentiles, wicked men, one or another, know not God: as not the father, so neither the son, nor spirit; though deity may be known by them, or that there is a God, yet they know not God in Christ, nor as the father of Christ, or as their father in him, nor what it is to have communion with him; nor do they know any of the things of God in a spiritual way; which shews the darkness and blindness of men by nature, the necessity of a divine illumination, and the miserable state of men without one: *but I have known thee*: his nature, perfections and glory, his secret thoughts, purposes and designs, his covenant, promises and blessings, his love, grace and good-will to his people, his whole mind and will; as he needs must, since he was one with him, and lay in his bosom; *and these have known that thou hast sent me*: meaning his disciples and apostles, whom he distinguishes from the world; these knew the father that sent him, and that he was sent by the father; they knew the love of the father in sending of him, the manner in which he was sent, and the end, man's redemption, for which he was sent; and acknowledged all this, and which laid them under an obligation to trust in him, love him, and magnify his grace; and is used by Christ as an argument with the father to be concerned for them.

Ver. 26. *And I have declared unto them thy name*, &c.] Himself, his nature, his perfections, especially of grace and mercy, his mind and will, his Gospel; see the note on ver. 6. A very fit person Christ was to make this declaration, since he was with him from all eternity, and was in his bosom; the father did all in him, and his name is in him; and he is the faithful witness; nor is any thing of God to be known savingly, but in and through Christ: the apostles are here particularly meant, though the same is true with respect to all that are given to Christ, who are his children and brethren, to whom he also declares the name of God: *and will declare it*: more fully to them after his resurrection, during his forty-days' stay with them, and upon his ascension, when he poured down his spirit in such a plentiful and extraordinary manner upon them; and will declare it to others besides them in the Gentile world; and still more in the latter-day glory, and to all believers more and more: *that the love wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in them*: that is, that a sense of that love with which God loves his son, as Mediator, might be in them, and abide in them, and which is the rather mentioned, because they are loved by the father with the same love, and share all the blessed consequences of it, the knowledge and sense of which they come at, through Christ's declaring his father's name unto them; and which they will have a greater sense of, and will be swallowed up in it in heaven to all eternity: *and I in them*: dwelling in them, taking up his residence in them; not only by his spirit and grace here, but by his glorious presence with them hereafter; when they shall be brought to his father's house, behold his glory, and be for ever with him.

CHAP. XVIII.

Ver. 1. *WHEN Jesus had spoken these words*, &c.] Referring either to his discourses in chap. xiv. 15, 16. in which he acquaints his disciples with his approaching death; comforts them under the sorrowful apprehension of his departure from them; gives them many excellent promises for their relief, and very wholesome advice how to conduct themselves; lets them know what should befall them, and that things, however distressing for the present, would have a joyful issue: or else to his prayer in the preceding chapter, in which he had been very importunate with his father, both for himself and his disciples; or to both of these, which is highly probable: *he went forth with his disciples over the brook Cedron*: the same with *Kidron* in 2 Sam. xv. 23. and elsewhere: it had its name, not from cedars, for not cedars but olives chiefly grew upon

the mount, which was near it; and besides the name is not Greek, but Hebrew, though the Arabic version renders it, *the brook* אל ארזין, *of Cedar*: it had its name either from the darkness of the valley in which it ran, being between high mountains, and having gardens in it, and set with trees; or from the blackness of the water through the soil that ran into it, being a kind of a common sewer, into which the Jews cast every thing that was unclean and defiling; see 2 Chron. xxix. 16. and xxx. 14. Particularly there was a canal which led from the altar in the temple to it, by which the blood and soil of the sacrifices were carried into it[m]. This brook was but about three feet over from bank to bank, and in the summer-time was quite dry, and might be walked over dry-shod; and is therefore by Josephus sometimes called the brook of Kedron[n], and sometimes the valley of Kedron[o]: in this valley were corn-fields; for hither the sanhedrim sent their messengers to reap the sheaf of the first-fruits, which always was to be brought from a place near to Jerusalem[p]; and it is very likely that willows grew by the brook, from whence they might fetch their willow-branches at the feast of tabernacles; for the Jews say[q], there is a place below Jerusalem called Motza, (in the Gemara it is said to be Klamia or Colonia,) whither they went down and gathered willow-branches; it seems to be the valley of Kedron, which lay on the east of Jerusalem, between that and the Mount of Olives[r]; it had fields and gardens adjoining to it; see 2 Kings xxiii. 4. So we read of a garden here, into which Christ immediately went, when he passed over this brook. The blood, the filth and soil of it, which so discoloured the water, as to give it the name of the Black Brook, used to be sold to the gardeners to dung their gardens with[s]. It was an emblem of this world, and the darkness and filthiness of it, and of the exercises and troubles of the people of God in it, which lie in the way to the heavenly paradise and Mount of Zion, through which Christ himself went, drinking *of the brook in the way*; and through which also all his disciples and followers enter into the kingdom of heaven: it may also be a figure of the dark valley of the shadow of death, through which Christ and all his members pass to the heavenly glory. And I see not why this black and unclean book may not be a representation of the pollutions and defilements of sin; which being laid on Christ when he passed over it, made him so heavy and sore amazed in the human nature, as to desire the cup might pass from him. Once more let it be observed, that it was the brook David passed over when he fled from his son Absalom; in this David was a type of Christ, as in other things: Absalom represented the people of the Jews, who rejected the Messiah, and rebelled against him; Achitophel, Judas, who betrayed him; and the people that went with David over it, the disciples of our Lord; only there was this difference; there was a father fleeing from a son, here a son going to meet his father's wrath; David and his people wept when they went over this brook, but so did not Christ and his disciples; the sorrowful scene to them both began afterwards in the garden. This black brook and dark valley, and it being very late at night when it was passed over, all add to that dark dispensation, that hour of darkness, which now came upon our Lord; yet he went forth over it of his own accord, willingly and cheerfully; not being forced or compelled by any; and his disciples with him, not to be partners of his sufferings, but to be witnesses of them, and to receive some knowledge and instruction from what they should see and hear: *where was a garden into which he entered; and his disciples*: there were no orchards nor gardens within the city of Jerusalem, but rose gardens, which were from the times of the prophets[t]; all others were without; and this was a very proper place for gardens, where so much dung was near at hand. Whether this garden belonged to one of Christ's friends, is not certain; but since he often resorted hither, no doubt it was with the leave, and by the consent of the proprietor of it. However, so it was, that as the first Adam's disobedience was committed in a garden, the second Adam's obedience to death for sin, began here; and as the sentence of death, on account of sin, was passed in a garden, it began to be executed in one.

Ver. 2. *And Judas also which betrayed him, knew the place*, &c.] This character is given of Judas, to distinguish him from another disciple of the same name; and though as yet he had not betrayed him, yet it was determined he should, and Christ knew it, and he was now about to do it: and it is observed, that Judas was as well acquainted with the place of Christ's resort, and knew the garden he frequently retired to, as the rest of the disciples; to shew that Christ did not go there to hide and secure himself from him, but to meet him, and that he might have an opportunity of finding him with the greater ease: *for Jesus oftentimes resorted thither with his disciples*; when at Jerusalem at any of the feasts, and at this festival; partly for refreshment and rest after he had been preaching in the temple, and partly for prayer, and also for private conversation with his disciples.

Ver. 3. *Judas then having received a band of men*, &c.] From the captain of this band, who in ver. 12. is called a *Chiliarch*, that is, a commander of a thousand men, one might conclude there were so many in this band; but it seems, that such an officer might have two bands under his command; and if this was the case, there were at least five hundred men in this company; a large number indeed, to take an unarmed person; and yet, as if this was not sufficient, 'tis added, *and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees*: servants that belong to each of these, and who seem to be a considerable number also; for these are said to be *a great multitude*; Matt. xxvi. 47. nay, not only

[m] Misn. Middot, c. 3. sect. 2. Meila, c. 3. sect. 3. & Bartenora in ib. Maimon. & Bartenora in Misn. Zebachim, c. 8. 7. & Temura, c. 7. sect. 6.

[n] Antiqu. l. 8. c. 1. sect. 5.

[o] Ib. l. 9. c. 7. sect. 3. & de Bello Jud. l. 5. c. 4. sect. 2. & c. 6. sect. 1.

[p] Misna Menachot, c. 10. sect. 2, 3.

[q] Misna Succa, c. 4. sect. 5.

[r] Jerom de locis Hebraicis, fol. 92. C.

[s] Misn. Yoma, c. 5. sect 6. Maimon. Meila, c. 2. sect. 11.

[t] T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 82. 2. Abot. R. Nathan, c. 35. Maimon. Beth Habbechira, c. 7. sect. 14. Moses Kotsensis Mitzvot Tora precept. Aff. 164.

so, but the chief priests, captains of the temple, and elders of the people, were themselves among them, Luke xxii. 52. to see that the men did their work, and did not return without him; as these officers, when sent by them once before, did: *cometh thither with lanterns, and torches, and weapons*: פנס, which is no other than the Greek word here used for a lantern, the Jews tell us[u], was an earthen vessel, in which a candle was put and covered, that the wind might not put it out, and it had holes in the sides of it, through which light was let out; their לפיד, *or lamp*, here rendered *torch*, they say[w], was also an earthen vessel in the form of a reed, at the top of which was a proper receptacle, in which they burnt old rags dipped in oil: now though it was full moon, being the time of the passover, they brought these along with them to discover him by the light of, and find him out with them, if he should hide himself among the trees, or in any of the more shady places in the garden; and they took warlike instruments, as swords, spears, and staves, as if they had a thief or a murderer to apprehend, or a little army of men to encounter with; whereas there were only Christ, and his eleven disciples; and these in no condition, nor had any design, to defend themselves in an hostile manner.

Ver. 4. *Jesus therefore knowing all things*, &c.] As being the omniscient God, so his knowledge reaches to all persons and things, without any limitation, and restriction; though here it has a regard to all the things, *that should come upon him*; even all the sufferings he should endure, which were all determined by God; agreed to by him, in the covenant of grace; predicted in the Old Testament, and foretold by himself: he knew all the circumstances that would attend his sufferings, as that he should be betrayed by Judas; be forsaken by the rest of his disciples; that the Jews would give him gall and vinegar in his thirst; and the soldiers part his garments among them: he knew the time of his sufferings; and that it was now at hand; and that Judas and his company were not far off: and therefore, *went forth*; out of the garden, or at least from that part of it where he was, and his disciples with him: this was done to shew his willingness to suffer; he went forth of his own accord; he did not hide himself in the garden, as the first Adam did: he did not stay till those that sought his life came up to him: he went forth, not to make his escape from them, but to meet them, and make himself known unto them; *and said unto them: whom seek ye?* this question was put, not out of ignorance; for he knew full well who they were seeking after: nor with a design to deceive them, and make his escape; but to shew that he was not afraid of them, and that they could not have known him, nor have taken him, had he not made himself known; and offered himself to them; and which makes it appear, that he was willingly apprehended by them, and voluntarily suffered.

Ver. 5. *They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth*, &c.] Their answer is not, *thee*; for they knew him not, their eyes were holden, or struck with dimness, or blindness, as the men of Sodom were; or they that answered might be such who never personally knew him: nor do they say *Christ*, for they rejected and denied him as the Messiah; nor do they call him that deceiver, or seditious person, as they sometimes did, being willing to cover their malicious views and intentions; but Jesus of Nazareth, a name by which he was commonly known, being taken from his education and conversation in that place; though this was sometimes given him in a contemptuous way: *Jesus saith unto them, I am he*; or *I am*, respecting his name Jehovah, averring himself to be the Christ, and owning himself under the name they were pleased to call him by; which shews how willing he was to be taken by them, and may teach us not to be ashamed of him, or of any nick-name we may bear for his sake: *and Judas also which betrayed him stood with them*; this circumstance is recorded to shew, that Judas at first did not know him any more than the rest; so that he might easily have passed them if he had pleased; and that Judas did not stand with them as an idle spectator; he came with them to betray him, and was looking out for him; though when he spake he knew him not: it also expresses the different company Judas was in; a little while ago, he was at supper with Christ, and the other disciples, and now he is at the head of a band of soldiers, and others, to betray him; and also his continuance in his iniquity and wicked resolutions and agreement; as yet he had no remorse of conscience, or sense of his sin; and it seems to be mentioned also with this view, to inform us, that he fell to the ground with the rest; which is related in the next verse. The Jew[x] asserts, that there is a disagreement between the Evangelist John and the rest of the evangelists in this account: he observes, that when Judas came with his armed men to take Jesus, Jesus went out to meet them, and asked them, saying, whom seek ye? they say Jesus of Nazareth; to whom he replies, I am he; and then Judas, that betrayed him, stood with them: but Matthew, in his Gospel, ch. xxvi. 47. and Mark. ch. xiv. 43. and Luke, ch. xxii. 47. relate, that Judas gave a sign to the soldiers, when they came to take Jesus, saying, him whom I shall kiss, lay hold on, and they did so. But here is no contradiction, John does not deny that Judas gave a sign to the soldiers; though he omits it, it being so particularly observed by the other evangelists, and only relates what is not taken notice of by them, and which no ways contradicts what they have asserted; the force of the objection seems to lie here; that, according to the other evangelists, Judas, as soon as he came into the garden, made up to Christ, and gave the signal by which he might be known, whereas he is here said to stand with the soldiers and officers; and that seeing such a signal was given, he must be, and was known by it, whereas he is here represented as if he was not known by them until he had made himself known to them; and that as soon as Judas had given the sign, they immediately seized him, whereas, according to this account, they did not, until some words had passed between Christ and them, and they first fell to the

[u] Maimon. & Bartenora in Misn. Celim, c. 2. sect. 4.
[w] Ib. in sect. 8.

[x] R. Isaac Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 56. p. 445, 446.

ground. In answer to which it may be said, that admitting that Judas did make up to Christ as soon as he entered the garden, and gave the signal to the soldiers, he might upon that immediately retire, and place himself among the multitude; either to give further directions and instructions to them, or that they might defend him from Jesus, should there be any occasion for it: and though it should be allowed that the signal was given by Judas before this, it might not be discerned by the soldiers, either not being near enough to observe it; or, as some think, being stricken with blindness, for a time, as the Sodomites were; or even supposing it was seen, and they knew by it which was Jesus, it is still a fuller proof of the courage and intrepidity of Christ to go forth, and present himself to them, and put the questions he did, and confirm unto them the truth of it, that he was Jesus whom they sought: to which may be added, that it does not appear that Christ was immediately seized by the soldiers, upon the signal given them by Judas, without some intervening words and actions; for though the signal and the seizure lie very near together in the accounts of Matthew and Mark; yet Luke relates many things between them, as the question of the disciples, whether they should smite with the sword; Peter's cutting off the ear of the high-priest's servant; Christ's rebuking him, and touching the servant's ear, and healing it; and some discourse which passed between him, and the chief priests, captains, and elders. All which agree with the account the Evangelist John here gives.

Ver. 6. *As soon then as he had said unto them I am he,* &c.] Immediately upon his speaking these words, which were delivered with so much majesty and authority, and were attended with such a divine power: *they went backward, and fell to the ground*; they were confounded, surprised, and intimidated, and seemed as if they would have chose rather to have fled from him, than to have apprehended him; and as they retired and went backward, they fainted away, as it were, either at the majesty of his looks, or at the power of his words, or both, so that they became like dead men, falling to the ground. Sometimes the majesty of a man's person, or his fame for some remarkable things done by him, or the innocence and uprightness of his cause, have had such an influence upon his enemies, that they have not been able to execute upon him what they intended. It is reported of Caius Marius, that being reduced to the utmost misery, and shut up in a private house at Minturnæ, (a town in Italy,) an executioner was sent to kill him; and though he was an old man, and unarmed, and in the most miserable condition, yet the executioner having drawn his sword, could not attempt to use it; but, as the historian [y] says, being struck with blindness at the glory of the man, ran away astonished and trembling. Now, besides the above things, in their highest perfection, there was in our Lord something more than human; he was God as well as man, and he displayed his divine majesty, glory, and power. This was done, not to make his escape from them; but to give proof of his deity, and a specimen of his power at the great day; and to let them know, that if he had not thought fit to have surrendered himself voluntarily to them, though he was an unarmed person, they, with all their men and arms, could never have laid hold on him; and to shew them, that he could as easily have struck them dead, as to cause them to fall to the ground: and sometimes striking a person dead immediately, is expressed by this phrase of striking to the ground; and is ascribed to God, who does it by the ministry of angels: says R. Simeon ben Shetach [z], to some persons at variance, "let the master "of thoughts come, (*i. e.* the blessed God,) and take "vengeance on you; immediately Gabriel came, חבטן "בקרקע, *and smote them to the ground*, and they died "immediately." The like is elsewhere said [a], "if "thou transgresseth thy father's command, immediately comes Gabriel, and *smites to the ground*."

Ver. 7. *Then asked he them again, whom seek ye?* &c.] This supposes them to be risen up again and on their feet; no hurt being done to them; for Christ always did good, and not hurt, to the bodies of men; he never disabled any, or took away life, or limb: he only did this to shew his power, and not to do them any real damage; and the same divine person that struck them down, suffered them to rise, and gave them power and strength to get up; which shewed his great clemency and goodness: but they, on the contrary, persisted in their wicked intentions, and were still seeking after him; a plain proof of that judicial hardness of heart, under which they were; and that even miracles wrought will not bring hardened sinners to repentance without powerful and efficacious grace. When Christ, as fearless of them, and to shew that by this action he had no design to make his escape from them, though he could easily have done it, and that he was willing to be apprehended by them, puts the question a second time, and asks them who they were seeking for. Something like this Josephus [b] reports concerning Elisha the prophet, though not repeated as here, nor attended with the like effect: he relates that Elisha having requested of God that he would smite his enemies with blindness, and that being granted he went into the midst of them, and asked them, τινα επιζητουντες ηλθον, *whom do ye come to seek?* they say Elisha the prophet: he promised them to deliver him to them, if they would follow him into the city, where he was; and so they being blinded by God, both in their sight and in their mind, followed the prophet. *They said Jesus of Nazareth*: having recovered their spirits, and being hardened in desperate malice and wickedness, impudently make this reply to him; nor would they, notwithstanding this instance of his power, own him to be the Messiah; but still contemptuously style him Jesus of Nazareth.

Ver. 8. *Jesus answered, I have told you that I am he,* &c.] This he said, upbraiding them with their stupidity; signifying he was ready to deliver himself up into their hands; and which he did with intrepidity and calmness, only on this condition, with this proviso for his disciples; *if therefore ye seek me, let*

[y] Valerius Maxim. l. 2. c. 5.
[z] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 19. 2.

[a] Shemot Rabba, sect. 1. fol. 91. 2.
[b] Antiqu. l. 9. c. 4. sect. 3.

these go their way: Christ was about to suffer for them, and therefore it was not just that they should suffer too; nor was it proper that they should suffer with him, lest their sufferings should be thought to be a part of the price of redemption. Besides, their suffering-time was not come, and they had other work to do: this shews the love of Christ to his disciples, and his care of them, and also his power, and that he could have saved himself as well as them. Moreover, these words may be considered as an emblem and pledge of the acquittance and discharge of God's elect, through the suretyship-engagements, and performances of Christ, who drew near to God on their account, substituted himself in their room, and undertook for them in the council and covenant of peace, and laid himself under obligation to pay their debts, to satisfy for their sins, to bring in an everlasting righteousness, to keep and preserve them in this world, and to make them happy in another. Accordingly, in the fulness of time he was made under the law, and stood in their place and stead, and was taken, suffered, died, and rose again. Now, as there was a discharge and acquittance of them from eternity, a non-imputation of sin to them, and a secret letting of them go upon the suretyship-engagements of Christ, and in virtue thereof, a passing by, and over, the sins of the Old-Testament saints; so there was an open acquittance and discharge of them all upon the apprehension, sufferings, death, and resurrection of Christ; complete deliverance from wrath and condemnation being obtained, and a full title to eternal glory made. Moreover, these words may be considered not only and merely as spoken to the Jews, but as addressed to the law and justice of God; or however, as having some respect to them, while directed to the others; for justice finding the sins of all the elect upon Christ, on whom the father had laid them, and Christ had took them upon himself, was seeking for, and about to demand satisfaction of him for them; and he being under the law, and coming into the world to fulfil it, in the room and stead of his people, was about to bear the curse of it; wherefore seeing this was the case, he insists upon it, that they who were convicted of the law as transgressors, and held under it as condemned criminals and malefactors, and who were liable, as considered in themselves, to be seized upon by the justice of God, and to have the sentence of condemnation and death executed upon them, might be discharged and let go; and accordingly, upon the satisfaction made by Christ, this is the case: Christ's people are no longer under the law, as a ministration of condemnation and death, nor liable to suffer the vindictive wrath of God; they are become free from the curses of a righteous law, and are let go by divine justice, and will never suffer the strokes of it, neither in this world nor in that to come; there's no demand to be made upon them, either by the law or justice of God; there is no wrath or punishment will be inflicted on them, either here or hereafter; and they may, and shall go their way into everlasting life, when time shall be no more with them, neither law nor justice having any thing to say to the contrary.

Ver. 9. *That the saying might be fulfilled which he spake,* &c.] John xvii. 12. *of them which thou gavest me have I lost none:* which though it has a peculiar respect to the apostles, is true of all the elect of God; who are given to Christ, and shall none of them be lost, neither their souls nor bodies; for Christ's charge of them reaches to both: both were given to him, both are redeemed by him, and both shall be saved in him with an everlasting salvation: he saves their souls from an eternal death, and will raise their bodies from a corporeal one; wherefore that his care of his disciples, with respect to their bodies as well as souls, with respect to their temporal lives as well as eternal happiness, might be seen; he made this agreement with the Jews that came to take him, or rather laid this injunction on them, to dismiss them; and which 'tis very remarkable they did; they laid hands on none of them, even though Peter drew his sword and struck off the ear of one of them: and which is a very considerable instance of the power which Christ had over the spirits of these men, to restrain them; and so a proof of his proper deity, as well as of the care of Christ for the preservation of his apostles, whilst he was here on earth; for to that time only the words cited have a respect; in which Christ speaks of his keeping them whilst he was with them, and uses this as an argument with his father to keep them, now he was removing from them: wherefore their losing their lives afterwards for his sake, as they all did excepting the Apostle John, is no contradiction to this expression of his; and besides, they were preserved by the power of God so long, until they had done the work which was appointed them to do, and for which they were given him, and chosen by him to be his apostles, and for which they were better furnished after his resurrection and ascension; for had they been apprehended by the Jews at this time, in all probability, according to an human view of things, such was their weakness, they would have fallen most foully and shamefully, as the instance of Peter, the strongest of them, shews; and therefore to prevent such a temptation, and to preserve them, our Lord took this method to deliver them out of the hands of the Jews; the saving clause, *but the son of perdition,* is here left out, because Judas, who is designed by that character, was now openly declared to be what he was; he was no longer among the disciples; he was separated from them, and had betrayed his master, and was not of the number of those Christ insisted upon might be let go.

Ver. 10. *Then Simon Peter having a sword,* &c.] Girt about him, which he either wore in common, or particularly at the feast, as the Galileans are said to do, to preserve them from thieves and wild beasts by the way; or was one of the two the disciples had with them in the garden; or what Peter purposely furnished himself with to defend his master, taking a hint from what was said by him, Luke xxii. 36. *drew it;* before Christ could give an answer to the question put by his disciples, whether they should smite or no, Luke xxii. 49. being encouraged thereunto by what Christ said, Luke xxii. 38. or by what he had just done in striking the man to the ground; and being provoked by that servant's going to lay hold on Christ, and who 'tis probable was more forward and busy than any of the rest; for it appears from the other evangelists, that Peter did this, though he is not mentioned by name by any of the

rest, just as they were seizing and apprehending Christ: *and smote the high-priest's servant, and cut off his right ear:* he doubtless struck at his head, and intended to have cleaved him down, but missed his aim, and took off his ear: the person is particularly described, that he was a servant, and the servant of the high-priest, and he is mentioned also by name; *and the servant's name was Malchus:* that if the truth of this relation was called in question, it might easily be looked into and examined, when it would appear that it was perfectly right. All the evangelists give an account of this action of Peter's, but none of them mention his name but this evangelist; perhaps the reason might be, that Peter was alive when the other evangelists wrote, and therefore it was not safe to say who it was that did it, lest he who was the minister of the circumcision, and dwelt among the Jews, should be persecuted for it, or their minds should be prejudiced against him on that account; but John writing his Gospel many years after his death, the reason for the concealment of his name no longer subsisted: nor indeed is the name of the high-priest's servant mentioned by any other of the evangelists: John had, or however he writes, a more exact and particular account of this matter. This was a name frequent with the Syrians, Phœnicians, and Hebrews. Jerom [c] wrote the life of one Malchus, a monk or Eremite, who was by nation a Syrian; and Porphyry, that great enemy of Christianity, who was by birth a Tyrian, his original name was Malchus, as was his father's; and *which*, in the Syrian, and his country dialect, as he himself [d] and others [e] say, signifies a *king*. Josephus [f] speaks of one Cleodemus, whose name was Malchus, that wrote a history of the Hebrews. And some Jewish Rabbins were of this name: hence we read of ר' מלוך, *R. Maluc* [g], and of ר' מלכיו, *R. Malcio* [h]; the name is the same with Malluch, Neh. x. 4.

Ver. 11. *Then said Jesus unto Peter,* &c.] By way of rebuke, and to prevent his repeating the blow, and that further mischief might not ensue; for such a bold imprudent action risked the lives of all the disciples, who, in all probability, would have fallen a sacrifice to the fury and resentment of these men, had not Christ interposed in this prudent manner; who, also, Luke says, touched the servant's ear and healed him, which no doubt tended greatly to conciliate their minds, and make them easy: *put up thy sword into the sheath:* Peter was not a proper person to bear the sword, and use it; it was a very daring attack, and a dangerous one, and was very unnecessary; since Christ could have defended himself, had he thought fit, without Peter's drawing his sword; and besides, for a word speaking, he could have had of his father more than twelve legions of angels; and it was also contrary to the nature of his kingdom, which was not of this world, nor to be supported and defended in any such manner; and was, moreover, as much as in Peter lay, an hinderance of his sufferings, and of the execution of his father's will and decree; wherefore he adds, *the cup which my father hath given me:* by the cup is meant, the wrath of God, and punishment due to sin, endured by Christ in his sufferings, and is said to be *given* him by his father; because he called him to these sufferings, they were appointed and determined by him; yea, he was even ordered, and commanded by his father, to drink of this cup; justice mixed it up, and put it into his hands; and he took it as coming from his father, who delighted in seeing him drink it up, as the surety of his people; and a dreadful one it was, a cup of trembling and astonishment, of curse, and not of blessing, of wrath and fury: the allusion seems to be to the master of the family, who appointed, and gave to every one their cup: *shall I not drink it?* which expresses his willingness to do it, his eager desire after it, his delight in it, and displeasure at Peter's attempt to hinder him; he being now perfectly reconciled in his human nature to drink it, though it was so bitter a potion: he found it was impossible, considering the decree of God, his own agreement, and the salvation of his people, that it should be otherwise; and besides, it was his father's will and pleasure, he considered it as coming from him; and therefore cheerfully accepted it, and was resolved to drink it up, and that nothing should hinder him. The Persic version reads it, *I will not give it to another to drink;* Peter, by this rash action, seeming as if he would have the cup out of Christ's hands, and have drank it himself; which, as it could not be, nor would Christ suffer it, so if he had, it would have been of no advantage to the salvation of his people.

Ver. 12. *Then the band, and the captain, and the officers of the Jews,* &c.] Which Judas received, and which came along with him, ver. 3. When Jesus had rebuked Peter, and healed the servant's ear, and shewed such a willingness to surrender himself to them; *they took Jesus and bound him.* This they did, partly for safety and security, he having several times escaped from them; and partly for contempt, and by way of reproach, using him as they would do the vilest of malefactors: and this was submitted to by Christ, that his people might be loosed from the cords of sin, be delivered from the captivity of Satan, and be freed from the bondage of the law; hereby the types of him were fulfilled, as the binding of Isaac, when his father was going to offer him up, and the binding of the sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar: who that has read the ceremonies of the sheaf of the first-fruits, but must call them to mind, upon reading this account of the apprehension and binding of Christ, and leading him to the high-priest? This sheaf was fetched from places the nearest to Jerusalem, particularly from the fields of Kidron: the manner was this [i]: "the messengers of the sanhedrim went out (from Jerusalem) "on the evening of the feast-day (the sixteenth of "Nisan, and over the brook Kidron to the adjacent "fields), and bound the standing corn in bundles, that "it might be the easier reaped; and all the neighbouring cities gathered together there, that it might "be reaped in great pomp; and when it was dark, "one (of the reapers) says to them, is the sun set? "they say, yes; and again, is the sun set? they say, "yes: with this sickle (shall I reap?) they say, yes:

[c] Tom. I. fol. 97.
[d] Porphyr. vita in Plotin. c. 17.
[e] Eunapius in vita Porphyr. p. 16.
[f] Antiqu. l. 1. c. 15.
[g] T. Hieros. Succa, fol. 53. 3. & Bab. Bathra, fol. 16. 1.
[h] T. Bab. Nidda, fol. 52. 1.
[i] Misn. Menachot, c. 10. sect. 2, 3, 4.

"again, with this sickle (shall I reap?) they say, yes; "in this basket (shall I put it?) they say, yes; again, "in this basket (shall I put it?) they say, yes; if on "the sabbath-day he says to them, is this sabbath-"day? they say, yes; again, is this sabbath-day? "they say, yes; (it was sabbath-day this year;) shall "I reap? they say to him reap, shall I reap? they "say to him reap; three times upon every thing; then "they reap it, and put it into the baskets, and bring it "to the court, where they dry it at the fire." Whoever reads this, will easily observe a likeness: the messengers of the great sanhedrim go to the fields of Kidron, in the evening, with their sickles and baskets; bind the standing corn; questions and answers pass between them and the people before they reap; and when they have done, they bring the sheaf in their basket to the court, to be dried at the fire. So the officers of the high-priest, with others, pass over the brook Kidron, with lanterns, torches, and weapons; in the night go into a garden; there apprehend Jesus; questions and answers pass between them there; then they lay hold on him, bind him, and bring him to the high-priest.

Ver. 13. *And led him away to Annas first*, &c.] Who is elsewhere mentioned with Caiaphas as an high-priest also, Luke iii. 2. Acts iv. 6. He was the *sagan* of the high-priest; he and Caiaphas seem to have had the high-priesthood alternately; and either now, because his house lay first in the way, or rather, because he was a man of age, learning, and experience, as these men usually were, that they might supply the deficiencies of the high-priests, who were sometimes very weak and unlearned men[k]; therefore they first lead him to him, to have his advice how to proceed, and to take him along with them to his son-in-law, where the great council was convened, and that he might use his interest and authority, in taking proper measures, in order to put Jesus to death; and especially they led him to him, for the reason here assigned; *for he was father-in-law to Caiaphas;* so that he was, it is very probable, the older man: and being related to him, had an interest in him; and to whom such a sight was equally pleasing as to the high-priest himself, or any of the council: *which was the high-priest that same year;* for the high-priesthood was not for life, but was often changed, being bought and sold for money: see the note on Luke iii. 2. so that this clause is very properly added, though Caiaphas held it longer, or, at least, had it more years than one; for Caiaphas was high-priest when John began to preach, Luke iii. 2. but he now succeeded Simeon ben Camhith, who was priest the year before; as was Eleazar the son of Ananus, the year before that; and before him Ishmael ben Phabi, who were all three successively put into the priesthood by Valerius Gratus, the Roman governor; as was also Caiaphas this year, and whose name was Joseph.

Ver. 14. *Now Caiaphas was he which gave council to the Jews*, &c.] The chief-priests and Pharisees, who met in council about Jesus, John xi. 47, &c. the counsel he gave was, *that it was expedient that one man should die for the people;* and which advice was given out of ill will and malice to Christ, and to prevent, as he thought, the people of the Jews being destroyed by the Romans; though the words have a very good sense which he did not understand. The people Christ was to die for, was not all the people of the world, nor only the people of the Jews, nor all of them; but all the elect of God, whom God has chosen for his special and peculiar people, and has given to Christ as such: these Christ were to die for, and did, not merely as a martyr, to confirm his doctrine to them, or as an example to teach them meekness, patience, and courage, but in the room and stead of them, as a surety for them; and it was expedient that he should, in such sense, die for them, because of his suretyship-engagements, that he might make satisfaction to the law and justice of God, and procure the salvation of his people, and send forth the spirit to make application of it to them.

Ver. 15. *And Simon Peter followed Jesus*, &c.] 'Tis certain, he first fled with the rest, and forsook him, as they all did, notwithstanding his resolution to abide by him; however, he was very desirous to know what would become of Jesus, and what would be the issue of things; with this view he followed him, and not to deny him; though that was the consequence. Other evangelists say he followed him afar off, at a distance; which shewed some fear; and yet to follow him at all discovered love and zeal. To follow Christ is a property of his sheep, and is highly commendable, especially to follow him in sufferings; a greater character a person can't well have, than to be a follower of Jesus, in the exercise of grace, in the discharge of duty, and in bearing the cross; and yet it does not appear that Peter did well in following Christ now; for Christ had cautioned him of his over-confidence, had hinted to him that he should deny him, and had dismissed him, and took his leave of him, and the rest, on whose discharge he insisted, when he was apprehended, ver. 8. *And so did another disciple, and that disciple was known unto the high-priest.* This is thought to be the Apostle John, because he frequently speaks of himself, without mentioning his name; and these two, Peter and John, were generally together; and certain it is, that John was present at the cross at the time of Christ's crucifixion; and who is supposed to be known to the high-priest, by carrying fish to his house, and selling it to him; so Nonnus says, he was known from his fishing trade: but it is not probable that he was known, or could be known by the high-priest, so as to have any intimacy with him; nor is it likely that he, being a Galilean, would venture in; he was discoverable by his speech, and would have been in equal danger with Peter; rather it was some one of the disciples of Christ, who had not openly professed him; one of the chief rulers that believed in him, but, for fear of the Pharisees, had not confessed him; it may be Nicodemus, or Joseph of Arimathea, or the man at whose house Christ had eaten the passover. In the Syriac version he is called one of the other disciples; not of the twelve, but others. However, through his knowledge of the high-priest, he *went in with Jesus into the palace of the high-priest;* not Annas, but Caiaphas; for Christ was

[k] Misn. Yoma, c. 1. sect. 3, 6.

now brought from Annas's house to Caiaphas's, where the Scribes and elders were assembled together.

Ver. 16. *But Peter stood at the door without*, &c.] It being difficult to get in; and perhaps he might be fearful too of going in, lest he should be known; however, he waited, if he could hear or see any thing, and for a proper opportunity of entrance: it would have been well if he had took the hint of providence, access not being easy, and have gone his way; for he was now at the door of temptation: it would have been best for him, if he had kept without; and indeed at a greater distance; but his curiosity had led him thus far, and he hoped for an opportunity of getting nearer, which offered in the following manner: *then went out that other disciple, which was known unto the high-priest:* seeing Peter through the window, by the light of the moon, for it was full moon; and knowing him, who he was, concluded he had a mind to come in, and hear and see what he could, steps out, *and spake unto her that kept the door;* which might be thought more properly the business of men-servants; but these being employed in apprehending and guarding Jesus, the maid-servants might be obliged to take this post. The Ethiopic version, in the next verse, calls her the door-keeper's daughter; her father might be the porter, and he being busy, she supplied his place. Though there is no need of these conjectures, since it was usual with other nations, and it might be with the Jews, for women to be door-keepers, as Pignorius[l] has shewn out of Plautus, Petronius, Pausanias, and others. However, the other disciple, who was a man of figure and authority, and was known by the servants of the family, ordered her to open the door, and let Peter in; who accordingly did: *and brought in Peter;* into the hall, where Jesus was, under the examination of the high-priest.

Ver. 17. *Then saith the damsel that kept the door unto Peter*, &c.] She being relieved, either by her father, if porter, or by a fellow-servant, had the opportunity of coming into the hall, where Peter was, and was curious to observe him, who he should be, that that person of note should order him to be admitted, when an affair of so much privacy and importance was transacting; and either by Peter's language, or the trouble that appeared in his countenance, or fancying she had seen him in the temple, or in some part of the city in company with Jesus, addresses him after this manner: *art not thou also one of this man's disciples?* She speaks of Christ in the vulgar dialect of the Jews, calling him *this man;* not only esteeming him a mere man, but a worthless man; and knowing he had disciples, challenges him as one of them; when he, all in fright and surprise, not expecting such a question to be put to him, without any further thought, rashly and suddenly says, *I am not:* he never denied that Christ was God or the son of God, or that he was come in the flesh, or that he was the Messiah and Saviour of sinners; but either that he did not know what the maid said, or the person she spoke of; or, as here, that he was one of his disciples; which was a very great untruth: and many are the aggravations of his fall; which came to pass as soon as ever he was entered almost; and that by the means of a maid, a servant-maid, a very inferior one; and at first perhaps they were alone; and the question put to him might not be in a virulent way, nor proceed from malice, but commiseration of him; and yet he had not resolution enough to own himself a disciple of Jesus; which he might have done, and in all likelihood might have gone safe off directly: but he that had so much confidence as to say, though all men deny thee, yet will not I; and had so much courage, as, in the face of a band of soldiers, to draw his sword, and smite one of the high-priest's servants, but a few hours before, has not spirit enough in him to own his master before a servant-maid!

Ver. 18. *And the servants and officers stood there*, &c.] In a certain part of the hall, the middle of it; the Vulgate Latin reads, *by the coals:* it follows, *who had made a fire of coals, for it was cold;* though it was the passover, and harvest near. Dr. Lightfoot has observed from our countryman Biddulph, who was at Jerusalem at this time of the year, that though in the day-time it was as hot as with us at Midsummer, yet such very great dews fell as made it very cold, especially in the night; and from one of the Jewish canons[m], that the year was not intercalated, (which when done was chiefly on account of the passover,) neither for snow nor frost; which, as he justly remarks, supposes there might be frost and snow at the time of the passover. The same is observed in the Talmud[n], where the gloss upon it is, "that they might not desist, on that account, from "coming to the passover." The sense is, that whereas sometimes snow fell about the time of the passover; which might be thought to be an hinderance to some from coming to it; this never was a reason that came into consideration with the sanhedrim, or prevailed upon them to intercalate a month, that so the passover might not fall at a time of year when there was usually snow. The passover was always in the spring of the year, when nights are commonly cold, as they are generally observed to be at the vernal equinox: this night might be remarkably cold; which seems to be suggested by the Persic version, which reads, *for it was cold that night;* and the Ethiopic version, *for the cold of that night was great;* and adds what is neither in the text, nor true, *for the country was cold.* The Arabic version, as it should seem, very wrongly renders it, *for it was winter;* since the passover was never kept in the winter-season, but always in the spring, in the month Nisan: the winter-season, with the Jews, were half the month of Cisleu, all Tebet, and half Shebet[o]; though this is to be observed in favour of that version, that the Jews distinguish their winter into two parts; the one they call חורף, which, as the gloss says, is the strength of winter, the coldest part of it, and which lasts the time before mentioned; and the other they call קור, which is the end of winter, and when the cold is not so strong; and half Nisan is taken into this; for they say that half Shebat, all Adar, and half Nisan, are reckoned to this part of winter: so that, according to this account, the fourteenth of Nisan, which was the day on which the passover was killed; or at least

[l] De Servis, p. 454, 455.
[m] Maimon. Hilch. Kiddush Chodesh, c. 4. sect. 6.
[n] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 11. 1.
[o] T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 106. 2.

the fifteenth, which was now begun, was the last day of winter, and so just secures the credit of the above version. *And they warmed themselves, and Peter stood with them, and warmed himself:* he was cold both inwardly and outwardly; and being so, he gets into bad company; and it may be with a view that he might not be suspected, but be taken for one of their own sort, as one who had the same ill opinion of Jesus they had; and by the light of the fire he is again discovered and challenged, which makes way for a second denial.

Ver. 19. *The high-priest then asked Jesus,* &c.] Being now brought from Annas to Caiaphas, who was the high-priest and mouth of the sanhedrim, and to whom it appertained to hear and try a cause relating to doctrine. And what he did was by putting questions to him, instead of opening the charge against him, and calling for witnesses to support it. The person he interrogated was a greater high-priest than himself; was that prophet Moses spoke of, to whom the Jews were to hearken, and no other than the son of God, and King of Israel; who, when at twelve years of age, asked the doctors questions, and answered theirs, to their great astonishment. He first inquires *of his disciples,* not so much who they were, and what they were, and how many they were, and where they were now, as for what purpose he gathered them together; whether it was not with some seditious views to overturn the present government, and set up himself as a temporal prince; and this he did, that he might be able to send him, with a charge against him, to the Roman governor: he did not ask for his disciples to come and speak on his behalf, if they had any thing to say for him, which, by their canons[p], was allowed and encouraged: "if any of the disciples (of the person "accused) says, I have a crime to lay to his charge, "they silence him; but if one of the disciples says, I "have something to say in his favour, they bring him "up, and place him between them; nor does he go "down from thence all the day; and if there is any "thing in what he says, שומעין לו, *they hearken to "him.*" The Jews indeed pretend[q], that after Jesus was found guilty, a herald went before him forty days declaring his crime, and signifying, that if any one knew any thing worthy in him, to come and declare it; but none were found: but this is all lies and falsehood, to cover their wickedness; no disciple of his was allowed to speak for him. The high-priest next asked Jesus *of his doctrine;* not for the sake of information and instruction, nor to see whether it was according to the Scriptures; but if it was a new doctrine, and his own, and whether it tended to idolatry or blasphemy, and whether it was factious and seditious, that so they might have wherewith to accuse him; for though they had got his person, they were at a loss for an accusation; and yet this self-same man that put these questions, and was fishing for something against him, had before given counsel to put him to death, right or wrong: all this was doing, and these questions were put to Jesus, whilst Peter was denying him.

Ver. 20. *Jesus answered him,* &c.] Not to the first of these questions, concerning his disciples; not because they had all now forsaken him, and one was denying him; nor because he would not betray them; nor because he would suffer alone; but because if his doctrine was good, it could not be blameworthy to have disciples, and to teach them: and the charge of sedition, blasphemy, and idolatry, they wanted to fasten on him, would sufficiently appear to be groundless by the doctrine he preached; and as to that he answers not directly what he taught, but declares the manner in which he delivered it, and which was such, that they that heard him could not be strangers to it. *I spake openly to the world:* with all plainness, freedom, and boldness, without any reserve or ambiguity; and that not to a few persons only, to his own particular disciples, but to all the people of the Jews, who crowded in great numbers to hear him; insomuch that it was said by his enemies, that the world was gone after him. *I ever taught in the synagogue;* the Arabic, the *synagogues;* the places of public worship in all parts of the nation, where the Jews met to pray, and read, and hear the word: *and in the temple;* at Jerusalem, whenever he was in that city; *whither the Jews always resort;* for prayer, and to offer sacrifice, and particularly at the three grand festivals of the year, the passover, Pentecost, and feast of tabernacles, when all the males from all parts appeared before the Lord. Accordingly, the Alexandrian copy, and some others, read, *whither all the Jews resort;* and so read the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions. *And in secret have I said nothing;* not but that our Lord taught in other places than what are here mentioned, as on mountains, in deserts, by the sea-shore, and in private houses, yet generally to great multitudes; and though he sometimes conversed alone, and in secret with his disciples, yet what he taught them was either an explanation of what he had said in public, or was perfectly agreeable to it.

Ver. 21. *Why askest thou me?* &c.] He seems surprised at the high-priest's conduct, that he should put such questions to him, who stood bound before him; was brought there as a criminal, and was the defendant, and not obliged to accuse himself; nor could it be thought, that whatever evidence or testimony he should give, would have much weight with the persons before whom he stood. *Ask them which heard me, what I said unto them;* he appeals to his hearers, many of whom were then present; and these his enemies, even his worst enemies, so clear was his case, so free was his doctrine from sedition and blasphemy, so innocent was he in the whole of his deportment and conduct, that he even submits to have his case issued and determined by what his hearers should say of him; and these not his friends, but his enemies; see Isa. l. 8. *behold, they,* or these, *know what I have said;* pointing at some persons present, perhaps the very officers who had been sent to take him before, but returned without him, declaring that never man spake like him.

Ver. 22. *And when he had thus spoken,* &c.] What was so right and reasonable, in so becoming a manner, without heat or passion: *one of the officers which stood by;* it may be one of those who had been sent to him,

[p] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 40. 1. Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrin, c. 10. sect. 8.

[q] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 43. 1.

and had been a hearer of him, whom Jesus might look wistly at, or point unto, when he said the above words, at which he might be provoked: and therefore *stroke Jesus with the palm of his hand;* or gave him a rap with a rod, or smote him with a staff, as some think, is the sense of the phrase; though the Syriac, agreeably to our version, reads it, he smote him, על לועדו, *upon his cheek;* gave him, what we commonly call, *a slap on the face;* and which is always esteemed a very great affront, and was a piece of rudeness and insolence to the last degree in this man: *saying, answerest thou the high-priest so?* This he said, as well as gave the blow, either out of flattery to the high-priest, or to clear himself from being a favourer of Christ; which, by what had been said, he might think would be suspected: some have thought this was Malchus, whose ear Christ had healed; if so, he was guilty of great ingratitude.

Ver. 23. *Jesus answered him,* &c.] For the high-priest took no notice of him, nor any of the sanhedrim, though the action was so insolent and indecent, both as to the manner in which it was done, and the person, an officer, by whom it was done; and considering the circumstances of it, in the palace of the high-priest, in his presence, and before so grand a council, and whilst a cause was trying; and it was a barbarous, as well as an impious action, considering the person to whom it was done. Wherefore Jesus replies to him, without making use of his divine power as the son of God, or discovering any warmth of spirit, and heat of passion, as a man, mildly and rationally argues with him; *if I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil:* meaning, either if he had, to his knowledge, delivered any wicked doctrine in the course of his ministry, or had at that time said any evil thing of the high-priest, or any other person, he desires that he would make it to appear, and give proper proof and evidence of it: *but if well, why smitest thou me?* If he had said nothing contrary to truth, reason, and good manners, then he ought not to be used and treated in such an injurious way. And moreover, the officer ought to have been corrected by the council, and have been made to pay the two hundred *zuzim*, or pence, the fine for such an affront, according to the Jewish canon, or more, according to the dignity of the person abused[r].

Ver. 24. *Now Annas had sent him bound,* &c.] As he found him, when the captain, band, and officers brought him to him; who having pleased himself with so agreeable a sight, and had asked him some few questions, and perhaps insulted him, sent him away in this manner, *unto Caiaphas the high-priest;* his son-in-law, as the more proper person to be examined before; and especially as the grand council was sitting at his house. This was done before Peter's first denial of Christ; which, 'tis plain, was in the palace of the high-priest, and not in Annas's house; though there seems no reason on this account to place these words at the end of the 13th verse, as they are by some, since they manifestly refer to time past, and do not at all obscure or hinder the true order of the history, as standing here.

Ver. 25. *And Simon Peter stood and warmed himself,* &c.] This is repeated from ver. 18. to connect the history, and carry on the thread of the account of Peter's denial of Christ, which is interrupted by inserting the examination of Christ before the high-priest, which was made at the same time. Peter stood among, and continued with the servants and officers of the high-priest, warming himself by a fire they had made, it being a cold night; and this proved of bad consequence to him. The company and conversation of wicked men should be abstained from; no good is got thereby; continuance among such is very dangerous; men are too often more concerned for their bodies than their souls; Satan baits his temptations for the fleshly and sensitive part; and that which is thought to be for good, is the occasion of hurt. *They said therefore unto him;* the servants and officers, among whom he stood warming himself, having observed what the maid had said to him: *art thou not also one of his disciples?* suspecting that he was, though he had denied it, and therefore press him to give a direct answer: they might observe his countenance to fall, when the maid put the question to him; there might be something in his dress, and especially in his speech, which increased the suspicion: but *he denied it, and said, I am not;* a second time. This denial of his being a disciple of Christ, as before, did not arise from a sense of his unworthiness to be one; nor from diffidence and distrust of a right to such a character; but from the fear of men; and being ashamed of Christ, he denies that which was his great mercy, privilege, and glory.

Ver. 26. *One of the servants of the high-priest,* &c.] Hearing him so stiffly deny that he was a disciple of Jesus, when he had great reason to believe he was: *being his kinsman, whose ear Peter cut off;* a near relation of Malchus, to whom Peter had done this injury; and who was present at the same time, and no doubt took particular notice of him; and the more, because of what he had done to his kinsman: *saith unto him, did not I see thee in the garden with him?* as if he should have said, I saw thee with my own eyes along with Jesus, this very night in the garden, beyond Kedron, where he was apprehended, how can'st thou deny it? and wilt thou stand in it so confidently, that thou art not one of his disciples?

Ver. 27. *Peter then denied again,* &c.] A third time, as the Ethiopic version renders it; and that, according to other evangelists, with cursing and swearing; for now he was more affrighted than before, lest should he be taken up, and it be proved upon him, that he was the person that cut off Malchus's ear, he should be sentenced to a fine, or it may be some capital punishment. The fine for plucking a man's ears, and which some understand of plucking them off, was four hundred *zuzim*[s], or pence; which, as they answer to Roman pence, amount to twelve pounds ten shillings; a sum of money Peter perhaps could not have raised, without great difficulty: and therefore, that it might be believed he was not a disciple of Christ, so not the man; he swears in a profane manner, and imprecates the judgments of God upon him: *and immediately the cock crew;* the second time; which was a signal, by which he might call to remembrance, what Christ had said to him; that before the cock crowed twice, he

[r] Misn. Bava Kama, c. 8. sect. 6.

[s] Misn. Bava Kama, c. 8. sect. 6. Vid. L'Empereur in ib.

should deny him thrice, Mark xiv. 72. It was now early in the morning, about three o'clock, or somewhat after.

Ver. 28. *Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas, &c.*] When Peter had denied him, one of the officers had smote him, the high-priest had examined him, and they thought they had enough, out of his own mouth, to condemn him; they, the chief priests, elders, Scribes, and the whole multitude, led him bound as he was, from Caiaphas's house, *unto the hall of judgment*; or the *prætorium*; the place where the Roman governor, who was now Pontius Pilate, used to hear and try causes in; the Romans now having matters and causes relating to life and death, in their hands: *and it was early*; the morning indeed was come; but it was as soon as it was day; they had been all night in taking and examining Jesus, and consulting what to do with him; and as soon as they could expect the governor to be up, they hurry him away to him, eagerly thirsting after his blood, and fearing lest he should be rescued out of their hands: *and they themselves went not into the judgment-hall, lest they should be defiled*: that is, the Jews, only the band of Roman soldiers went in; the reason of this was, because it was the house of a Gentile, and with them, מדורות העכו״ם טמאים, *the dwelling-houses of Gentiles*, or idolaters, *are unclean*[t]; yea, if they were the houses of Israelites, and Gentiles were admitted to dwell in them, they were defiled, and all that were in them; for so they say[u], "if the collectors for the government enter into a house to "dwell in, all in the house are defiled." They did not think it lawful to let out a house in Judea to an Heathen[w], or to assist in building a *Basilica* for them; which they explain to be a palace, in which judges sit to judge men[x]: hence the reason of their caution, and which they were the more observant of, *that they might eat the passover*; pure and undefiled; not the passover lamb, for that they had eaten the night before; but the *Chagigah*, or feast on the fifteenth day of the month. Many Christian writers, both ancient and modern, have concluded from hence, that Christ did not keep his last passover, at the same time the Jews did; and many things are said to illustrate this matter, and justify our Lord in it: some observe the distinction of a sacrificial, and commemorative passover; the sacrificial passover is that, in which the lamb was slain, and was fixed to a certain time and place, and there was no altering it; the commemorative passover is that, in which no lamb is slain and eaten, only a commemoration made of the deliverance of the people of Israel out of Egypt; such as is now kept by the Jews, being out of their own land, where sacrifice with them is not lawful; and this 'tis supposed our Lord kept, and not the former: but it does not appear that there was such a commemorative passover kept by the Jews, in our Lord's time, and whilst the temple stood: and supposing there was such an one allowed, and appointed for those that were at a distance from Jerusalem, and could not come up thither, (which was not the case of Christ and his disciples,) it is reasonable to conclude, that it was to be kept, and was kept at the time the sacrificial passover was, in the room of which it was substituted, as it is by the Jews to this day; so that this will by no means clear the matter, nor solve the difficulty; besides it is very manifest, that the passover our Lord kept was sacrificial; and such an one the disciples proposed to get ready for him, and did, of which he and they are said to eat: *and the first day of unleavened bread, when they* KILLED *the passover, his disciples said to him, where wilt thou that we go and prepare, that thou mayest* EAT *the passover?* Mark xiv. 12. and again, *then came the day of unleavened bread, when the passover* MUST *be* KILLED, Luke xxii. 7. *They made ready the passover*, ver. 13. *and he sate down, and the twelve apostles with him*, ver. 14. *and he said unto them, with desire I have desired to eat this passover*, ver. 15. Others suggest, that this difference of observing the passover by Christ and the Jews arose from fixing the beginning of the month, and so accordingly the feasts in it, by the φασις, or appearance of the moon; and that our Lord went according to the true appearance of it, and the Jews according to a false account: but of this, as a fact, there's no proof; besides, though the feasts were regulated and fixed according to the appearance of the moon, yet this was not left to the arbitrary will, pleasure, and judgment of particular persons, to determine as they should think proper; but the sanhedrim, or chief council of the nation sat, at a proper time, to hear and examine witnesses about the appearance of the moon; and accordingly determined, and none might fix but them[y]; and as this was doubtless the case at this time, it is not very reasonable to think, that Christ would differ from them: besides, it was either a clear case, or a doubtful one; if the former, then there would be no room nor reason to keep another day; and if it was the latter, then two days were observed, that they might be sure they were right[z]; but then both were kept by all the Jews: and that the time of this passover was well known, is clear from various circumstances; such and such facts were done, so many days before it; six days before it, Jesus came to Bethany, John xii. 1. and two days before it, he was in the same place, Matt. xxvi. 2, 6. and says to his disciples, *ye know that after two days is the feast of the passover*, &c. Others taking it for granted, that Christ kept the passover a day before the usual and precise time, defend it, by observing the despotic and legislative power of Christ, who had a right to dispense with the time of this feast, and could at his pleasure anticipate it, because the betraying of him and his death were so near at hand: that he had such a power will not be disputed; but that he should use it in this way, does not seem necessary, on account of his death, seeing none but the living were obliged to it; nor so consistent with his wisdom, since hereby the mouths of his enemies would be opened against him, for acting not agreeably to the law of God: moreover, when it is considered that the passover, according to the Jews, was always kept במועדו, *in its set time*[a], and was not put off on the account of the sabbath, or any thing else, to another day; and that though when it was put off

[t] Misn. Oholot, c. 18. sect. 7.
[u] Maimon. Mishcab & Moshcb, c. 12. sect. 12.
[w] Misn. Avoda Zara, c. 1. sect. 8.
[x] Jarchi & Bartenora in ib. sect. 7.
[y] Maimon. Kiddush Hachodesh, c. 2. sect. 7, 8.
[z] Ib. c. 5. sect. 6, 7, 8.
[a] Maimon. in Misn. Pesachim, c. 7. sect. 4. & Bartenora in ib. c. 3. sect. 4.

for particular persons, on account of uncleanness, to another month, yet still it was to be kept on the fourteenth day at even, in that month, Numb. ix. 10, 11. it will not easily be received that Christ observed it a day before the time: besides, the passover lamb was not killed in a private house, but in the temple, in the court of it, and that always on the fourteenth of Nisan, after noon: so says Maimonides [b], "it is an affirmative "command to slay the passover on the fourteenth of "the month Nisan, after the middle of the day.—— "The passover is not slain but in the court, as the "rest of the holy things; even in the time that altars "were lawful, they did not offer the passover on a "private altar; and whoever offers the passover on a "private altar, is to be beaten; as it is said, *thou mayest "not sacrifice the passover within any of thy gates, which "the Lord thy God giveth thee*, Deut. xvi. 5." And seeing therefore a passover lamb was not to be killed at home, but in the court of the priests, in the temple, it does not seem probable, that a single lamb should be suffered to be killed there, for Christ and his disciples, on a day not observed by the Jews, contrary to the sense of the sanhedrim, and of the whole nation: add to this, that the sacred text is express for it, that it was at the exact time of this feast, when it was come according to general computation, that the disciples moved to Christ to prepare the passover for him, and did, and they with him kept it: the account Matthew gives is very full; *now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread*; that is, when that was come in its proper time and course, *the disciples came to Jesus*: saying unto him, where wilt *thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover?* He bids them go to the city to such a man, and say, *I will keep the passover at thy house with my disciples, and the disciples did as Jesus had appointed, and they made ready the passover: now when the even was come*, the time of eating the passover, according to the law of God, *he sat down with the twelve, and as they did eat*, &c. Matt. xxvi. 17, 18, 19, 20. and Mark is still more particular, who says, *and the first day of unleavened bread, when they killed the passover*; that is, when the Jews killed the passover, on the very day the lamb was slain, and eaten by them; and then follows much the same account as before, Mark xiv. 12—18. and Luke yet more clearly expresses it, *then came the day of unleavened bread, when the passover must be killed*; according to the law of God, and the common usage of the people of the Jews; yea, he not only observes, that Christ kept the usual day, but the very hour, the precise time of eating it; for he says, *and when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him*, Luke xxii. 7—14. Nor is there any thing in this text, that is an objection to Christ and the Jews keeping the passover at the same time; since by the passover here is meant, the *Chagigah*, or feast kept on the fifteenth day of the month, as it is sometimes called: in Deut. xvi. 2. it is said, *thou shalt therefore sacrifice the passover unto the Lord thy God, of the flock and the herd*: now the passover of the herd, can never mean the passover lamb, but the passover *Chagigah*; and so the Jewish commentators explain it; *of the herd*, says Jarchi, thou shalt sacrifice for the *Chagigah*: and says Aben Ezra, for the peace-offerings; so Josiah the king is said to give for the passovers three thousand bullocks, and the priests three hundred oxen, and the Levites five hundred oxen, 2 Chron. xxxv. 7, 8, 9. which Jarchi interprets of the peace-offerings, of the *Chagigah*, there called passovers; and so in 1 Esd. i. 7, 8, 9. mention is made of three thousand calves, besides lambs, that Josias gave for the passover; and three hundred by some other persons, and seven hundred by others: the passage in Deuteronomy, is explained of the *Chagigah*, in both Talmuds [c], and in other writings [d]; so besides the passover lamb, we read of sacrifices slain, לשום פסח, *in the name of* the passover, or on account of it [e]; and particularly of the calf and the young bullock, slain for the sake of the passover [f]: and now this is the passover which these men were to eat that day, and therefore were careful not to defile themselves, that so they might not be unfit for it; otherwise had it been the passover lamb in the evening, they might have washed themselves in the evening, according to the rules of טבול יום, or the daily washing, and been clean enough to have eat it: besides, it may be observed, that all the seven days were called the passover; and he that ate the unleavened bread, is said by eating that, to eat the passover; and thus they invite their guests daily to eat the bread, saying [g], "every one that is hungry, let him "come and eat all that he needs, ויפסח, *and keep the "passover*." It is easy to observe the consciences of these men, who were always wont to strain at a gnat and swallow a camel; they scruple going into the judgment-hall, which belonged to an Heathen governor, and where was a large number of Heathen soldiers; but they could go along with these into the garden to apprehend Christ, and spend a whole night in consulting to shed innocent blood: no wonder that God should be weary of their sacrifices and ceremonious performances, when, trusting to these, they had no regard to moral precepts: however, this may be teaching to us, in what manner we should keep the feast, and eat of the true passover, Christ; not with malice and wickedness, as these Jews ate theirs, but with sincerity and truth: besides, a sanhedrim, when they had adjudged any one to death, were forbidden to eat any thing all that day [h]; and so whilst scrupling one thing, they broke through another.

Ver. 29. *Pilate then went out unto them*, &c.] Either into the street, or rather into the place called the pavement, and in Hebrew *Gabbatha*; see ch. xix. 13. the place where the Jewish sanhedrim used to sit; wherefore in complaisance to them, since they would not come into his court of judicature, he condescends to go into one of theirs, which shewed great civility and humanity in him: *and said, what accusation bring ye against this man?* meaning, what offence had he committed? what crime had they to charge him with? what did they accuse him of? and what proof had

[b] Hilchot Korban Pesach. c. 1. sect. 1, 3.
[c] T. Hieros. Pesach. fol. 33. 1. T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 70. 2.
[d] Maimon. Korban Pesach. c. 10. sect. 12. Moses Kotsensis Mitzvot Tora, pr. neg. 349.
[e] Misn. Pesachim, c. 6. sect. 5.
[f] T. Bab. Menachot, fol. 3. 1.
[g] Haggadah Shel Pesach. p. 4. Ed. Rittangel.
[h] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 63. 1. Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrin, c. 13. sect. 4.

they to support their charge? His view was, to have the matter stated, the cause opened, and evidence given; that the accused being face to face with the accusers, might answer for himself; and he, as a judge, be capable of judging between them: all which were very commendable in him, and agreeably to the Roman laws; and have an appearance of equity, justice, and impartiality.

Ver. 30. *They answered and said unto him*, &c.] Offended at the question put to them, and filled with indignation that they should be so interrogated, with an air of haughtiness and insolence reply to him: *if he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee*: insinuating, that he was guilty of some very wicked action; not merely of a breach of some of their laws peculiar to them; for then they would have tried and judged him according to them, and not have brought him before him; but they suggest, that he was guilty of some mal-practices cognizable by Cæsar's court; and which they did not care to mention expressly, lest they should not succeed, not having it may be as yet, their witnesses ready; and hoped he would have took their own word for it, without any further proof, they being men of such rank and dignity, and of so much knowledge, learning, and religion; and therefore took it ill of him, that he should ask such persons as they were, so famous for their prudence, integrity, and sanctity, such a question: however, they own themselves to be the betrayers and deliverers up of our Lord, which Christ had before foretold, and which Stephen afterwards charged them with.

Ver. 31. *Then said Pilate unto them*, &c.] Either ironically, knowing that they did not, or it was not in their power, to judge in capital causes; or seriously, and with some indignation, abhorring such a method of procedure they would have had him gone into, to condemn a man without knowing his crime, and having evidence of it: *take ye him, and judge him according to your law*; this he said, as choosing to understand them in no other sense, than that he had broken some peculiar law of theirs, though they had otherwise suggested; and as giving them liberty to take him away to one of their courts, and proceed against him as their law directed, and inflict some lesser punishment on him than death, such as scourging, &c. which they still had a power to do, and did make use of: *the Jews therefore said unto him, it is not lawful for us to put any man to death*; thereby insinuating, that he was guilty of a crime, which deserved death, and which they could not inflict; not that they were of such tender consciences, that they could not put him to death, or that they had no law to punish him with death, provided he was guilty; but because judgments in capital cases had ceased among them; nor did they try causes relating to life and death, the date of which they often make to be forty years before the destruction of the temple[i]; and which was much about, or a little before the time these words were spoken: not that this power was taken away wholly from them by the Romans; though since their subjection to the empire, they had not that full and free exercise of it as before; but through the great increase of iniquity, particularly murder, which caused such frequent executions, that they were weary of them[k]; and through the negligence and indolence of the Jewish sanhedrim, and their removal from the room Gazith, where they only judged capital causes[l]: as for the stoning of Stephen, and the putting of some to death against whom Saul gave his voice, these were the outrages of the zealots, and were not according to a formal process in any court of judicature. Two executions are mentioned in their Talmud; the one is of a priest's daughter that was burnt for a harlot[m], and the other of the stoning of Ben Stada in Lydda[n]; the one, according to them, seems to be before, the other after the destruction of the temple; but these dates are not certain, nor to be depended upon: for since the destruction of their city and temple, and their being carried captive into other lands, 'tis certain that the power of life and death has been wholly taken from them; by which it appears, that the sceptre is removed from Judah, and a lawgiver from between his feet; and this they own almost in the same words as here expressed; for they say[o] of a certain man worthy of death, "why dost thou scourge him? he replies, because he lay with a beast; they say to him, hast "thou any witnesses? he answers, yes; Elijah came "in the form of a man, and witnessed; they say, if it "be so, he deserves to die; to which he answers, *from "the day we have been carried captive out of our land,* "לית לן רשותא לכיקטל, *we have no power to put to "death.*" But at this time, their power was not entirely gone; but the true reason of their saying these words is, that they might wholly give up Christ to the Roman power, and throw off the reproach of his death from themselves; and particularly they were desirous he should die the reproachful and painful death of the cross, which was a Roman punishment: had they took him and judged him according to their law, which must have been as a false prophet, or for blasphemy or idolatry, the death they must have adjudged him to, would have been stoning; but it was crucifixion they were set upon; and therefore deliver him up as a traitor, and a seditious person, in order thereunto.

Ver. 32. *That the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled*, &c.] That he should be delivered by the Jews to the Gentiles, to crucify him; and that he should be lifted up from the earth, and as the serpent upon the pole: *which he spake, signifying what death he should die*: Matt. xx. 19. John xii. 32, 33. and iii. 14. and which was brought about this way, by the providence of God conducting this whole affair; and was cheerfully submitted to by Christ, in great love to his people, to redeem them from the curse of the law, being hereby made a curse for them.

Ver. 33. *Then Pilate entered into the judgment-hall again*, &c.] Where he went at first, but the Jews refusing to come in thither to him, he came out to them; and now they speaking out more plainly, that he was guilty of a crime deserving of death; as that he set up himself as a king, in opposition to Cæsar,

[i] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 15. 1. Sanhedrin, fol. 41. 1. T. Hieros. Sanhedrin, fol. 18. 1. & 24. 2. Juchasin, fol. 51. 1. Moses Kotsensis pr. affirm. 99.

[k] T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 8. 2. Juchasin, fol. 21. 1.

[l] Gloss. in T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 8. 2.

[m] T. Hieros. Sanhedrin, fol. 24. 2.

[n] Ib. fol. 25. 4.

[o] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 58. 1.

and taught the people not to pay tribute to him; he goes into the *prætorium* again, *and called Jesus*: beckoned, or sent for him; or ordered him to come in thither to him, that he might alone, and the more freely, converse with him; which Jesus did, paying no regard to the superstitious observances of the Jews: *and said unto him, art thou the king of the Jews?* This he might say, from a rumour that was generally spread, that there was such a person to come, and was born; and by many it was thought, that Jesus was he; and particularly from the charge of the Jews against him, which though not here expressed, is elsewhere; see Luke xxiii. 2. Wherefore Pilate was the more solicitous about the matter, on account of Cæsar, and lest he should be charged with dilatoriness and negligence in this affair: some read these words not by way of question, but affirmation, *thou art the king of the Jews*; which method he might make use of, the more easily to get it out of him, whether he was or no: and to this reading, Christ's answer in the next verse seems best to agree.

Ver. 34. *Jesus answered him, sayest thou this thing of thyself*, &c.] That he was the king of the Jews: Christ's meaning is, whether he asserted this from the sentiments of his own mind; or moved the question from any thing he himself had observed, which might give him just ground to suspect that he had, or intended to set up himself as the king of that nation: *or did others tell it thee of me?* Whether the Jews had not intimated some such thing to him, out of malice and ill will? not but that Christ full well knew where the truth of this lay; but he was desirous of convincing Pilate of his weakness, if he so judged of himself, and of his imprudence and hastiness, if he took up this from others; and also to expose the baseness and wickedness of the Jews, to charge him with this, when they themselves would have made him a temporal king, and he refused; and when he had not only paid tribute himself to Cæsar, but had exhorted them to do the like.

Ver. 35. *Pilate answered, am I a Jew?* &c.] This he said, in a sort of derision and contempt; who was not a Jew, neither by birth, nor by religion, and so had never imbibed any notions of their King Messiah, nor read any thing about him; and knew nothing of his distinguishing characters and properties, by which he was described, and might be known; and therefore it remained, that what he had said, though not expressed, was not of himself, of his own knowledge or observation, but arose from some intimations and suggestions the Jews had given him: *thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me*: that is, the men of his nation, his countrymen the Jews, who best understood their own laws and books of prophecy; and what expectations they had formed from thence, concerning their king, and his kingdom; and the principal of the priesthood, who were accounted men of the greatest learning, piety, and integrity, they had brought him bound before him; they had entered a charge against him, and had delivered him up into his hands, as an enemy to Cæsar, and a traitor to his government: *what hast thou done?* as an occasion of such treatment, and as the foundation of such a charge; surely there must be something in it, or men of such character would never impeach a man altogether innocent, and one of their own country too!

Ver. 36. *Jesus answered, my kingdom is not of this world*, &c.] By saying which, he tacitly owns he was a king: as such he was set up, and anointed by his father from everlasting; was prophesied of in the Old Testament; declared by the angel, both when he brought the news of his conception, and of his birth; was owned by many, who knew him to be so in the days of his flesh; and since his resurrection, ascension, and session at God's right hand, more manifestly appears to be one: he also hereby declares, that he had a kingdom; by which he means, not his natural and universal kingdom, as God, and the Creator and Governor of all things; but his mediatorial kingdom, administered both in the days of his flesh, and after his resurrection; which includes the whole Gospel dispensation, Christ's visible church-state on earth, and the whole election of grace; it takes in that which will be at the close of time, in the latter day, which will be more spiritual, and in which Christ will reign before his ancients gloriously; and also the kingdom of God, or of heaven, even the ultimate glory: the whole of which is not of this world; the subjects of Christ's kingdom are not of the world, they are chosen and called out of it; the kingdom itself does not appear in worldly pomp and splendour, nor is it supported by worldly force, nor administered by worldly laws; nor does it so much regard the outward, as the inward estates of men; it promises no worldly emoluments, or temporal rewards. Christ does not say it is not *in* this world, but it is not *of* it; and therefore will not fail, when this world does, and the kingdoms thereof. Every thing that is carnal, sensual, and worldly, must be removed from our conceptions of Christ's kingdom, here or hereafter: and to this agrees what some Jewish writers say of the Messiah, and his affairs; "the Messiah (they say[o]) is separated from "the world, because he is absolutely intellectual; but "the world is corporeal; how then should the Messiah "be in this world, when the world is corporeal, and "ענין המשיח הוא אלהי לא גשמי, *the business of the "Messiah is divine, and not corporeal?*" And since this was the case, Cæsar, or any civil government, had no reason to be uneasy on account of his being a king, and having a kingdom; since his kingdom and interests did not in the least break in upon, or injure any others: and that this was the nature of his kingdom, he proves by the following reason; *if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight that I should not be delivered to the Jews*: if Christ's kingdom had been a worldly one, set up on worldly views, and governed with worldly policy, and was to answer some worldly ends, Christ would have had servants enough among the Jews, who would have declared for him, and took up arms in his favour against the Romans; his own disciples would not have suffered him to have been betrayed into the hands of the Jews by Judas; nor would he have hindered them from attempting his rescue, as he did Peter; nor would they suffer him

[o] R. Juda Bezaleel Nizeach Israel, fol. 48.

now to be delivered by Pilate into their hands, to put him to death; since they had such a Prince at the head of them, who, was he to make use of his power, was able to drive all the Roman forces before them out of the nation, and oblige a general submission among the Jews, to the sceptre of his kingdom: *but now is my kingdom not from hence;* it does not rise out of, nor proceed upon, nor is it supported by worldly principles, wherefore none of the above methods are made use of.

Ver. 37. *Pilate therefore said unto him,* &c.] Upon this free and full declaration of Christ, concerning his kingly office, and the nature of his kingdom: *art thou a king then?* or thou art a king then: for, from his having a kingdom, it might be very justly inferred that he was a king: *Jesus answered, thou sayest that I am a king;* and which was very rightly said; and Christ by these words owns and confesses, that he was one: adding, *to this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth.* The end of Christ's being born, which was of a virgin, in a very miraculous manner, and of his coming into the world, which was by the assumption of human nature, among many other things, was to bear testimony to truth in general; to the whole Gospel, the word of truth, and every branch of it, which he brought with him, constantly preached in life, and confirmed by his death; and particularly to this truth, that he was a King, and had a kingdom in a spiritual sense: *every one that is of the truth;* that is of God, belongs to the sheep of Christ, knows the truth as it is in Jesus, and is on the side of truth, and stands by it: *heareth my voice;* the voice of his Gospel; and that not only externally, but internally; so as to approve of it, rejoice at it, and distinguish it; and the voice of his commands, so as cheerfully to obey them from a principle of love to him.

Ver. 38. *Pilate saith unto him, what is truth?* &c.] That is, in general, or that which Christ then particularly spoke of: many things might be observed in answer to this question, as that there is the truth and faithfulness of God in his word and promises; the truth of grace in the hearts of his people; Jesus Christ himself is truth, he is true God, and true man; the truth of all covenant transactions, of all types, promises, and prophecies; whatever he said and taught was truth, and the truth of all doctrine comes from him. The Gospel is truth in general; it comes from the God of truth; lies in the Scriptures of truth; Christ, who is truth itself, is the substance of it; the Spirit of truth has an hand in it, leads into it, and makes it effectual; the whole of it is true, and every particular doctrine of it; as the manifestation of the son of God in human nature, his coming into the world to save the chief of sinners, justification by his righteousness, pardon by his blood, atonement by his sacrifice, the resurrection of the dead, &c. The same question is put in the Talmud [p], מה אמת, *what is truth?* and it is answered, that he is the living God, and the King of the world: we don't find that our Lord gave any answer to this question, which might be put in a scornful, jeering way; nor did Pilate wait for one; for *when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews:* as soon as he had put the question about truth, having no great inclination to hear what Christ would say to it; nor did he put it for information-sake, or as having any opinion of Christ, and that he was able to answer it; he directly goes out of the judgment-hall, taking Jesus along with him, and addresses the Jews after this manner: *and saith unto them, I find in him no fault at all;* and indeed how should he? there was no sin in his nature, nor guile in his lips, nor any iniquity in his life; the devil himself could find none in him. This confession is both to the shame of Pilate and the Jews; to the reproach of Pilate, that after this he should condemn him; and of the Jews, that after such a fair and full declaration from the judge, they should insist upon his crucifixion; it shews, however, that he died not for any sin of his own, but for the sins of others.

Ver. 39. *But ye have a custom,* &c.] Not a law, either of God or man's, but a custom; and which was not originally observed at the feast of the passover, and perhaps was not of any long standing; but what the Roman governors, by the order of Cæsar, or of their own pleasure, had introduced to ingratiate themselves into the affections of the people; and being repeated once and again, was now looked for: *that I should release unto you one at the passover;* which was at this time; and more than one it seems it was not customary to release: *will ye therefore that I release unto you the King of the Jews?* who they had said called himself so, and was so accounted by others, and which Pilate says, in a sneering, sarcastic way; though he was heartily willing to release him, and was in hopes they would have agreed to it, since nothing could be proved against him; however, he proposes it to them, and leaves it to their option.

Ver. 40. *Then cried they all again,* &c.] For it seems that Pilate had made this proposal once before, and that this was the second time, though not mentioned; yet some copies, and the Syriac, Arabic, Persic, and Ethiopic versions, leave out the word *again:* they all, priests and people, in a very clamorous manner, cried out as one man, with one united voice, all at once; *saying, not this man, but Barabbas; now Barabbas was a robber;* who was an emblem of God's elect in a state of nature, released and set free when Christ was condemned. These, as he, many of them at least, are notorious sinners, the chief of sinners, robbers and murderers; who have robbed God of his glory, and destroyed themselves; are prisoners, concluded in sin and unbelief, and shut up in the law, and in a pit, wherein is no water, in their nature-state; and were, as this man, worthy of death, and by nature children of wrath; and yet children of God by adopting grace, as his name Bar Abba signifies, *the son of the father:* these, though such criminals, and so deserving of punishment, were let go free, when Christ was taken, condemned, and died; and which was according to the wise and secret counsel of Jehovah, and is a large discovery of divine grace; and what lays those who are released under the greatest obligations to live to him, who suffered for them, in their room and stead.

[p] T. Hieros. Sanhedrin, fol. 18. 1.

CHAP. XIX.

Ver. 1. *THEN Pilate therefore took Jesus*, &c.] Finding that the Jews would not agree to his release, but that Barabbas was the person they chose, and being very desirous, if possible, to save his life, thought of this method: he ordered Jesus to be taken by the proper officers, *and scourged him*: that is, commanded him to be scourged by them; which was done by having him to a certain place, where being stripped naked, and fastened to a pillar, he was severely whipped: and this he did, hoping the Jews would be satisfied therewith, and agree to his dismission; but though he did this with such a view, yet it was a very unjust action in him to scourge a man that he himself could find no fault in: however, it was what was foretold by Christ himself, and was an emblem of those strokes and scourges of divine justice he endured, as the surety of his people, in his soul, in their stead; and his being scourged, though innocent, shews, that it was not for his own, but the sins of others; and expresses the vile nature of sin, the strictness of justice, and the grace, condescension, and patience of Christ: and this may teach us not to think it strange that any of the saints should endure scourgings, in a literal sense; and to bear patiently the scourgings and chastisements of our heavenly father, and not to fear the overflowing scourge or wrath of God, since Christ has bore this in our room.

Ver. 2. *And the soldiers platted a crown of thorns*, &c.] This was an emblem of his being surrounded by wicked men, sons of Belial, comparable to thorns, whilst he hung suffering on the cross; and of the sins of his people compassing him about, which were as thorns, very grievous to him; and of his various troubles in life, and of his being made a curse for us at death; thorns being the produce of the curse upon the earth. *And put it on his head*: not only by way of derision, as mocking at his character, the King of the Jews, but in order to afflict and distress him. *And they put on him a purple robe*: Matthew calls it a *scarlet robe*; and the Arabic and Persic versions here, *a red one*: it very probably was one of the soldiers' coats, which are usually red: this was still in derision of him as a king, and was an emblem of his being clothed with our purple and scarlet sins, and of the bloody sufferings of his human nature for them, and through which we come to have a purple covering, or to be justified by his blood, and even to be made truly kings, as well as priests, unto God.

Ver. 3. *And said, hail, King of the Jews!* &c.] Some copies before this clause read, *and they came unto him*; and so read the Vulgate Latin, Arabic, Coptic, and Ethiopic versions; that is, they came and prostrated themselves before him; bowed the knee unto him, and addressed him in a mock way, as if he was an earthly monarch just come to his crown, and whom they wished long to live; thus mocking at his kingly office, and despising him under that character, as many do now: some will not have him to reign over them, but reject him as King; and others, though in words they own him to be King, yet disregard his commands, and act no better part than these scoffing soldiers did: *and they smote him with their hands*, upon his cheeks, as the Syriac version reads it. These, and many other affronts they gave him; in all which they were indulged by Pilate, and was a pleasing scene to the wicked Jews, whose relentless hearts were not in the least moved hereby, though Pilate hoped they would; and which was his view in allowing the soldiers to use such incivilities and indecencies to him.

Ver. 4. *Pilate therefore went forth again*, &c.] When all this was done to Jesus, Pilate went again out of the judgment-hall, or however from the place where Jesus had been scourged, and ill-used in the manner he was: he went a little before him unto the Jews that stood without, *and saith unto them, behold I bring him forth unto you*: that is, he had ordered him to be brought forth by the soldiers, and they were just bringing him in the sad miserable condition in which he was, that the Jews might see, with their own eyes, how he had been used: *that ye may know that I find no fault in him*, for by seeing what was done to him, how severely he had been scourged, and in what derision and contempt he had been had, and what barbarity had been exercised on him, they might know and believe, that if Pilate did all this, or allowed of it to be done to a man whom he judged innocent, purely to gratify the Jews; that had he found any thing in him worthy of death, he would not have stopped here, but would have ordered the execution of him; of this they might assure themselves by his present conduct. Pilate, by his own confession, in treating, or suffering to be treated in so cruel and ignominious a manner, one that he himself could find no fault in, or cause of accusation against, was guilty of great injustice.

Ver. 5. *Then came Jesus forth*, &c.] Out of the judgment-hall, or place where he had been scourged, as soon as Pilate had said these words: *wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe*: with his temples scratched and torn with the thorny crown, and the blood running down from thence, and his face and eyes swoln with the blows he had received from their closed fists, and all besmeared with his own blood, and the soldiers' spittle; his body appearing to be almost of the same colour with the purple or scarlet robe, through the stripes and lashes he had received, when that was thrown back. *And Pilate saith unto them, behold the man*: not their king, that would have provoked them; though he did say so afterwards, when he found he could not prevail upon them to agree to his release; but the man, to move their compassion: signifying, that he was a man as they were, and that they ought to use him as such, and treat him with humanity and pity; and that he was a poor despicable man, as the condition he was in shewed; and that it was a weak thing in them to fear any thing with respect to any change of, or influence in, civil govern-

ment from one that made such a figure; and therefore should be satisfied with what had been done to him, and dismiss him.

Ver. 6. *When the chief priests therefore, and officers, saw him*, &c.] In this piteous condition, in his mock dress, and having on him all the marks of cruel usage, enough to have moved an heart of stone: and though they were the principal men of the priesthood, and who made great pretensions to religion and piety, and the officers were their servants and attendants, and all of them used to sacred employments; which might have been thought would have at least influenced them to the exercise of humanity and compassion to fellow-creatures; yet instead of being affected with this sight, and wrought upon by it, to have agreed to his release, as Pilate hoped, *they cried out, saying, Crucify him, Crucify him*; which was done in a very noisy and clamorous way; and the repetition of their request shews their malignity, vehemence, and impatience; and remarkable it is, that they should call for, and desire that kind of death the Scriptures had pointed out, that the Messiah should die, and which was predicted by Christ himself. *Pilate saith unto them, take ye him, and crucify him, for I find no fault in him.* This was not leave to do it, as appears from the reason he gives, in which the innocence of Christ is again asserted; nor did the Jews take it in this light, as is evident from their reply; and 'tis clear, that after this Pilate thought he had a power either to release or crucify him; and he did afterwards seek to release him; and the Jews made a fresh request to crucify him; upon which he was delivered to be crucified: but this was said in a way of indignation, and as abhorring the action; and is an ironical concession, and a bitter sarcasm upon them, that men that professed so much religion and sanctity, could be guilty of such iniquity, as to desire the death of one that no fault could be found in; and therefore, if such were their consciences, for his part, he desired to have no concern in so unrighteous an action; but if they would, they must even do it themselves.

Ver. 7. *The Jews answered him*, &c.] Finding they could make nothing of the charge of sedition against him, and that Pilate could not be prevailed upon to adjudge him to death upon that score, they try another method, and charge him with blasphemy; which, if the other had succeeded, they would have concealed; because this, if proved, according to their law, would not have brought on him the kind of death they were desirous of: *we have a law*; meaning the law of Moses, which they had received by his hands from God: *and by our law he ought to die*; referring either to the law concerning blasphemy in general, or concerning the false prophet, or to the having and asserting of other gods, and enticing to the worship of them; in either of which cases death by stoning was enjoined: *because he made himself the son of God*; the natural and essential son of God; not by adoption, or on account of his incarnation and mediatorial office; but as being one with the father, of the same nature with him, and equal to him in all his perfections and glory. This he had often asserted in his ministry, or what was equivalent to it, and which they so understood; and indeed had said that very morning, before the high-priest in his palace, what amounted thereunto, and which he so interpreted; upon which he rent his garments, and charged him with blasphemy: for that God has a son, is denied by the Jews, since Jesus asserted himself to be so, though formerly believed by them; nor was it now denied that there was a son of God, or that he was expected; but the blasphemy with them was, that Jesus set up himself to be he: but now 'tis vehemently opposed by them, that God has a son; so from Eccl. iv. 8. they endeavour to prove[q], that God has neither a brother, ולא בן, *nor a son*: but, *hear, O Israel*, they observe, *the Lord our God is one Lord*. And elsewhere[r], "*there is one*; this is the holy blessed God; "*and not a second*; for he has no partner or equal in "his world; *yea, he hath neither child nor brother*; he "hath no brother, nor hath he a son; but the holy "blessed God loves Israel, and calls them his children, "and his brethren." All which is opposed to the Christian doctrine, relating to the sonship of Christ. The conduct of these men, at this time, deserves notice, as their craft in imposing on Pilate's ignorance of their laws; and the little regard that they themselves had to them, in calling for crucifixion instead of stoning; and their inconsistence with themselves, pretending before it was not lawful for them to put any man to death; and now they have a law, and by that law, in their judgment, he ought to die.

Ver. 8. *When Pilate therefore heard that saying*, &c.] That Jesus had asserted himself to be the son of God, and that the Jews had a law to put such a person to death that was guilty of such blasphemy: *he was the more afraid*: he was afraid to put him to death, or to consent to it before; partly on account of his wife's message to him, and partly upon a conviction of the innocence of Christ, in his own conscience: and now he was more afraid, since here was a charge brought against him he did not well understand the meaning of; and a law of theirs pretended to be violated hereby, which should he pay no regard to, might occasion a tumult, since they were already become very clamorous and noisy; and he might be the more uneasy, lest the thing they charged him with asserting, should be really fact; that he was one of the gods come down in the likeness of man; or that he was some demi-god at least, or so nearly related to deity, that it might be dangerous for him to have any thing to do with him this way: and in this suspicion he might be strengthened, partly from the writings of the Heathens, which speak of such sort of beings; and partly from the miracles he might have heard were performed by Jesus; and also by calling to mind what he had lately said to him, that his kingdom was not of this world, and that he was come into it to bear witness to the truth.

Ver. 9. *And went again into the judgment-hall*, &c.] From whence he came out, taking Jesus along with him, in order to interrogate him alone upon this head: *and saith unto Jesus, whence art thou?* meaning not of what country he was, for he knew he was of the nation of the Jews; nor in what place he was born,

[q] Debarim Rabba, sect. 2. fol. 237. 3.

[r] Midrash Kohelet, fol 70. 1.

whether at Bethlehem or at Nazareth, for this was no concern of his; but from whence he sprung, who were his ancestors, and whether his descent was from the gods, or from men; and if from the former, from which of them; for as Pilate was an Heathen, he must be supposed to speak as such: *but Jesus gave him no answer*: for his question was frivolous, and deserved none; and besides, he was not worthy of one, who had used him so ill, when he knew, in his own conscience, that he was innocent; nor was he capable of taking in an answer, or able to judge whether it was right or wrong; and since Christ was come to die for the salvation of his people, it was not proper he should say any thing that might be a means of hindering it.

Ver. 10. *Then saith Pilate unto him*, &c.] Being angry with him, resenting his silence, and looking upon it as a contempt of him; *speakest thou not unto me?* he wondered that he stood in no fear of him, who was the Roman governor, his judge; who had the power of life and death; and that he should make no answer to him, who was in so much dignity, and in so high and exalted a station. *Knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee?* proudly boasting of his authority to do one or the other. The sudden change of the man from fear, to vain and proud boasting, is to be observed; just now he was afraid of the divine power of Christ, lest he should have any divinity in him: and now he boasts and brags of his own power, and menaces and threatens with his authority to punish with death, even the death of the cross; in which he discovers his wickedness, as a magistrate, to endeavour to terrify one that he himself believed to be innocent: and besides, his assertion is false; for he had no power, neither from God nor man, to crucify innocent men, and release criminals: and moreover, he himself must be self-condemned, who had a power, as he says, of releasing him, and yet did not do it, though he had once and again declared he found no fault in him.

Ver. 11. *Jesus answered*, &c.] With great intrepidity and courage, with freedom and boldness, as being not at all dismayed with his threatenings, or affected with his proud boasts, and in order to expose the vanity of them: *thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above*: meaning, not from the Jewish sanhedrim, whose court of judicature was in the temple, which was higher than the other part of the city; nor from the Roman emperor, or senate of Rome, the higher powers; by whom Pilate was made governor of Judea, and a judge in all causes relating to life and death; but reference is had to the place from whence he came, and to the decree and council of God above, and the agreement between the eternal three in heaven. Christ speaks of a power he had against him, that is, of taking away his life; he had no lawful power to do it at all; nor any power, right or wrong, had it not been given him by God: and which is to be ascribed, not merely to the general providence of God, without which nothing is done in this world; but to the determinate counsel of God, relating to this particular action of the crucifying of Christ; otherwise Christ, as God, could have struck Pilate his judge with death immediately, and without so doing could as easily have escaped out of his hands, as he had sometimes done out of the hands of the Jews; and, as man and Mediator, he could have prayed to his father for, and have had, more than twelve legions of angels, which would soon have rescued him: but this was not to be; power was given to Pilate from heaven against him; not for any evil he himself had committed, or merely to gratify the envy and malice of the Jews, but for the salvation of God's elect, and for the glorifying of the divine perfections: and to this the Jews themselves agree in general, "that all the things of this world depend on above; "and when they agree above first, (they say [*],) they "agree below; and that there is no power below, "until that דאתיהיב שולטנותא לעילא, *power is given* "*from above*; and the whole of that depends on "this:" *therefore he that delivered me unto thee, hath the greater sin*: מן דילך, *than thine*, as the Syriac version adds; and to the same purpose the Persic. Pilate had been guilty of sin already in scourging Christ, and suffering the Roman soldiers to abuse him; and would be guilty of a greater in delivering him up to be crucified, who he knew was innocent: but the sin of Judas in delivering him into the hands of the chief priests and elders, and of the chief priest and elders and people of the Jews, in delivering him to Pilate to crucify him, according to the Roman manner, were greater, inasmuch as theirs proceeded from malice and envy, and was done against greater light and knowledge; for by his works, miracles, and ministry, as well as by their own prophecies, they might, or must have known, that he was the Messiah, and son of God: and it is to be observed, that as there is a difference in sin, and that all sins are not equal, the circumstances of things making an alteration; so that God's decree concerning the delivery of his son into the hands of sinful men, does not excuse the sin of the betrayers of him.

Ver. 12. *And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him*, &c.] From the time that Christ spoke the above words; or, as the Syriac version renders it, מטל הדא, *because of this*, or on account of the words he had spoken; to which agree the Arabic and Ethiopic versions: he sought by all means, and studied every way to bring the Jews to agree to his release: his reasons were, because of the consciousness of guilt, and the danger of contracting more; the sense he might have of a Divine Being, to whom he was accountable for the exercise of his power; his suspicion that Jesus was the son of God, or that he was more than a man; for he perceived that power went along with his words, by the effect they had on him: but though he sought to release him, he did not do it, nor use the power he boasted he had: the reason in himself was, he was desirous that the Jews would concur with him; the secret one in providence was, God would not have it so; and yet things must be carried to this pitch, that it might appear that Christ suffered not for his own sins, but ours, and

[*] Zohar in Gen. fol. 99. 1.

that he suffered willingly: *but the Jews cried out, saying, if thou let this man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend.* These were the chief priests, Scribes, and elders of the people, more especially, and by whom, the common people were stirred up to request his crucifixion; these still made a greater outcry, and in a more clamorous way urged, that should he be released, Pilate would shew but little regard to Cæsar, by whom he was raised to this dignity; who had put him into this trust; whom he represented, and in whose name he acted. This was a piece of craftiness in them, for nothing could more nearly affect Pilate, than an insinuation of want of friendship and fidelity to Tiberius, who was then Cæsar, or emperor; and also, it was an instance of great hypocrisy in them, to pretend a regard to Cæsar, when they scrupled paying tribute to him, and would have been glad, at any rate, to have been free from his yoke and government; and is a very spiteful hint, and carries in it a sort of threatening to Pilate, as if they would bring a charge against him to Cæsar, should he let Jesus go with his life, whom they in a contemptuous manner call *this man*; adding, *whosoever maketh himself a king, speaketh against Cæsar*: returning to their former charge of sedition, finding that that of blasphemy had not its effect: their reasoning is very fallacious, and mere sophistry; for though it might be allowed that whoever set up himself as a temporal king in any of Cæsar's dominions, must be an enemy of his, a rebel against him; and such a declaration might be truly interpreted as high treason; yet Christ did not give out that he was such a king, but, on the contrary, that his kingdom was not of this world, and therefore did not assume to himself any part of Cæsar's dominions and government; and though the Jews would have took him by force, and made him a king, he refused it, and got out of their hands.

Ver. 13. *When Pilate therefore heard that saying,* &c.] Of the Jews, that a dismission of Jesus would shew an unfriendliness to Cæsar; and gave very broad hints that they would accuse him to Cæsar of treachery and unfaithfulness, in letting go a man, that made pretensions to be a king in his territories; and knowing well the jealousies and suspicions of Tiberius, and fearing lest it would turn to his own disrepute and disadvantage, immediately *he brought Jesus forth* out of the judgment-hall, the place where he had been examined in; not to declare his innocence, nor to move their pity, nor to release him, but to pass sentence on him. *And he sat down in the judgment-seat* for that purpose. He had sat but little all this while, but was continually going in and out to examine Jesus, and converse with the Jews; but he now takes his place, and sits down as a judge, in order to give the finishing-stroke to this affair; and where he sat down, was *in the place that is called the pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha.* This place, in the Greek tongue, was called *Lithostrotos*; or *the pavement of stones*, as the Syriac version renders it: it is thought to be the room *Gazith*, in which the sanhedrim sat in the temple when they tried capital causes[t]; and it was so called, because it was paved with smooth, square, hewn stones: "it was in the north part; half "of it was holy, and half of it common; and it had two "doors, one for that part which was holy, and another "for that which was common; and in that half which "was common the sanhedrim sat[u]." So that into this part of it, and by this door, Pilate, though a Gentile, might enter. This place, in the language of the Jews, who at this time spoke Syriac, was *Gabbatha*, from its height, as it should seem; though the Syriac and Persic versions read *Gaphiphtha*, which signifies a fence, or an enclosure. Mention is made in the Talmud[w] of the upper *Gab* in the mountain of the house; but whether the same with this *Gabbatha*, and whether this is the same with the chamber *Gazith*, is not certain. The Septuagint use the same word as John here does, and call by the same name the pavement of the temple on which the Israelites fell and worshipped God, 2 Chron. vii. 3.

Ver. 14. *And it was the preparation of the passover,* &c.] So the Jews[x] say, that Jesus suffered on the eve of the passover; and the author of the blasphemous account of his life says[y], it was the eve both of the passover and the sabbath; which account so far agrees with the evangelic history; but then this preparation of the passover was not of the passover lamb, for that had been prepared and eaten the night before. Nor do I find that there was any particular day which was called *the preparation of the passover* in such sense, and much less that this day was the day before the eating of the passover. According to the law in Exod. xii. 3—6. the lamb for the passover was to be separated from the rest of the flock on the *tenth* day of the month, and to be kept up till the *fourteenth*: but this is never called the preparation of the passover; and was it so called, it cannot be intended here; the preparing and making ready the passover the evangelists speak of, were on the same day it was eaten, and design the getting ready a place to eat it in, and things convenient for that purpose, and the killing the lamb, and dressing it, and the like, Matt. xxvi. 17, 19. Mark xiv. 12, 15, 16. Luke xxii. 8, 9, 12, 13. there is what the Jews call פרוס הפסח, which was a space of fifteen days before the passover, and began at the middle of the thirty days before the feast, in which they used to ask questions, and explain the traditions concerning the passover[z]: but this is never called the preparation of the passover: and on the night of the fourteenth month they sought diligently, in every hole and corner of their houses, for leavened bread, in order to remove it[a]; but this also never went by any such name: wherefore, if any respect is had to the preparation for the passover, it must either design the preparation of the *Chagigah*, which was a grand festival, commonly kept on the fifteenth day,

[t] Gloss. in T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 8. 2.
[u] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 25. 1. Maimon. Hilch. Beth Habbechira, c. 5. sect. 17. Bartenora in Misn. Middot, c. 5. sect. 3.
[w] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 115. 1.
[x] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 43. 1. & 67. 1.
[y] Toldos Jesu, p. 18.
[z] Misn. Shekalim, c. 3. sect. 1. & Bartenora in ib. T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 6. 1.
[a] Misn. Pesachim, c. 1. sect. 1, 2, 3.

and which was sometimes called the passover; or else the preparation for the whole feast all the remaining days of it; see the note on ch. xviii. 28. but it seems best of all to understand it only of the preparation for the sabbath, which, because it was in the passover week, is called the passover preparation-day: and it may be observed, that it is sometimes only called *the day of the preparation*, and *the preparation*, Matt. xxvii. 62. Luke xxiii. 54. John xix. 31. and sometimes the *Jews' preparation-day*, John xix. 42. and it is explained by the Evangelist Mark ch. xv. 42. *It was the preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath*: on which they both prepared themselves for the sabbath, and food to eat on that day; and this being the time of the passover likewise, the preparation was the greater: and therefore to distinguish this preparation-day for the sabbath, from others, it is called the passover-preparation; nor have I observed that any other day is called the preparation but that before the sabbath: the Jews dispute about preparing food for the sabbath on a feast-day, as this was; they seem to forbid it, but afterwards soften their words, and allow it with some provisos: their canon runs thus[b]; "a feast-day "which falls on the eve of the sabbath, a man may "not boil (any thing) at the beginning of the feast-"day for the sabbath; but he may boil for the "feast-day; and if there is any left, it may be left "for the sabbath; and he may make a boiling "on the eve of a feast-day, and depend on it for the "sabbath: the house of Shammai say two boilings; "and the house of Hillell say one boiling." Bartenora on the passage observes, that some say the reason of this boiling on the evening of a feast-day, is for the honour of the sabbath; for because from the evening of the feast-day, the sabbath is remembered, that which is best is chosen for the sabbath, that the sabbath may not be forgotten through the business of the feast-day. The account Maimonides[c] gives of this matter is, "on "a common day they *prepare* for the sabbath, and on "a common day they prepare for a feast-day; but "they don't prepare on a feast-day for the sabbath, nor "is the sabbath, מכינה, *a preparation* for a feast-day." This seems to be contrary to the practice of the Jews in the time of Christ, as related by the evangelists, understanding by the preparation they speak of, a preparation of food for the sabbath; but what he afterwards says[d] makes some allowance for it: "a feast-day, "which happens to be on the eve of the sabbath, "*(Friday,)* they neither bake nor boil, on a feast-"day what is eaten on the morrow, on the sab-"bath; and this prohibition is from the words of "the Scribes, (not from the word of God,) that a "man should not boil any thing on a feast-day for a "common day, and much less for the sabbath; but "if he makes a boiling (or prepares food) on the "evening of a feast-day on which he depends and boils "and bakes on a feast-day for the sabbath, lo, this is "lawful; and that on which he depends is called the "mingling of food." And this food, so called, was a small portion of food prepared on a feast for the sabbath, though not less than the quantity of an olive, whether for one man or a thousand[e]; by virtue of which, they depending on it for the sabbath, they might prepare whatever they would, after having asked a blessing over it, and saying[f], "by this mixture it "is free for me to bake and boil on a feast-day what "is for the morrow, the sabbath; and if a man pre-"pares for others, he must say for me, and for such "an one, and such an one; or for the men of the city, "and then all of them may bake and boil on a feast-"day for the sabbath." *And about the sixth hour*; to which agrees the account in Matt. xxvii. 45. Luke xxiii. 44. but Mark says, ch. xv. 25. that *it was the third hour, and they crucified* him; and Beza says, he found it so written in one copy; and so read Peter of Alexandria, Beza's ancient copy, and some others, and Nonnus: but the copies in general agree in, and confirm the common reading, and which is differently accounted for; some by the different computations of the Jews and Romans; others by observing that the Jewish day was divided into four parts, each part containing three hours, and were called the third, the sixth, the ninth, and the twelfth hours; and not only that time, when one of these hours came, was called by that name, but also from that all the space of the three hours, till the next came, was called by the name of the former: for instance, all the space from nine o'clock till twelve was called *the third hour*; and all from twelve till three in the afternoon *the sixth hour*; hence the time of Christ's crucifixion being supposed to be somewhat before, but yet near our twelve of the clock, it may be truly here said that it was about the sixth hour; and as truly by Mark the third hour; that space, which was called by the name of the third hour, being not yet passed, though it drew toward an end. This way go Godwin and Hammond, whose words I have expressed, and bids fair for the true solution of the difficulty: though it should be observed, that Mark agrees with the other evangelists about the darkness which was at the sixth hour, the time of Christ's crucifixion, ch. xv. 33, 34. and it is to be remarked, that he does not say that it was the third hour *when* they crucified him, or that they crucified him at the third hour; but it was the third hour, *and* they crucified him, as Dr. Lightfoot observes. It was the time of day when they should have been at the daily sacrifice, and preparing for the solemnity of that day particularly, which was their Chagigah, or grand feast; but instead of this they were prosecuting his crucifixion, which they brought about by the sixth hour. And about this time Pilate said, and did the following things: *and he saith unto the Jews, behold your king*: whom some of your people, it seems, have owned for their king, and you charge as setting up himself as one; see what a figure he makes; does he look like a king? this he said, in order to move upon their affections, that, if possible, they might agree to release him, and to shame them out of putting such a poor despicable creature to death; and as upbraiding them for their folly, in fearing any thing from so mean and contemptible a man.

Ver. 15. *But they cried out, Away with him*, &c.] As

[b] Misn. Betza, c. 2. sect. 1.
[c] Hilchot Yom Tob, c. 1. sect. 19.
[d] Ib. c. 6. sect. 1.
[e] Maimon. & Bartenora in Misn. Betza, c. 2. sect. 1.
[f] Maimon. Hilchot Yom Tob, c. 6. sect. 8.

a person hateful and loathsome to them, the sight of whom they could not bear; and this they said with great indignation and wrath, and with great vehemency, earnestness and importunacy, in a very clamorous way; repeating the words *away with him:* they were impatient until he was ordered away for execution; and nothing would satisfy them but the crucifixion of him; and therefore they say, *crucify him:* which is also repeated in the Syriac version; for this was what they thirsted after, and were so intent upon; this cry was made by the chief priests: *Pilate saith unto them, shall I crucify your king?* This he said either seriously or jeeringly, and it may be with a view to draw out of them their sentiments concerning Cæsar, as well as him; however it had this effect; *the chief priests answered, we have no king but Cæsar:* whereby they denied God to be their king, though they used to say, and still say in their prayers; *we have no king but God*[g]: they rejected the government of the King Messiah, and tacitly confessed that the sceptre was departed from Judah; and what they now said, came quickly upon them, and still continues; for according to prophecy, Hos. iii. 4. they have been many days and years *without a king:* and this they said in spite to Jesus, and not in respect to Cæsar, whose government they would have been glad to have had an opportunity to shake off. They could name no one as king but Jesus, or Cæsar; the former they rejected, and were obliged to own the latter: it is a poor observation of the Jew[h] upon this passage, that it "shews "that before the crucifixion of Jesus, the Roman "Cæsars ruled over Israel; and that this Cæsar was "Tiberius, who had set Pilate over Jerusalem, as is "clear from Luke iii. 1. Wherefore here's an answer "to the objection of the Nazarenes, who say that "the Jews, for the sin of crucifying Jesus, lost their "kingdom." To which may be replied, that this is not said by any of the writers of the New Testament, that the kingdom of the Jews was taken away from them for their sin of crucifying Jesus; and therefore this is no contradiction to any thing said by them; this is only the assertion of some private persons, upon whom it lies to defend themselves; and what is asserted, is defensible, nor do the words of the text militate against it: for though before the crucifixion of Christ the Jews were tributary to the Roman Cæsars, and Roman governors were sent to preside among them; yet the government was not utterly taken from them, or their kingdom lost; they indeed feared this would be the case, should Jesus succeed and prosper, as he did, saying, *the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation*, John xi. 48, which shews, that as yet this was not done, though for their disbelief and rejection of the Messiah, their destruction was hastening on apace; and after the crucifixion of him, all power was taken from them; the government was seized upon by the Romans entirely, and at last utterly destroyed; besides, the Jews did not own Cæsar to be their king, though they said this now to serve a turn; and after this they had kings of the race of Herod over them, though placed there by the Roman emperor or senate.

Ver. 16. *Then delivered he him therefore*, &c.] Perceiving he could not by any means work upon them, and that nothing would satisfy them but his death; he therefore passed sentence on him, and gave him up to their will, *unto them to be crucified:* as they requested, and which was done in a judicial way, and all by divine appointment, according to the counsel and fore-knowledge of God: *and they took Jesus and led him away:* directly from the judgment-hall, out of the city to the place of execution, whither he was led as a lamb to the slaughter, without opening his mouth against God or man; but behaved with the utmost patience, meekness, and resignation.

Ver. 17. *And he bearing his cross*, &c.] Which was usual for malefactors to do, as Lipsius[i] shews out of Artemidorus, and Plutarch; the former says, "the "cross is like to death, and he that is to be fixed to "it, *first bears it*," and the latter says, "and every "one of the malefactors that are punished in body, "*carries out his own cross.*" So Christ, when he first went out to be crucified, carried his cross himself, until the Jews, meeting with Simon the Cyrenian, obliged him to bear it after him; that is, one part of it; for still Christ continued to bear a part himself: of this Isaac was a type, in carrying the wood on his shoulders for the burnt-offering; and this shewed that Christ was made sin, and a curse for us, and that our sins, and the punishment which belonged to us, were laid on him, and bore by him; and in this he has left us an example to go forth without the camp, bearing his reproach: *went forth in a place called* the place *of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew, Golgotha:* and signifies a man's skull: it seems, that as they executed malefactors here, so they buried them here; and in process of time, their bones being dug up to make room for others, their skulls, with other bones, lay up and down in this place; from whence it had its name in the Syriac dialect, which the Jews then usually spake: here some say Adam's skull was found, and that it had its name from thence. This was an ancient tradition, as has been observed in the notes on Matt. xxvii. 33. and Luke xxiii. 33. the Syriac writers have it[k], who say, "when Noah went out of the ark there was "made a distribution of the bones of Adam; to Shem, "his head was given, and the place in which he was "buried is called *Karkaphta;* where likewise Christ "was crucified;" which word signifies a skull, as Golgotha does: and so likewise the Arabic writers[l]; who affirm that Shem said these words to Melchizedek, "Noah commanded that thou shouldst take the body of "Adam, and bury it in the middle of the earth; there- "fore let us go, I and thou, and bury it; wherefore "Shem and Melchizedek went to take the body of "Adam, and the angel of the Lord appeared to them "and went before them, till they came to the place "Calvary, where they buried him, as the angel of the "Lord commanded them:" the same also had the ancient fathers of the Christian church; Cyprian[m] says,

[g] T. Bab Taanith, fol. 25. 2. Seder Tephillot, fol. 46. 2. Ed. Basil. fol. 71. 2. Ed. Amsterd.
[h] R. Isaac Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 57. p. 446.
[i] De Cruce, l. 2. c. 5. p. 76.

[k] Bar Bahluli apud Castel. Lexic. Polyglot. col. 3406.
[l] Elmacinus, p. 13. Patricides, p. 12. apud Hottinger. Smegma Oriental. l. 1. c. 8. p. 257.
[m] De Resurrectione Christi, p. 479.

that it is a tradition of the ancients, that Adam was buried in Calvary under the place where the cross of Christ was fixed; and Jerom makes mention of it more than once; so Paula and Eustochium, in an epistle supposed to be dictated by him, or in which he was assisting, say [n], in this city, meaning Jerusalem, yea in this place, Adam is said to dwell, and to die; from whence the place where our Lord was crucified is called Calvary, because there the skull of the ancient man was buried: and in another place he himself says [o], that he heard one disputing in the church and explaining, Eph. v. 14. of Adam buried in Calvary, where the Lord was crucified, and therefore was so called. Ambrose [p] also takes notice of it; the place of the cross, says he, is either in the midst of the land, that it might be conspicuous to all, or over the grave of Adam, as the Hebrews dispute: others say that the hill itself was in the form of a man's skull, and therefore was so called; it was situated, as Jerom says [q], on the north of Mount Zion, and is thought by some to be the same with the hill Gareb, in Jer. xxxi. 39. It was usual to crucify on high hills, so Polycrates was crucified upon the highest top of Mount Mycale [r].

Ver. 18. *Where they crucified him,* &c.] Namely, at Golgotha, the same with Calvary; and so had what they were so desirous of: *and two other with him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst:* these other two men were thieves, as the other evangelists declare; among whom Christ was placed, being numbered and reckoned among transgressors: he was no transgressor of the law of God himself, but he was accounted as such by men, and was treated as if he had been one by the justice of God; he, as a surety, standing in the law-place, and stead of his people; hence he died in their room, and for their sins: this shews the low estate of Christ, the strictness of justice, the wisdom of God in salvation, and the grace and love of the Redeemer; who condescended to every thing, and every circumstance, though ever so reproachful, which were necessary for the redemption of his people, and the glory of the divine perfections, and for the fulfilment of purposes, promises, and predictions.

Ver. 19. *And Pilate wrote a title,* &c.] Luke calls it a superscription, Mark, the superscription of his accusation, and Matthew, the accusation itself; it contained the substance of the charge against him, and was written upon a table or board, and nailed to the cross, as Nonnus suggests; to this is the allusion, Col. ii. 14. The form of it was drawn up by Pilate, his judge, who ordered it to be transcribed upon a proper instrument, and placed over him: *and put it on the cross;* not with his own hands, but by his servants, who did it at his command; for others are said to do it, Matt. xxvii. 37. It was put upon *the top of the cross,* as the Persic version reads it; *over him,* or *over his head,* as the other evangelists say; and may denote the rise of his kingdom, which is from above, the visibility of it, and the enlargement of it, through the cross: *and the writing was;* the words written in the title were, *Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews:* Jesus was his name, by which he was commonly called and known, and signifies a Saviour, as he is of all the elect of God; whom he saves from all their sins, by bearing them in his own body on the cross, and of whom he is the able and willing, the perfect and complete, the only and everlasting Saviour: he is said to be of Nazareth; this was the place of which he was an inhabitant; here Joseph and Mary lived before his conception; here he was conceived, though born in Bethlehem; where he did not abide long, but constantly in this place, till he was about thirty years of age; this title was sometimes given him as a term of reproach, though not always: *the King of the Jews;* which both expresses his accusation, and asserts him to be so.

Ver. 20. *This title then read many of the Jews,* &c.] Who were in great numbers, at the place of execution, rejoicing at his crucifixion, and insulting him as he hung on the cross: *for the place where Jesus was crucified, was nigh unto the city:* Golgotha, the place of Christ's crucifixion, was not more than two furlongs, or a quarter of a mile from the city of Jerusalem: so that multitudes were continually going from thence to see this sight; the city also being then very full of people, by reason of the feast of the passover; to which may be added, that the cross stood by the way-side, where persons were continually passing to and fro, as appears from Matt. xxvii. 39. Mark xv. 29. and where it was usual to erect crosses to make public examples of malefactors, and to deter others from committing the like crimes: so Alexander, the emperor, ordered an eunuch to be crucified by the way-side, in which his servants used commonly to go to his suburb [s] or country-house: Cicero says [t] the Mamertines, according to their own usage and custom, crucified behind the city, in the Pompeian way; and Quinctilian observes [u], as often as we crucify criminals, the most noted ways are chosen, where most may behold, and most may be moved with fear: and now Christ being crucified by a public road-side, the inscription on the cross was doubtless read by more than otherwise it would: *and it was written in Hebrew,* and *Greek,* and *Latin;* that it might be read by all, Jews, Greeks, and Romans; and to shew that he is the Saviour of some of all nations; and that he is King over all. These words were written in Hebrew letters in the Syriac dialect, which was used by the Jews, and is called the Hebrew language, ver. 13, 17. and in which it is most likely Pilate should write these words, or order them to be written; and which, according to the Syriac version we now have, were thus put, ישוע נצריא מלכא דיהודיא; in Greek the words stood as in the original text, thus, Ἰησοῦς ὁ Ναζωραῖος ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων: and in the Latin tongue, as may be supposed, after this manner, *Jesus Nazarenus Rex Judæorum.* These three languages may be very well thought to be understood by Pilate; at least so much of them as to qualify him to write such an inscription as this. The Latin tongue was his mother tongue, which he must be supposed well to understand; and the Greek tongue was very much used

[n] Epist. Marcellæ, fol. 42. L. Tom. I.
[o] Comment. in Eph. v. 14.
[p] Comment. in Luc. xx. 33.
[q] De locis Hebraicis, fol. 92. F.
[r] Valer. Maxim. l. 6. c. ult.
[s] Lipsius de Cruce, l. 3. c. 13. p. 158.
[t] Orat. 10. in Verrem. l. 5. p. 604.
[u] Declamat. 275.

by the Romans, since their conquest of the Grecian monarchy; and the emperors' edicts were generally published in Greek, which it was therefore necessary for Pilate to understand; and as he was a governor of Judea, and had been so for some time, he must have acquired some knowledge of the Hebrew language; and these being the principal languages in the world, he chose to write this title in them, that persons coming from all quarters might be able to read it, and understand it in some one of them.

Ver. 21. *Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate*, &c.] Who were not only informed of this inscription, but might read it themselves, for they were present at the crucifying of Christ, and mocked at him as he hung on the tree; these, when they read the title, were greatly offended at it, partly because it was doing too great an honour to Jesus to call him the King of the Jews: and partly because it fixed a public brand of infamy upon their nation, that a king of theirs should be crucified: wherefore they went to Pilate and addressed him, saying, *write not the King of the Jews:* because they did not own him for their king, which this title seemed to suggest, nor had he in their opinion any right to such a character; wherefore they desired that in the room of these words he would be pleased to put the following, *but that he said, I am King of the Jews;* that so he might be thought to be a seditious person and a traitor; one that laid claim to the temporal crown and kingdom of Israel, and one that suffered justly for attempts of that kind.

Ver. 22. *Pilate answered, what I have written I have written*, &c.] He seems to say this, as one angry and displeased with them; either because they would not consent to release Jesus, which he was desirous of, but pressed him so very hard to crucify him; or at their insolence, in directing him in what form to put the superscription, which he determines shall stand unaltered, as he had wrote it. This he said, either because he could not alter it after it was written, for 'tis said [w], that "a pro-consul's table is his sentence, which "being once read, not one letter can either be in"creased or diminished; but as it is recited, so it is "related in the instrument of the province;" or if he could have altered it, he was not suffered by God to do it; but was so directed, and over-ruled by divine providence, as to write, so to persist in, and abide by what he had wrote inviolably; which is the sense of his words. Dr. Lightfoot has given several instances out of the Talmud, shewing that this is a common way of speaking with the Rabbins; and that words thus doubled signify that what is spoken of stands good, and is irrevocable: so a widow taking any of the moveable goods of her husband deceased for her maintenance, it is said [x], מה שתפסה תפסה, *what she takes, she takes;* that is, she may lawfully do it, and retain it: it continues in her hands, and can't be taken away from her; and so the gloss explains it, *they don't take it from her;* and in the same way Maimonides [y] interprets it: so of a man that binds himself to offer an oblation one way, and he offers it another way, מה שהביא הביא, *what he has offered, he has offered* [z]; what he has offered is right, it stands good, and is not to be rejected: and again, among the rites used by a deceased brother's wife, towards him that refuses to marry her, if one thing is done before the other, it matters not, מה שעשוי עשוי, *what is done, is done* [a]; and is not to be undone, or done over again in another way; it stands firm and good, and not to be objected to: and the same writer observes, that this is a sort of prophecy of Pilate, and which should continue, and for ever obtain, that the Jews should have no other King Messiah than Jesus of Nazareth; nor have they had any other; all that have risen up have proved false Messiahs; nor will they have any other; nor indeed any king, until they seek the Lord their God, and David their king, Hos. iii. 5. that is, the son of David, as they will do in the latter day; when they shall be converted, and when they shall own him as their king, their ancestors at this time were ashamed of.

Ver. 23. *Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus*, &c.] The crucifixion of Christ was at the request and solicitation of the Jews, was ordered by the Roman governor, and performed by the Roman soldiers; the sinful men into whose hands Christ was to be delivered: *took his garments;* which they had stripped his body of, crucifying him naked; as what properly belonged to them, it being usual then, as now, for executioners to have the clothes of the persons they put to death; these were his inner garments: *and made four parts, to every soldier a part:* for it seems there were four of them concerned in his execution, and who were set to watch him: *and also his coat;* or upper garment; *now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout:* in such an one the Jews say [b] Moses ministered: and of this sort and make was the robe of the high-priest, said to be of *woven work*, Exod. xxiii. 32. upon which Jarchi remarks, ולא במחט, *and not with a needle;* it was all woven, and without any seam: and so the Jews say [c] in general of the garments of the priests: "the gar"ments of the priests are not made of needle-work, "but of woven work; as it is said, Exod. xxviii. 32. "Abai says, it is not necessary (*i. e.* the use of the "needle) but for their sleeves; according to the tradi"tion, the sleeve of the garments of the priests is "woven by itself, and is joined to the garment, and "reaches to the palm of the hand." So that this was an entire woven garment from top to bottom, excepting the sleeves, which were wove separately and sewed to it; of this kind also was his coat, which Jacob Iehudah Leon says [d], "was a stately woollen "coat of a sky-colour, wholly woven, all of one "piece, without seam, without sleeves;" such a garment Christ our great High-priest wore, which had no seam in it, but was a curious piece of texture from top to bottom. The very learned Braunius [e] says, he has seen such garments in Holland, and has given very fine cuts of them, and also of the frame in which they

[w] Apulei Florid. c. 9.
[x] T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 96. 1.
[y] Hilchot Ishot, c. 18. sect. 10.
[z] T. Bab. Menachot, fol. 3. 1.
[a] T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 106. 2.

[b] T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 11. 2. Gloss in ib.
[c] T. Bab. Yoma, c. 7. fol. 72. 2. Maimon. Hilch. Cele Hamikdash, c. 8. sect. 16.
[d] Relation of Memorable Things in the Tabernacle, &c. c. 5. p. 25.
[e] De vestitu Sacerdot. Heb. l. 1. c. 16. p. 346, 360, 361.

are wrought. What authority Nonnus had to call this coat a *black* one, or others for saying it was the work of the Virgin Mary, I know not.

Ver. 24. *They said therefore among themselves,* &c.] When they saw what a curious piece of work it was, and that it was pity to divide it into parts: and besides, that it would have been rendered entirely useless thereby: they moved it to each other, saying, *let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be, that the Scripture might be fulfilled:* not that they knew any thing of the Scripture, or had any intention of fulfilling it hereby, but they were so directed by the providence of God, to take such a step; whereby was literally accomplished the passage in Psal. xxii. 18. *which saith, they parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots.* The whole psalm is to be understood of the Messiah, not of David, as some do[f]; many passages in it cannot be applied to him, such as speak of the dislocation of his bones, the piercing of his hands and feet, and this of parting his garments, and casting lots for his vesture: all which had their literal accomplishment in Jesus: nor can it be understood of Esther, as it is by some Jewish[g] interpreters; there is not one word in it that agrees with her, and particularly, not the clause here cited; and there are some things in it which are manifestly spoken of a man, and not of a woman, as ver. 8. 24. nor can the whole body of the Jewish nation, or the congregation of Israel be intended, as others say[h]; since it is clear, that a single person is spoken of throughout the psalm, and who is distinguished from others, from his brethren, from the congregation, from the seed of Jacob and Israel, ver. 22, 23. and indeed, no other than the Messiah can be meant; he is pointed at in the very title of it, Aijeleth Shahar, which words, in what way soever they are rendered, agree with him: if by *the morning daily sacrifice,* as they are by the Targum; he is the Lamb of God, who continually takes away the sins of the world; and very fitly is he so called in the title of a psalm, which speaks so much of his sufferings and death, which were a propitiatory sacrifice for the sins of his people: or by *the morning star,* as others[i] interpret them: Christ is the bright and morning star, the day-spring from on high, the sun of righteousness, and light of the world: or by *the morning help,* as by the Septuagint; Christ had early help from God in the morning of his infancy, when Herod sought his life, and in the day of salvation of his people; and early in the morning was he raised from the dead, and had glory given him: or by *the morning hind,* which seems best of all, to which he may be compared, as to a roe or hart, in Cant. ii. 9, 17. and viii. 14. for his love and loveliness, and for his swiftness and readiness in appearing for the salvation of his people; and for his being hunted by Herod in the morning of his days; and being encompassed by those dogs, the Scribes and Pharisees, Judas and the band of soldiers; see ver. 16. The first words of the psalm were spoken by Jesus the true Messiah, when he hung upon the cross, and are truly applied to himself; his reproaches and sufferings endured by him there, are particularly and exactly described in it, and agree with no other; the benefits which the people of God were to enjoy, in consequence of his sufferings, and the conversion of the Gentiles spoken of in it, which is peculiar to the days of the Messiah, shew to whom it belongs. The Jews *themselves* are obliged to interpret some parts of it concerning him; they sometimes say[k], that by Aijeleth Shahar is meant the Shekinah, a name that well suits with the Messiah Jesus, who tabernacled in our nature; the 26th verse is applied by Jarchi to the time of the redemption, and the days of the Messiah; so that upon the whole, this passage is rightly cited with respect to the Messiah, and is truly said to be fulfilled by this circumstance, of the soldiers doing with his garments as they did: *these things therefore the soldiers did;* because they were before determined and predicted that they should be done: and therefore they were disposed and directed by a superior influence, in perfect agreement with the freedom of their wills to do these things. The whole of this account may be spiritually applied. The Scriptures are the garments of Christ; or, as a prince of Anhalt said, the swaddling clothes in which the infant of Bethlehem was wrapped; these exhibit and shew forth Christ in his glory, and by which he is known and bore witness to, and are pure and incorrupt, fragrant, and savory. Heretics are the soldiers that rend and tear the Scriptures in pieces, part them, add unto them, or detract from them; who corrupt, pervert, wrest, and misapply them; but truth is the seamless coat; it is all of a piece, is of God, there's nothing human in it; though it may be played with, betrayed, sold, or denied, it cannot be destroyed, but is, and will be preserved by divine providence: or the human nature of Christ is the vesture, with which his divine person was as it were covered, was put on and off, and on again as a garment; is of God, and not man; is pure and spotless; and though his soul and body were parted asunder for a while, this could never be parted from his divine person: or else the righteousness of Christ may be signified by this robe, which is often compared to one, because it is put on the saints, and they are clothed with it: it covers, keeps warm, protects, beautifies, and adorns them; this is seamless, and all of a piece, and has nothing of men's works and services tacked unto it; is enjoyed by a divine lot by some men, and not all, and even such as have been sinful and ungodly; it is pure, perfect, and will last for ever.

Ver. 25. *Now there stood by the cross of Jesus,* &c.] So near as not only to see him, but to hear him speak: *his mother;* the mother of Jesus, Mary; which shewed her affection to Christ, and her constancy in abiding by him to the last; though it must be a cutting sight, and now was fulfilled Simeon's prophecy, Luke ii. 35. to see her son in such agonies and sorrow, and jeered and insulted by the worst of men; and though she herself was exposed to danger, and liable to be abused by the outrageous multitude; and it also shewed that she stood in need, as others, of a crucified Saviour; so far was she from being a co-partner with him in

[f] R. R. in Kimchi in Psal. 22.
[g] R. R. in Jarchi in Psal. 22.
[h] Kimchi & Ben Melech in ib.
[i] Vid. Kimchi & Abendana in ib.
[k] Zohar in Lev. fol. 5. 4. & Imre Bina in ib.

making satisfaction for sin, as the Papists wickedly say: *and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas.* The Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions distinguish Mary the wife of Cleophas from his mother's sister, by placing the copulative *and* between them, and so make two persons; whereas one and the same is intended, and who was the sister of Mary, the mother of Christ; not her own sister, for it is not likely that two sisters should be of the same name; but her husband Joseph's sister, and so her's; or else Cleophas was Joseph's brother, as Eusebius from Hegesippus says[k]: and who was also not the daughter of Cleophas, as the Arabic version has here supplied it; much less the mother of him; but his wife, as is rightly put in our translation: for, according to the other evangelists, she was the mother of James and Joses, and who were the sons of Cleophas or Alpheus; which are not the names of two persons, nor two names of one and the same person, but one and the same name differently pronounced; his true name in Hebrew was חלפי, or חלפאי, or חילפי, *Chelphi*, or *Chelphai*, or *Chilphi*, a name frequently to be met with in Talmudic and Rabbinic writings; and so a Jewish writer[l] observes, that חילפא והוא אילפא, *Chilpha is the same as Ilpha;* and in Greek may be pronounced either Cleophas, or Alpheus, as it is both ways: ignorance of this has led interpreters to form different conjectures, as that either the husband of this Mary had two names; or that she was twice married to two different persons, once to Alpheus, and after his death to Cleophas; or that Cleophas was her father, and Alpheus her husband; for neither of which is there any foundation. She was no doubt a believer in Christ, and came and stood by his cross; not merely to keep her sister company, but out of affection to Jesus, and to testify her faith in him: *and Mary Magdalene;* out of whom he had cast seven devils, and who had been a true penitent, a real believer in him, an hearty lover of him, was zealously attached to him, and followed him to the last. Three Maries are here mentioned as together; and it is observable, that the greater part of those that are taken notice of, as following Christ to the cross, and standing by it, were women, the weaker, and timorous sex, when all his disciples forsook him and fled; and none of them attended at the cross, as we read of, excepting John; no, not even Peter, who boasted so much of his attachment to him. These good women standing by the cross of Christ, may teach us to do, as they did, look upon a crucified Christ, view his sorrows, and his sufferings, and our sins laid upon him, and borne and taken away by him; we should look unto him for pardon, cleansing, and justification, and, in short, for the whole of salvation: we should also weep, as they did, whilst we look on him; shed even tears of affection for, and sympathy with him; of humiliation for sin, and of joy for a Saviour: and likewise should abide by him as they did, by his persons, offices, and grace; by the doctrine of the cross, continuing steadfastly in it; and by the ordinances of Christ, constantly attending on them, and that notwithstanding all reproaches and sufferings we may undergo.

[k] Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. 3. c. 11.

Ver. 26. *When Jesus therefore saw his mother,* &c.] Standing near him, within the reach of his voice, as well as sight, he took notice of her, and shewed a concern for her temporal, as well as for her eternal good: *and the disciple standing by;* either by his cross, or by his mother, or both: *whom he loved:* meaning John, the writer of this Gospel, who for modesty's sake often describes himself in this manner; he being distinguished by Christ from the rest, by some peculiar marks of affection as man; though as God, and as the Redeemer, he loved his disciples alike, as he does all his true and faithful followers: *he saith unto his mother, woman, behold thy son;* meaning not himself, but the disciple, who was her son, not by nature, nor adoption; but who would shew himself as a son, by his filial affection for, care of, honour and respect unto her. Christ calls her not *mother*, but *woman;* not out of disrespect to her, or as ashamed of her; but partly that he might not raise, or add strength to her passions, by a tenderness of speaking; and partly to conceal her from the mob, and lest she should be exposed to their rude insults; as also to let her know that all natural relation was now ceasing between them; though this is a title he sometimes used to give her before.

Ver. 27. *Then saith he to the disciple,* &c.] The same disciple John: *behold thy mother;* take care of her, and provide for her, as if she was thine own mother: this shews the meanness of Christ, who had nothing to leave her, though Lord of all; it is very probable that Joseph was dead, and Mary now a widow; and whereas Christ had taken care of her, and maintained her hitherto, he now, in his dying moments, commits her to the care of this disciple; which is an instance of his humanity, and of his regard to every duty; and this in particular, of honouring parents, and providing for them in distress, and old age: *and from that hour that disciple took her to his own* home: or house; so the Septuagint render ביתו, *to his house,* by εἰς τὰ ἴδια in Esth. vi. 12. the phrase here used, and in chap. xvi. 32. Some say she lived with John at Jerusalem, and there died; and others say, that she died in the twelfth year after the resurrection of Christ, being 59 years of age, and was buried by John in the garden of Gethsemane: where his house was is not certain, whether at Jerusalem or in Galilee, nor how long she lived with him; but this is not to be doubted, that he took care of her, and provided for her, as if she was his own mother; and his doing this forthwith shews his great regard to Christ, his readiness and cheerfulness to comply with his orders and directions, and his unfeigned love unto him.

Ver. 28. *After this,* &c.] After he had committed his mother to the care of John, which was about the sixth hour, before the darkness came over the land: and three hours after this was the following circumstance, which was not without the previous knowledge of Christ: *Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished;* or just upon being accomplished, were as good as finished; and as they were to be, would be in a very short time; even all things relating to his sufferings, and the circumstances of them, which were afore

[l] Juchasin, fol. 92. 1.

appointed by God, and foretold in prophecy, and of which he had perfect knowledge: *that the Scripture might be fulfilled*; might appear to have its accomplishment, which predicted the great drought and thirst that should be on him, Psal. xxii. 15. and that his enemies at such a time would give him vinegar to drink, Psal. lxix. 21. *saith, I thirst;* which was literally true of him, and may be also understood spiritually of his great thirst and eager desire after the salvation of his people.

Ver. 29. *Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar,* &c.] In a place near at hand, as Nonnus observes; not on purpose, for the sake of them that were crucified, either to refresh their spirits, or stop a too great effusion of blood, that they might continue the longer in their misery; but for the use of the soldiers who crucified Christ, vinegar being part of the allowance of Roman soldiers [s], and what they used to drink: sometimes it was mixed with water; which mixed liquor they called *Posca* [t], and was what even their generals sometimes used; as Scipio, Metellus, Trajan, Adrian, and others: vinegar was also used by the Jews for drink, as appears from Ruth ii. 14. *and dip thy morsel in the vinegar,* which Boaz's reapers had with them in the field; *because of heat,* as the commentators say [u]; that being good to cool, and to extinguish thirst; for which reason the soldiers here offer it to Christ; though the Chaldee paraphrase of the above place makes it to be a kind of sauce or pap boiled in vinegar; and such an *Embamma* made of vinegar the Romans had, in which they dipped their food [x]; but this here seems to be pure vinegar, and to be different from that which the other evangelists speak of, which was mingled with gall, or was sour wine with myrrh, Matt. xxvii. 34. Mark xv. 23. Vinegar indeed is good to revive the spirits, and hyssop, which is after mentioned, is an herb of a sweet smell; and if the reed, which the other evangelists make mention of, was the sweet calamus, as some have thought, they were all of them things of a refreshing nature: vinegar was also used for stopping blood [y], when it flowed from wounds in a large quantity; and of the same use were sponges; hence Tertullian [z] mentions *spongias retiariorum,* the sponges of the fencers, which they had with them to stop any effusion of blood that should be made in their exercises; but then it can hardly be thought that these things should be in common prepared at crucifixions for such ends, on purpose to linger out a miserable life a little longer, which would be shocking barbarity; and especially such a provision would never be made at this time, on such an account, since the Jews' sabbath drew nigh, and they were in haste to have the executions over before that came on, that the bodies might not remain on the cross on that day; for which reason they would do nothing, at this time, however, to prolong the lives of the malefactors; wherefore it is most reasonable, that this vessel of vinegar was not set for any such purpose, but was for the use of the soldiers; and therefore this being at hand when Christ signified his thirst, they offered some of it in the following manner: *and they filled a sponge with vinegar;* it being the nature of a sponge (which Nonnus here calls βλαστημα θαλασσης, *a branch of the sea,* because it grows there) to swallow up any thing that is liquid, and which may be again squeezed and sucked out of it; hence the Jews say [a] of it, ספוג שבלע משקין, *the sponge which swallows up liquids;* and used it for such a purpose; *and put it upon hyssop;* meaning not the juice of hyssop, into which some have thought the sponge with vinegar was put, but the herb, and a stalk of it: the other evangelists say, it was put *upon a reed;* meaning either that the sponge with the hyssop were put about a reed, and so given him; or rather it was a stalk of hyssop, which was like a reed or cane; and in this country of Judea grew very large, sufficient for such a purpose. The hyssop with the Jews was not reckoned among herbs, but trees; see 1 Kings iv. 33. and they speak [b] of hyssop which they gather לעצים, *for wood;* the stalks of which therefore must be of some bigness; yea, they call [c] a stalk which has a top to it, קנה, *a reed,* or cane; which observation seems to reconcile the other evangelists with this: and they distinguish their hyssop which was right for use from that which had an epithet joined to it; as, Roman hyssop, Grecian hyssop, wild and bastard hyssop [d]: and some writers [e] observe even of our common hyssop, that it has sometimes stalks of nine inches long, or longer, and hard and woody, nay, even a foot and a half; with one of which a man with his arms stretched out might possibly reach the mouth of a person on a cross: how high crosses usually were is not certain, nor was there any fixed measure for them; sometimes they were higher, and sometimes lower; the cross or gallows made by Haman for Mordecai was very high indeed, and the mouth of a person could not have been reached with an hyssop-stalk; but such an one might, as was erected for Saul's sons, whose bodies on it could be reached by the beasts of the field, 2 Sam. xxi. 10. and so low was the cross on which Blandina the martyr suffered, as the church at Lyons relates [f], when on the cross she was exposed to beasts of prey, and became food for them: so that there is no need to suppose any fault in the text, and that instead of *hyssop* it should be read *hyssos;* which was a kind of javelin the Romans call *Pilum,* about five or six foot long, which, it is supposed, one of the soldiers might have, and on it put the hyssop with the sponge and vinegar; but this conjecture is not supported by any copy, or ancient version; the Syriac version, which is a very ancient one, reads *hyssop.* The Arabic and Persic versions render it, *a reed,* as in the other evangelists; and the Ethiopic version has both, *they filled a sponge with vinegar, and it was set round with hyssop, and they bound*

[s] Julian. Imperator. Epist. 27. p. 161. Vid Lydium de re militari, l. 6. c. 7. p. 245.
[t] Salmuth. in Panciroll. rerum memorab. par. 1. Tit. 52. p. 274.
[u] Jarchi & Aben Ezra in loc.
[x] Salmuth. ib. par. 2. Tit. 2. p. 83.
[y] Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 31. c. 11.
[z] De Spectaculis, c. 25.
[a] Maimon. in Misn. Sabbat, c. 21. sect. 3. Misn. Celim. c. 9. sect. 4.
[b] Misn. Parah, c. 11. sect. 8. Maimon. Hilch. Parah Adumah, c. 11. sect. 7.
[c] Gloss. in T. Bab. Succa, fol. 13. 1.
[d] Misn. Parah, c. 11. sect. 7. Negaim, c. 14. 6. T. Bab. Succa, fol. 13. 1. & Cholin, fol. 62. 2.
[e] Dodonaeus, l. 4. c. 19.
[f] Apud Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. 5. c. 1. p. 161. Vid. Lipsium de Cruce, l. 3. c. 11.

it *upon a reed*; and so some have thought that a bunch of hyssop was stuck round about the sponge of vinegar, which was fastened to the top of a reed; and the words will bear to be rendered, *setting it about with hyssop*: this they might have out of the gardens, which were near this place, or it might grow upon the mountain itself; for we are told [a], it grew in great plenty upon the mountains about Jerusalem, and that its branches were almost a cubit long. Josephus [b] makes mention of a village beyond Jordan called Bethezob, which, as he says, signifies the *house of hyssop*; perhaps so called from the large quantity of hyssop that grew near it: *and put it to his mouth*; whether Christ drank of it or no is not certain; it seems by what follows as if he did; at least he took it, being offered to him: the Jews themselves say [c], that Jesus said, give me a little water to drink, and they gave him חומץ חזק, *sharp vinegar*; which so far confirms the evangelic history.

Ver. 30. *When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar*, &c.] Of the Roman soldiers, who offered it to him, either by way of reproach, or to quench his thirst; and he drank of it, as is very likely: *he said, it is finished*: that is, the whole will of God; as that he should be incarnate, be exposed to shame and reproach, and suffer much, and die; the whole work his father gave him to do, which was to preach the Gospel, work miracles, and obtain eternal salvation for his people, all which were now done, or as good as done; the whole righteousness of the law was fulfilled, an holy nature assumed, perfect obedience yielded to it, and the penalty of death endured; hence a perfect righteousness was finished agreeably to the law, which was magnified and made honourable by it, and redemption from its curse and condemnation secured; sin was made an end of, full atonement and satisfaction for it were given; complete pardon procured, peace made, and redemption from all iniquity obtained; all enemies were conquered; all types, promises, and prophecies were fulfilled, and his own course of life ended: the reason of his saying so was, because all this was near being done, just upon finishing, and was as good as done; and was sure and certain, and so complete, that nothing need, or could be added to it; and it was done entirely without the help of man, and cannot be undone; all which since has more clearly appeared by Christ's resurrection from the dead, his entrance into heaven, his session at God's right hand, the declaration of the Gospel, and the application of salvation to particular persons: *and he bowed his head*; as one dying, and freely submitting to his father's will, and the stroke of death: *and gave up the ghost*; his spirit or soul into the hands of his father; freely laying down that precious life of his which no man could take away from him.

Ver. 31. *The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation*, &c.] That is, either of the passover, as in ver. 14. which was the *Chagigah* or grand festival in which they offered their peace-offerings and slayed their oxen, and feasted together in great mirth and jollity; or of the sabbath, the evening of it, or day before it, as in Mark xv. 42. *that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath-day*; which was now drawing near: according to the Jewish law, Deut. xxi. 22, 23. the body of one that was hanged on a tree was not to remain all night, but to be taken down that day and buried; though this was not always observed; see 2 Sam. xxi. 9, 10. What was the usage of the Jews at this time is not certain; according to the Roman laws, such bodies hung until they were putrefied, or eaten by birds of prey; wherefore that their land might not be defiled, and especially their sabbath, by their remaining on the cross, they desire to have them taken down: *for that sabbath-day was an high day*: it was not only a sabbath, and a sabbath in the passover week, but it was the day in which all the people appeared and presented themselves before the Lord in the temple, and the sheaf of the first-fruits was offered up; all which solemnities meeting together made it a very celebrated day: it is in the original text, *it was the great day of the sabbath*; which is the language of the Talmudists, and who say [d], "נקרא "שבת הגדול, *is called the great sabbath*, on account of "the miracle or sign of the passover;" and in the Jewish Liturgy [e] there is a collect for the *great sabbath*: hence the Jews pretending a great concern lest that day should be polluted, though they made no conscience of shedding innocent blood, *besought Pilate that their legs might be broken*; which was the manner of the Jews [f], partly to hasten death, since, according to their law, the body was to be taken down before night; and partly that it might be a clear point that the person was rightly executed; for this was not the Roman custom, with whom breaking of the legs, or rather thighs, was a distinct punishment, and was done by laying a man's legs or thighs upon an anvil, and striking them with an hammer [g]; which could not be the case here; this seems to have been done by striking the legs of those that were crucified, which were fastened to the cross, with a bar of iron, or some such instrument. Nonnus suggests that their legs were cut off with a saw or sword; but the former seems more reasonable: *and that they might be taken away*; which it seems the Jews had not power to do, but must be done by the Roman soldiers, or by leave at least from the Roman governor; and therefore they make their request to him.

Ver. 32. *Then came the soldiers*, &c.] Pilate having granted the Jews what they desired; either the soldiers that crucified Christ, and the others with him, and watched their bodies, being ordered by Pilate, went from the place where they sat; or a fresh company, which were sent for this purpose, came from the city: *and brake the legs of the first*; they came unto, which whether it was he that was crucified on his right hand, and was the penitent believer in him, as some have thought, is not certain: *and of the other which was crucified with him*; who, if the former is true, must be he that reviled him; and was this their position, it was a lively emblem of the last day, when the sheep

[a] Arabes Lexicograph. apud de Dieu in loc.
[b] De Bello Jud. l. 6. c. 3. sect. 4.
[c] Toldos Jesu, p. 17.
[d] Piske Tosephot Sabbat, art. 314.
[e] Seder Tephillot, fol. 183. 2. &c. Ed. Basil.
[f] Lactantii Divin. Institut. l. 4. c. 26.
[g] Lipsius de Cruce, l. 2. c. 14. p. 110, 114.

shall stand at the right, and the goats on the left hand of Christ.

Ver. 33. *But when they came to Jesus*, &c.] Whom they passed by before, and now returned to; this they did not out of tenderness to him, but that he might be the longer in his torture, and whom they reserved till last, that they might use him with the greater cruelty and barbarity: *and saw that he was dead already;* as they might, from the bowing down of his head, the ghastliness of his countenance, the falling of his jaws, and other signs: *they brake not his legs;* there being no occasion for it, nor would it have answered any end, were they ever so spiteful and malicious against him; though the true reason was, and which restrained them from it, divine providence would not suffer them to do it.

Ver. 34. *But one of the soldiers*, &c.] Whose name some pretend to say was Longinus, and so called from the spear with which he pierced Christ: *with a spear pierced his side;* his left side, where the heart lies; though the painters make this wound on the right, and the Arabic version of Erpenius, as cited by Dr. Lightfoot, adds the word *right* to make the miracle the greater: this the soldier did, partly out of spite to Christ, and partly to know whether he was really dead; and which was so ordered by divine providence, that it might beyond all doubt appear that he really died, and was not taken down alive from the cross; so that there might be no room to call in question the truth of his resurrection, when he should appear alive again: *and forthwith came there out blood and water:* this is accounted for in a natural way by the piercing of the *pericardium*, which contains a small quantity of water about the heart, and which being pierced, a person, if alive, must inevitably die; but it seems rather to be something supernatural, from the asseverations the evangelist makes. This water and blood some make to signify baptism and the Lord's supper, which are both of Christ's appointing, and spring from him, and refer to his sufferings and death; rather they signify the blessings of sanctification and justification, the grace of the one being represented by water, as it frequently is in the Old and New Testament, and the other by blood, and both from Christ: that Christ was the antitype of the rock in the wilderness, the apostle assures us, in 1 Cor. x. 4. and if the Jews are to be believed, he was so in this instance; Jonathan ben Uzziel, in his Targum on Numb. xx. 11. says that "Moses "smote the rock twice, at the first time אטיפת אדמא, "*blood dropped out*: and at the second time abundance "of waters flowed out." The same is affirmed by others [h] elsewhere in much the same words and order.

Ver. 35. *And he that saw it, bare record*, &c.] Meaning himself, John the evangelist, the writer of this Gospel, who, in his great modesty, frequently conceals himself, under one circumlocution or another; he was an eye witness of this fact, not only of the piercing of his side with a spear, but of the blood and water flowing out of it; which he saw with his eyes, and bore record of to others, and by this writing; and was ready to attest it in any form it should be desired: *and his record is true:* though it is not mentioned by any of the other evangelists, none of them but himself being present at that time: *and he knoweth that he saith true;* meaning either God or Christ, who knew all things; and so it is a sort of appeal to God or Christ, for the truth of what he affirmed, as some think; or rather himself, who was fully assured that he was under no deception, and was far from telling an untruth; having seen the thing done with his eyes, and being led into the mystery of it by the Divine Spirit; see 1 John v. 6, 8. wherefore he could, and did declare it with the strongest asseverations: *that ye might believe;* the truth of the fact, and in Christ, both for the expiation of the guilt of sin, and cleansing from the filth of it; both for sanctifying and justifying grace, which the water and the blood were an emblem of.

Ver. 36. *For these things were done*, &c.] The not breaking his bones and piercing his side, and that not by chance, and without design; but, *that the Scripture should be fulfilled, a bone of him shall not be broken:* referring either to Psal. xxxiv. 20. *he keepeth all his bones, not one of them is broken;* which if to be understood of the righteous in general, had a very particular and remarkable accomplishment in Christ; though a certain single person seems to be designed; nor is it true in fact of every righteous man, some of whom have had their bones broken; and such a sense would lead to despair in case of broken bones; for whereas such a calamity befalls them, as well as wicked men, under such an affliction, they might be greatly distressed, and from hence be ready to conclude, that they are not righteous persons, and are not under the care and protection of God, or otherwise this promise would be made good: nor have the words any respect to the resurrection of the dead, as if the sense of it was, that none of the bones of the righteous shall be finally broken; and though they may be broken by men, and in their sight, yet the Lord will raise them again, and restore them whole and perfect at the general resurrection; for this will be true of the wicked, as well as of the righteous: and much less is the meaning of the words, one of his bones shall not be broken, namely, the bone *luz*, the Jews speak of; which, they say [i], remains uncorrupted in the grave, and is so hard that it can't be softened by water, nor burnt in the fire, nor ground in the mill, nor broke with an hammer; by and from which God will raise the whole body at the last day: but the words are to be understood of Christ, he is the poor man that is particularly pointed at in ver. 6. who was poor in his state of humiliation, and who cried unto the Lord, and he heard him, and saved him; and he is the righteous one, whose afflictions were many, and out of which the Lord delivered him, ver. 19. whose providential care of him was very particular and remarkable; he kept his bones from being broken, when others were; and by this incident this passage had its literal fulfilment in him: or else it may refer to the passover lamb, a type of Christ, 1 Cor. v. 7. a bone of which was not to be broken, Exod. xii. 46. Numb. ix. 12. The former of these passages is a command, in the second person, to the

[h] Shemot Rabba, sect. 3. fol. 91. 1. Zohar in Num. fol. 102. 4.

[i] Bereshit Rabba, sect. 28. fol. 23. 3. Vajikra Rabba, sect. 18. fol. 159. 3. Zohar in Gen. fol. 51. 1. & 82. 1.

Israelites, concerning the paschal lamb, *neither shall ye break a bone thereof*: and the latter is delivered in the third person, *nor shall they break any bone of it*: which may be rendered impersonally, *a bone of it*, or *of him, shall not be broken*; or *a bone shall not be broken in him*: and so the Syriac and Persic versions read the words here; and in some copies it is, *a bone shall not be broken from him*; and so read the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions; and he that violated this precept, according to the traditions of the Jews, was to be beaten. Maimonides[k] says, "he that breaks a bone in a pure "passover, lo, he is to be beaten, as it is said, *and a* "*bone ye shall not break in it*: and so it is said of the "second passover, *and a bone ye shall not break in it*; "but a passover which comes with uncleanness, if a "man breaks a bone in it, he is not to be beaten: "from the literal sense it may be learned, that a bone "is not to be broken, whether in a pure or defiled "passover: one that breaks a bone on the night of the "fifteenth, or that breaks a bone in it within the day, "or that breaks one after many days, lo, he is to be "beaten; wherefore they burn the bones of the pass-"over in general, with what is left of its flesh, that "they may not come to damage: none are guilty but "for the breaking of a bone on which there is flesh of "the quantity of an olive, or in which there is mar-"row; but a bone in which there is no marrow, and "on which there is no flesh of the quantity of an olive, "a man is not guilty for breaking it: and if there is "flesh upon it of such a quantity, and he breaks the "bone in the place where there is no flesh, he is guilty, "although the place which he breaks is quite bare of "its flesh: he that breaks after (another) has broken, "is to be beaten." And with these rules agree the following canons[l], "the *bones* and sinews, and what is "left, they burn on the sixteenth day, but if that falls "on the sabbath, they burn them on the seventeenth, "because these do not drive away the sabbath or a "feast-day." And so it fell out this year in which Christ suffered, for the sixteenth was the sabbath-day: again, "he that breaks a bone in a pure passover, lo, "he is to be beaten with forty stripes; but he that "leaves any thing in a pure one, and breaks in an im-"pure one, is not to be beaten with forty stripes;" yea, they say[m], though "it was a little kid and tender, "and whose bones are tender, they may not eat them; "for this is breaking of the bone, and if he eats he "is to be beaten, for it is the same thing whether a "hard or a tender bone be broken." Now in this as in many other respects the paschal lamb was a type of Christ, whose bones were none of them to be broken, to shew that his life was not taken away by men, but was laid down freely by himself; and also the unbroken strength of Christ under the weight of sin, the curse of the law, and wrath of God, and conflict with Satan, when he obtained eternal redemption for us: and also this was on account of his resurrection from the dead, which was to be in a few days; though had his bones been broken he could easily have restored them, but it was the will of God it should be otherwise. Moreover, as none of the bones of his natural body were to be broken, so none that are members of him in a spiritual sense, who are bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh, shall ever be lost.

Ver. 37. *And again another Scripture saith*, &c.] Zech. xii. 10. which as the former is referred to on account of the not breaking of his bones, this is cited as fulfilled by the piercing of his side: *they shall look on him whom they pierced*; in the Hebrew text it is, *upon me whom they have pierced*; the reason of this difference is, because Christ, who is Jehovah, is there speaking prophetically of himself, here the evangelist cites it as fulfilled in him, that is, that part of it which regards the piercing of him; for that of the Jews looking upon him and mourning is yet to be fulfilled, and will be at the time of their conversion in the latter day, and at the day of judgment. And as the piercing of the Messiah has been literally fulfilled in Jesus, there is reason to believe, though the Jews are to this day hardened against him, that that part of the prophecy which concerns their looking to him, and mourning for him on account of his being pierced by them, will also, in God's own time, be fulfilled. Nor is it any objection to the application of this prophecy to our Lord Jesus, that not the Jews, but the Roman soldiers pierced him, since what one does by another, he may be said to do himself: though it was a Roman soldier that pierced the side of Christ, the Jews might desire and urge him to do it; and however, they agreed to it, and were well-pleased with it; and just so Christ is said to be crucified and slain by them; though this was done by the above soldiers, because they prevailed upon Pilate to pass the sentence of death upon him, and to deliver him to the soldiers to be crucified. From the citation of this passage it appears, that the writers of the New Testament did not always follow the Greek version of the Old Testament, which here renders the words very differently, and very wrongly; but John cites them according to the Hebrew text, even which we now have, and which is an instance of the truth, purity, and integrity of the present Hebrew books of the Old Testament. The Jewish doctors[n] themselves own that these words respect the Messiah, though they pretend that Messiah ben Joseph is meant, who shall be slain in the wars of Gog and Magog; for since their disappointment, and the blindness and hardness of heart which have followed it, they feign two Messiahs as expected by them; one Messiah ben David, who they suppose will be prosperous and victorious; and the other Messiah ben Joseph, who will suffer much, and at last be killed.

Ver. 38. *And after this*, &c.] That is, after Jesus had given up the ghost, when it was a clear case that he was dead; as it was before the soldiers came to break the legs of the crucified, and before one of them pierced the side of Jesus with his spear, though that confirmed it: but it seems to be before these last things were done, and yet after the death of Christ, that Joseph of Arimathea went to Pilate, and desired leave to take down the body of Jesus. This Joseph was a counsellor, one of the Jewish sanhedrim; though he

[k] Hilchot Korban Pesach. c. 10. sect. 1, 2, 3, 4.
[l] Misn. Pesachim, c. 7. sect. 10, 11.
[m] Maimon. Korban Pesach. c. 10. sect. 9.

[n] T. Bab. Succa, fol. 52. 1. & ex eodem R. Sol. Jarchi, R. David Kimchi, R. Aben Ezra, & R. Sol. ben Melech. in Zech. xii. 10.

did not give his consent to the counsel of the court concerning Jesus: he is here described by the place of his birth, Arimathea. This place has been generally thought to be the same with Ramah or Ramathaim Zophim, the birth-place of Samuel the prophet; and so I have taken it to be in the note on Matt. xxvii. 57. but there seems to be some reason to doubt about it, since Ramathaim Zophim was in Mount Ephraim, or in the mountainous parts of that tribe, 1 Sam. i. 1. whereas Arimathea is called a city of the Jews, Luke xxiii. 5. But if it was in the tribe of Ephraim, it would rather, as Reland [o] observes, be called a city of the Samaritans, to whom that part of the country belonged; besides, as the same learned writer shews from Judg. iv. 5. 2 Chron. xix. 4. the mountainous parts of Ephraim were about Bethel, to the north of Jerusalem; whereas Arimathea is mentioned along with Lydda, which lay to the west of it, as it is by Jerom, and others: that ancient writer says [p], that not far from Lydda, now called Diospolis, famous for the raising of Dorcas from the dead, and the healing of Æneas, is Arimathia, the little village of Joseph, who buried the Lord; though he makes this elsewhere [q] to be the same with Ramathaim Zophim: his words are, Armatha Zophim, the city of Elkanah and Samuel, is in the region of Thamna by Diospolis, (or Lydda,) from whence was Joseph, who, in the Gospels, is said to be of Arimathia; and so in Josephus [r], and in 1 Maccab. xi. 34. Lydda and Ramatha, or, as in the latter, Ramathem, are mentioned together, as added unto Judea from the country of Samaria; which last clause, *from the country of Samaria*, seems to bid fair for a reconciliation of this matter, that those two are one and the same place: and as the birth-place of Samuel the prophet is called, by the Septuagint, Armathaim, as has been observed on the note on Matt. xxvii. 57. so it is likewise called, רמתא, *Ramatha*, by the Targumist on Hos. v. 8. as it is also by Josephus [s]. The city of this name, near Lydda, is now called Ramola, and is about thirty-six or thirty-seven miles from Jerusalem. The Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions render it, *who was of Rama*. Some take this Joseph to be the same with Joseph ben Gorion, the brother of Nicodemus ben Gorion, and who is supposed to be the same Nicodemus mentioned in the next verse. The character the Jews [t] give of Joseph ben Gorion is, that he was a priest, and of the richest and most noble of the priests in Jerusalem; that he was a very wise, just, and upright man; and that three or four years before the destruction of Jerusalem, he was about sixty-seven years of age. *Being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly, for fear of the Jews*: not one of the twelve, but a private hearer, who had sometimes secretly attended on the ministry of Christ, loved him, and believed in him as the Messiah, but had not courage enough to confess him, and declare for him, for fear of being put out of the synagogue and sanhedrim: but now being inspired with zeal and courage, *went in boldly*, as Mark says, *and besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus*: from off the cross, that it might not be any more insulted by his enemies, and might not be thrown with the other bodies into the place where the bodies of malefactors were cast, but that it might be decently interred. This Pilate, the Roman governor, had the disposal of, and to him Joseph applies for it; which was a great instance of his affection for Christ, and was a declaring openly for him, and must unavoidably expose him to the malice and resentment of the Jews: *and Pilate gave him leave*: having first inquired of the centurion, whether he was dead; of which being satisfied, he readily granted it; not only in complaisance to Joseph, who was a man of note and figure, but on account of the innocence of Jesus, of which he was convinced, and therefore was very willing he should have an honourable burial: *he came therefore*; to the cross, with proper servants with him, *and took the body of Jesus*; down from the cross, and carried it away. The Alexandrian copy, different from all others, and in language uncommon, reads, *the body of God*.

Ver. 39. *And there came also Nicodemus*, &c.] To the cross, at the same time as Joseph did; who, whether they were brethren, as some conjecture, and met here by consent, since one prepared one thing, and another another, for the interment of Christ, is not certain. This Nicodemus is thought to be the same with Nicodemus ben Gorion, the Talmudists speak of, who, they say [u], was one of the three rich men in Jerusalem; as this appears to be a rich man, from the large quantity of myrrh and aloes he brought with him, and which must be very costly. Moreover, they say [w], that he had another name, which was Boni; and they themselves observe [x], that Boni was one of the disciples of Jesus, as this Nicodemus was, though a secret one, as Joseph: this is he *which at the first came to Jesus by night*; who, when Christ first entered on his ministry, or when he first came unto him, came to him by night to discourse with him about his Messiahship, doctrine, and miracles, John iii. 1, 2. for being one of the Pharisees, a ruler of the Jews, and a Rabbi or master in Israel, he was ashamed or afraid to converse publicly with him; however, he went away a disciple; and though he did not openly profess him, he loved him, and believed in him, and now being dead shewed his respect to him: *and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight*: not himself, but by his servants. This mixture of myrrh and aloes together, and which was a very large quantity, and exceeding costly, was not designed for the embalming of his body, and preserving it from putrefaction; for he was not embalmed, though myrrh and cassia and other odours were used in embalming [y]; but for perfuming it, and in honour and respect unto him: it was sweet-smelling myrrh, and an aromatic spice called *aloe* he brought, and not the common aloe. Nonnus calls it the *Indian aloe*, which was of a sweet odour; for which reason it was brought. These are both reckoned with the chief spices, Cant. iv. 14. Myrrh

[o] Palestina Illustrata, l. 2. p. 581.
[p] Epitaph Paulæ, fol. 59. A.
[q] De locis Hebraicis, fol. 88. K.
[r] Antiqu. l. 13. c. 4. sect. 9.
[s] Ib. l. 5. c. 10. sect. 2.
[t] Ganz. Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 25. 1. & 27. 1.
[u] T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 56. 1.
[w] T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 20. 1.
[x] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 43. 1.
[y] Herodotus in Euterpe, c. 86.

was one of the principal spices in the anointing oil and holy perfume, Exod. xxx. 23, 34. It is a kind of gum or resin called *stacte*, that issues either by incision, or of its own accord, out of the body or branches of a tree of this name, which grows in Arabia and Egypt; and being of an agreeable smell, was used at funerals: hence those words of Martial [z]——*& olentem funera myrrham:* and so Nazianzen, speaking of his brother Cæsarius, says [a], "he lies dead, friendless, desolate, "miserable, σμυρνης ολιγης ηξιωμενος, *favoured with a little "myrrh.*" And so the aloe was used to perfume, and to give a good scent, Prov. vii. 17. and Christ's garments are said to smell of myrrh, aloes, and cassia, Psal. xlv. 8. Some have thought, that this was a mixture of the juice of myrrh, and of the juice of the aloe-plant, and was a liquid into which the body of Christ was put: but this will not so well agree with the winding of the body in linen, with these in the next verse, where they are called spices. A Jew [b] objects to this relation of the evangelist as unworthy of belief: he affirms, that this was enough for two hundred dead bodies, and that it could not be carried with less than the strength of a mule, and therefore not by Nicodemus. In answer to which, it is observed by Bishop Kidder [c], that we having nothing but the Jew's own word for it, that this was enough for two hundred bodies, and a load for a mule; and that it should be told what was the weight of the λίτρα, or pound, mentioned by the evangelist, ere the force of the objection can be seen; and that it is a thing well known, that among the Jews the bodies of great men were buried with a great quantity of spices: 'tis said of Asa, that *they buried him in his own sepulchre which he had made for himself, in the city of David, and laid him in the bed which was filled with sweet odours, and divers kinds of spices*, 2 Chron. xvi. 14. To which may be added, what is before observed, that this was not brought by Nicodemus himself, but by his servants; and what they did by his orders, and he coming along with them, he may be said to do. Just as Joseph is said to take down the body of Jesus from the cross, wind it in linen, and carry it to his sepulchre, and there bury it; this being done by his servants, at his orders, or they at least assisting in it; and as Pilate is said to put the title he wrote upon the cross, though it was done by others, at his command.

Ver. 40. *Then took they the body of Jesus*, &c.] It being taken down from the cross, and carried to the designed place of interment; they, Joseph and Nicodemus, either themselves, or by their servants, took the body; *and wound it in linen clothes:* or *swathed*, or *wrapped it in linen:* rolled it about the body many times, as was the custom of the eastern nations to do; this was what Joseph prepared: *with the spices;* which they either wrapped up with the linen, or strowed over the body when it was wound up; these Nicodemus brought; *as the manner of the Jews is to bury:* both was usual with them; both to wind up the dead in linen; hence R. Jonathan, alluding to this custom, when R. Isai was taken, and others would have delivered him, said, יכרך המת בסדינו, *let the dead be wrapt in his own linen* [d]; and also to bury them with spices; hence we read of *the spices of the dead* in a Jewish canon [e]: "they don't say a blessing over a "lamp, nor over the spices of idolaters; nor over a "lamp, nor over הבשמים של מתים, *the spices of the "dead:*" the use of which, Bartenora on the place says, was to drive away an ungrateful smell. The wrapping up the body of Christ in a fine linen cloth, was a token of his purity and innocence; and significative of that pure and spotless righteousness he had now brought in: the strowing it with spices may denote the fragrancy of Christ's death to Jehovah the father, in whose sight it was precious, and whose sacrifice to him is of a sweet-smelling savour; and also to all sensible sinners, to whom a crucified Christ is precious; since by his death sin is expiated, the law fulfilled, justice satisfied, reconciliation made, security from condemnation obtained, and death is abolished.

Ver. 41. *Now in the place where he was crucified*, &c.] Which takes in all that spot of ground that lay on that side of the city where he was crucified; or near to the place of his crucifixion, for it was not a garden in which he was crucified: *there was a garden;* all gardens, except rose-gardens, were without the city, as has been observed on ch. xviii. 1. This, it seems, belonged to Joseph: rich men used to have their gardens without the city for their convenience and pleasure: *and in the garden a new sepulchre;* they might not bury within the city. Some chose to make their sepulchres in their gardens, to put them in mind of their mortality, when they took their walks there; so R. Dustai, R. Jannai, and R. Nehurai, were buried, בפרדס, *in a garden*, or orchard [f]; and so were Manasseh and Amon, kings of Judah, 2 Kings xxi. 18, 26. Here Joseph had one, hewn out in a rock, for himself and family, and was newly made. The Jews distinguish between an old, and a new sepulchre; they say [g], "קבר חדש, *a new sepulchre* may be measured and sold, "and divided, but an old one might not be measured, "nor sold, nor divided." *Wherein was never man yet laid;* this is not improperly, nor impertinently added, though the evangelist had before said, that it was a new sepulchre; for that it might be, and yet bodies have been lain in it; for according to the Jewish canons [h], "there is as a new sepulchre, which is an old one; and "there is an old one, which is as a new one; an old se-"pulchre, in which lie ten dead bodies, which are not "in the power of the owners, הרי זה כקבר חדש, *lo, this "is as a new sepulchre.*" Now Christ was laid in such an one, where no man had been laid, that it might appear certainly that it was he, and not another, that was risen from the dead.

Ver. 42. *There laid they Jesus therefore*, &c.] Because it was a new sepulchre, and no man had been ever laid there before; and some other reasons are added: *because of the Jews' preparation-day;* either for the Chagigah, or the sabbath, which was just at hand;

[z] L. 11. Epigr. 35.
[a] Epist. 18. p. 781. Tom. I.
[b] Jacob Aben Amram, porta veritatis N°. 1040. apud Kidder, Demonstration of the Messiah, part 3. p. 65, 66. Ed. fol.
[c] Ib.
[d] T. Hieros. Terumot, fol. 46. 2.
[e] Misn. Beracot. c. 8. sect. 6.
[f] Juchas haabot, p. 43. Ed. Hottinger.
[g] Massech. Semacot, c. 24. fol. 16. 3.
[h] Ib.

the Persic version reads, *the night of the sabbath:* for this reason, they could not dig a grave purposely for him; for it was forbidden on feast-days; and therefore they put him into a tomb ready-made: the canon runs[i], "they may not dig pits, וקברות, *nor graves*, on a solemn feast-day." The former of these, the commentators say[k], are graves dug in the earth, and the latter edifices built over graves; and for the same reason, because it was such a day, they did not take his body to any of their houses, and embalm and anoint it, as they otherwise would have done: but this being a solemn day, and the sabbath drawing on apace, they hastened the interment, and took the most opportune place that offered: *for the sepulchre was nigh at hand;* some say about an hundred and eight feet from the cross, and others an hundred and thirty feet, though some say but fifty or sixty, at furthest it was not far off.

CHAP. XX.

Ver. 1. *THE first day of the week*, &c.] On the sixth day of the week, towards the close of it, Christ was interred; he lay in the grave all the seventh day, and on the first day of the week rose from the dead: so the women, after they had observed where the body was laid, went home and prepared spices and ointments, to anoint it; but the sabbath coming on, they were prevented; on which they rested, according to the Jewish law: but as soon as it was over, *cometh Mary Magdalene;* not alone, but other women with her; who had attended Christ at the cross, observed where he was buried, and had prepared spices to anoint him, and now came for that purpose; for not merely to see the sepulchre, and weep at the grave, did she with the rest come, but to perform this piece of funeral service: *early, when it was yet dark;* as it was when she set out, the day just began to dawn; though by that time she got to the sepulchre, the sun was rising: *unto the sepulchre;* where she saw the body of Jesus laid by Joseph, in a tomb of his, and in his garden: by whose leave, it is probable, being asked over night, she with her companions were admitted: *and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre:* which Joseph rolled there, and the Pharisees sealed and set a watch to observe it. This was removed by an angel; for though Christ himself could easily have done it, it was proper it should be done by a messenger from heaven, by the order of divine justice, who had laid him as a prisoner there. Mary's coming so early to the grave, shews her great love and affection to Christ, her zeal, courage, and diligence, in manifesting her respect unto him: and oftentimes so it is, that the greatest sinners, when converted, are most eminent for grace, particularly faith, love, and humility; and are most diligent in the discharge of duty.

Ver. 2. *Then she runneth and cometh to Simon Peter*, &c.] That is, after she had not only seen that the stone was took away, but had looked into the sepulchre, and saw that the body of Christ was removed; for otherwise she could not have said, that it was took away out of it: upon which she made all the haste she could to Peter; who, where he was she knew; and she was particularly bid by the angel she saw in the sepulchre, to go to him: *and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved:* John the writer of this Gospel; for these two were together, as they usually were; nor were they alone, for the rest of the disciples were with them: *and saith unto them, they have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him.* The Oriental versions, the Syriac, Arabic, Persic, and Ethiopic, read, *I know not where they have laid him;* who they were that had taken the body of Christ away, whether friends or enemies, she could not say; nor did she, or any of the women that were with her, know where it was put; whether in some other grave, or was exposed to the insults of men, or to birds and beasts of prey; whether it was laid in a more suitable and convenient place, or in a scandalous one; and whether this removal was for his greater honour, or reproach; to know this, gave her great concern and uneasiness, as she knew it must the disciples also: so Christ, in a spiritual sense, may be removed from his people for a time, and they know not where he is; sometimes he removes himself, to chastise them for their former carriage, to try and exercise their grace, to inflame their love to him, and sharpen their desires after him, and to endear his presence to them the more, when they enjoy it again; sometimes he is taken away from them by preachers, when they leave him out of their discourses; and by their own sins and transgressions, which separate between him and them, with respect to communion; and who, for a time, may not know where to find him: and for the direction of such it may be observed, that he is to be found in the ministration of his word and ordinances in his churches.

Ver. 3. *Peter therefore went forth*, &c.] Out of the house where he was, upon hearing the account Mary gave: *and that other disciple:* John, the Evangelist and Apostle; the rest of the disciples staying at home and continuing together, waiting to hear what account these two would bring: *and came to the sepulchre;* to see with their own eyes what was done, and whether things were as Mary had related; and to make a more particular inquiry into, and examination of them.

Ver. 4. *So they ran both together*, &c.] At first setting out, and for a while; not content to walk, they ran, being eagerly desirous to know the truth of things: *and that other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre;* John was a younger man than Peter, and so more nimble, and swift of foot, and got to the sepulchre before him; and besides, had not that concern of mind to retard him, Peter might have; as,

[i] Misn. Moed Katon, c. 1. sect. 6.

[k] Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

supposing Christ was risen, and he should see him, how he should be able to look him in the face, whom he had so shamefully denied.

Ver. 5. *And he stooping down and looking in,* &c.] That is, John: when he came to the sepulchre, stooped down to look into it, and see what he could see: he only went into the court, or stood upon the floor, where the bearers used to set down the bier, before they put the corpse into one of the graves in the sepulchre, which were four cubits lower; see the note on Mark xvi. 5. Hence he was obliged to stoop down, ere he could see any thing within: when he *saw the linen clothes lying:* in which the body had been wrapped, but that itself not there: *yet went he not in:* to the sepulchre itself, but waited in the court or porch, till Peter came; and perhaps might be timorous and fearful of going into such a place alone; the Arabic version reads it, *he dared not go in.*

Ver. 6. *Then cometh Simon Peter following him,* &c.] In a very little time after him: *and went into the sepulchre;* itself, though not without first stooping down, as John did; see Luke xxiv. 12. *And seeth the linen clothes lie;* as John did; and as by the mouth of two or three witnesses every thing is confirmed, so was this; both saw the linen in which the body was wrapped, but that was gone; and which was a sign that the body was not stolen away, otherwise the linen would not have been left; and besides, it would have taken up some time, and given a good deal of trouble, to have unwrapped the body, when 'tis considered how many foldings the Jews used to wind up their corpse in.

Ver. 7. *And the napkin that was about his head,* &c.] The word σουδάριον, rendered *napkin,* is thought to be originally Latin, and signifies an handkerchief, with which the sweat is wiped off the face, and so it is used in Acts xix. 12. but Nonnus says it is a common word with the Syrians, and the word סודרא is used in the Syriac version; and which he renders, κεφαλῆς ζώστρα, *the girdle,* or *binding of the head,* for with this the head and face of the dead person were bound; see John xi. 44. Now Peter, by going into the sepulchre, and looking about him, and examining things more strictly and narrowly, observed that which neither he nor John had taken notice of, when only stooping they looked in; and that is, that this head-binder, or napkin, was *not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself:* and was plainly the effect of thought, care, and composure; and clearly shewed, that the body was not taken away in a hurry, or by thieves, since every thing lay in such order and decency; and which was done, either by our Lord himself, or by the angels.

Ver. 8. *Then went in also the other disciple,* &c.] John, being animated by the example of Peter, went down into the sepulchre likewise; whither Peter also might beckon, or call him, to be witness with him of the order and situation in which things lay: *which came first to the sepulchre;* yet went last into it; so it was, that the first was last, and the last first: *and he saw;* the linen clothes lie in one place, and the napkin folded up in order, lying by itself in another: *and believed:* that the body was not there, but either was taken away, or was raised from the dead; but whether as yet he believed the latter is doubtful, by what follows; unless what follows is considered as an illustration, especially of the faith of John, that he should believe the resurrection of Christ, though till now he did not know nor understand the Scriptures that spake of it.

Ver. 9. *For as yet they knew not the Scripture,* &c.] Meaning not some particular passage of Scripture, but the writings of the Old Testament in general, and the various places in it, which spoke of the resurrection of Christ, either in a way of type, or prophecy; such as Gen. xxii. 3, 4. x. 13. Jonas ii. 17. Psal. xvi. 10. Hos. vi. 2. Isa. xxvi. 19. and though our Lord had often referred to some of them, at least as in Matt. xii. 40. and xvi. 21. and xx. 16. yet such was the dulness of the disciples, or such their prejudices in favour of the Messiah being to continue, and set up a temporal kingdom, that even John, who leaned on his breast, and Peter, who was so inquisitive and desirous of knowing our Lord's meaning in every thing, did not understand the sense of his words, nor of those places of Scripture he had reference to: *that he must rise again from the dead:* so it was determined, thus it was predicted, and the justification and salvation of God's elect required it; and yet they knew not the thing, nor the necessity and importance of it.

Ver. 10. *Then the disciples,* &c.] Peter and John, after they had seen and examined things, and satisfied themselves as much as they could: *went away again unto their own home;* or *to themselves,* as in the original text, and so the Vulgate Latin reads it; not that the meaning is, that they had been out of their minds, and proper exercise of them, and now came to themselves; but they returned to their own company, to the rest of the disciples they left at home, who were as themselves. The Syriac renders it, לדוכתהון, *to their own place,* and so the Arabic and Persic versions; the place from whence they came, and where the rest were assembled together, to pray, converse, and consult together, what was to be done at this juncture.

Ver. 11. *But Mary stood without at the sepulchre,* &c.] She returned from the city to the sepulchre again, following Peter and John thither, who continued here when they departed, being willing to get some tidings of her Lord, if possible. The word *without,* is omitted by the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions, but is in the Greek copies; and is properly put by the evangelist, when rightly understood; for the meaning is not, that she stood without the sepulchre, taken in its full extent; for she stood, בחצר, *in the court,* where the bearers set down the corpse, in order to carry it into the cave, or vault; she stood without the innermost part of the sepulchre, but not without-side the sepulchre itself; as appears from her stooping and looking into it: *weeping;* that the body of her dear Lord was taken away, and she prevented of shewing that respect unto it she designed; and not knowing in whose hands it was, but fearing it would be insulted and abused by wicked men, her heart was ready to break with sorrow: *and as she wept, she stooped down and looked into the sepulchre;* to see if she could see him, if she and the disciples were not mistaken, being loth to go without finding him: so it is in a spiritual sense, the absence of Christ is cause of great distress and sorrow to gracious souls; because of the excellency of his person, the near and dear relations he stands in to them; and on account of the nature of his presence and company, which is preferable to every thing in this world; nor

can such souls, when they have lost sight of Christ, sit down contented; but will seek after him in the Scriptures, under the ministry of the word, and at the ordinances of the Gospel, where a crucified, buried, risen Jesus is exhibited.

Ver. 12. *And seeth two angels in white*, &c.] Matthew and Mark speak but of one, but Luke of two, as here; whom he calls *men*, because they appeared in an human form, and in shining garments, or white apparel; and which appearance is entirely agreeable to the received notion of the Jews, that as evil angels or devils are clothed in black, so good angels, or ministering spirits, לבושי לבנים, *are clothed in white*[1], expressive of their spotless purity and innocence: *sitting the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain;* in what position the body of Christ was laid, whether from west to east, as some, or from north to south, as others, is not certain; since the Jews observed no rule in this matter, as appears from the form of their sepulchres, and the disposition of the graves in them; some lying one way, and some another, in the same vault; see the note on Luke xxiv. 12.

Ver. 13. *And they say unto her, woman, why weepest thou?* &c.] Signifying, that she had no reason to weep, but to rejoice and be glad; since, though the body of her Lord was not there, yet he was risen from the dead, and was alive. This they said, partly to rebuke her for her grief, and to comfort her under it: Beza's ancient copy adds here, as in ver. 15. *whom seekest thou?* and so does the Ethiopic version: *she saith unto them;* without any concern of mind about what they were, and as if they had been of the human kind; for her grief made her fearless, and she cared not who she opened the case to, so that she could get any relief, and any tidings of her Lord: *because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him;* and which she thought was reason sufficient for her weeping; could she but have known, that if he was taken away, it was by his friends, and was well used, and she could have had the opportunity of paying her last respects to him, it would have been a satisfaction; but nothing short of this could dry up her tears.

Ver. 14. *And when she had thus said*, &c.] As soon as the words were out of her mouth, before she could have an answer from the angels: *she turned herself back;* perceiving, either by the looks and gesture of one of the angels, or by hearing a noise, that somebody was behind her: *and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus;* she saw a person, but did not know who he was, by reason of the form of his appearance, the difference of his clothes, and not expecting to see him alive; or through modesty, she might not look wistfully at him; and besides, her eyes were filled with tears, and swoln with weeping; so that she could not see clearly; and her eyes might be holden also, as the disciples were, that as yet she might not know him: so sometimes, in a spiritual sense, Christ is with, and near his people, and they know it not: Christ, as God, is omnipresent; he is every where, and in all places; the spiritual presence of Christ, is more or less, in some way or another, always in all his churches, and among his dear people; but the sight of him is not always alike to them, nor does he appear to them always in the same form; sometimes against them, at least in their apprehensions, nor always in a manner agreeably to their expectations; nor is his grace always discovered in the same way, nor has it the same effect.

Ver. 15. *Jesus saith unto her, woman, why weepest thou*, &c.] The same question he puts to her, as was put by the angels: adding, *whom seekest thou?* for she was not only weeping for the loss of him, but was inquiring after him, if any one saw him removed from thence, and where he was carried: *she supposing him to be the gardener;* that had the care of the garden, in which the sepulchre was; for not the owner of the garden, who was Joseph, but the keeper of it is meant; she could not imagine that Joseph should be there so early in the morning, but might reasonably think the gardener was: *saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away;* she addresses him, though she took him to be but the gardener, in a very civil and courteous manner; which was rightly judged, especially since she had a favour to ask of him: she does not mention the name of her Lord, but imagined he knew who she meant, being so lately buried there; and suggests, that perhaps it might not have been so agreeable to the gardener to have his body lie there, and therefore had removed it; and would he but be so kind as to let her know where he was put, she, with the assistance of her friends hard by, would take him away with them: so in a spiritual sense, a truly gracious soul is willing to do any thing, and to be at any trouble, so that it may but enjoy Christ; it dearly loves him, as this good woman did; it early, and earnestly, and with its whole heart, seeks after him, as she did; and absence of him, or loss of his presence for a while, sharpens the desire after him, and makes his presence the more welcome.

Ver. 16. *Jesus saith unto her, Mary*, &c.] He might alter the tone of his voice, and speak unto her as he used to do, calling her by her name in his usual manner: so Christ has personal knowledge of all his people, and can call them by name; he knows them, and makes himself known to them, before they can know him; and though he may absent himself from them for a while, yet not always: *she turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni, which is to say, Master;* it seems, as if she had dropped her conversation with the supposed gardener at once, and scarce waited for an answer from him, but turns herself to the angels again, if she could hear any tidings from them; acting like a person in the utmost distress, hurry and confusion; looking this way and that way, to this or the other person: and now upon Christ's speaking to her, in this plain, familiar manner, she turns herself again; when fully knowing him, she addresses him with the greatest faith and affection, reverence and humility; calling him her Lord and master, and throws herself at his feet: thus when Christ is pleased to manifest himself to his people, there goes a power along with his word, making himself known; and a word from Christ, attended with divine power, will give a soul a turn to him from the most excellent creatures, even angels; and when Christ is known, he'll be acknowledged with all love, humility,

[1] Gloss. in T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 72. 1.

and obedience. The word Rabboni, is of the Chaldee and Syriac form, and signifies *my Lord*, or *master;* and is commonly applied to one that has a despotic power over another: though all the Oriental versions say, that she spoke to him in Hebrew. The Syriac and Ethiopic, *Rabboni*, but the Arabic and Persic, *Rabbi*. The titles of Rab, Rabbi, and Rabban, are frequent with the Jewish doctors; who say [m], that Rabbi is greater than Rab, and Rabban is greater than Rabbi; and a man's own name greater than Rabban: but the word in the form here used Rabbon, I don't remember ever to have observed applied to any of the doctors; but is frequently used of the Divine Being, who, in their prayers, is often addressed in this manner, רבונו של עולם, *Lord of the world* [n]. I conjecture therefore, that Mary used this word, as expressive of her faith in his power and Godhead, seeing him alive from the dead; though it might be a name she was used to call him by before, being convinced from what he had done to her, and by the miracles she had observed performed by him on others, of his proper deity; as the poor blind man expresses his faith in the power of Christ to cure him, by addressing him in the same language, using the same word, Mark x. 51.

Ver. 17. *Jesus saith unto her, touch me not,* &c.] Not that his body was an aërial one, or a mere *phantom*, which could not be touched; the prohibition itself shews the contrary; and besides, Christ's body was afterwards presented to Thomas, to be touched by him, and to be handled by all the disciples; and his feet were held by the women, which is what Mary would have now done: upon the discovery of him, she threw herself at his feet, and was going to embrace and kiss them, to testify her affection and joy, when she is forbid; not as unworthy of the favour, because she sought him among the dead, for which the angels reproved her and the rest; but either because he was not to be conversed with, as before his death, his body being raised immortal and glorious; or rather, because he had an errand to send her on to his disciples, which required haste; nor need she stay now to shew her respect to him, since she would have opportunity enough to do that, before his ascension; which though it was to be quickly, yet not directly and immediately; and this seems to be the sense of our Lord's reason: *for I am not yet ascended to my father;* nor shall I immediately go to him; I shall make some stay upon earth; as he did, forty days before his ascension; when he intimates, she might see him again, and familiarly converse with him; at present he would have her stay no longer with him: *but go to my brethren;* this he says, to shew that their carriage to him, being denied by one of them, and forsaken by them all, and the glory he was raised unto, as all this made no alteration in their relation to him, so neither in his affection to them: Mary was a very proper person to be sent unto them, since she had lately been with them, and knew where they were all assembled together: *and say unto them;* as from himself, personating him as it were: *I ascend unto my father and your father, and to my God and your God;* God was his father, not by creation, as he is to angels, and the souls of men, and therefore is called the father of spirits; nor by adoption, as he is to the saints; nor with respect to the incarnation of Christ, for, as man, he had no father; or with regard to his office as Mediator, for as such he was a servant, and not a son; but he was his father by nature, or with regard to his divine person, being begotten of him, and so his own proper son, and he his own proper father; which hold forth the natural and eternal sonship of Christ, his equality with him, and distinction from him: and God was the father of his disciples by adopting grace, in virtue of the covenant of grace made with Christ, and through their spiritual relation to him, as the natural and eternal son of God: God the father is the God of Christ as man, who prepared, formed, anointed, supported, and glorified his human nature; and in which nature, he prayed to him as his God, believed in him, loved and obeyed him as such; wherefore the Jew [o] very wrongly infers from hence, that he is not God, because the God of Israel was his God; since this is spoken of him as he is man: and he was the God of his disciples, in and by the covenant of grace made with Christ, as their head and representative; so that their interest in God, as their covenant God and father, was founded upon his being the God and father of Christ, and their relation to, and concern with him; and which therefore must be firm and lasting, and will hold as long as God is the God and father of Christ: this was good news to be brought to his disciples; which, as it carried the strongest marks of affection, and expressions of nearness of relation; and implied, that he was now risen from the dead; so it signified, that he should ascend to God, who stood in the same relation to them, as to him; when he should use all his interest and influence on their behalf, whilst they were on earth; and when the proper time was come for a remove, that they might be with him, and with his God and father and theirs, where they would be to all eternity.

Ver. 18. *Mary Magdalene came,* &c.] Directly and immediately, being ready and willing to obey the commands of her Lord, with the utmost cheerfulness; and glad to go on such an errand, and carry such news to his disciples, even though her private interest and personal affection might have inclined her to desire to stay with Christ: *and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord;* not only that he was risen from the dead, and she had been told so by the angels, but she had seen him herself, and was an eye-witness of his resurrection, and which she firmly believed; this she said, not only with all the marks of pleasure, joy and transport, but with an air of assurance and confidence: *and that he had spoken these things unto her;* as that he called them brethren, and bid her go unto them, and acquaint them, that as he was risen, he should in a short time ascend to his father and theirs, to his God and theirs; all which she faithfully related to them.

Ver 19. *Then the same day at evening,* &c.] The same day Christ rose from the dead, and appeared to Mary; at the evening of that day, after he had been with the two disciples to Emmaus, about eight miles

[m] Halichot Olam Tract. 1. c. 3. p. 25.
[n] T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 20. 1. Sanhedrin, fol. 94. 1. Abot R. Nathan, c. 9. Bereshit Rabba, sect. 8. fol. 6. 4.

[o] R. Isaac Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 58. p. 446.

from Jerusalem, and they had returned again to the rest; and after there had been such a bustle all day in Jerusalem, about the body of Jesus; the soldiers that watched the sepulchre, giving out, by the direction of the elders, that the disciples of Christ had stolen away the body, while they slept: *being the first day of the week*; as is said in ver. 1. and here repeated, to prevent any mistake; and that it might be clear what day it was the disciples were assembled together, and Christ appeared to them: *when the doors were shut*: the doors of the house where they were, which 'tis plain was in Jerusalem, Luke xxiv. 33. but whether it was the house where Christ and his disciples ate the passover together, or whether it was John's home or house, to which he took the mother of Christ, since he and Peter, and the rest, seem to be afterwards together in one place, is not certain: however, the doors were shut: which is not merely expressive of the time of night, when this was usually done; but signifies that they were really locked and bolted, and barred, for which a reason is given as follows: *where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews*: after their scattering abroad upon the taking of Christ, and after his crucifixion was over; and especially after the report of his body being took away, they gathered together, and made fast the doors of the place, lest the Jews should come in upon them, and surprise them; for they might fear, that since they had took away their master's life, theirs must go next; and especially since it was rumoured abroad that they had stole away his body, they might be under the greater fear, that search would be made after them, and they be apprehended and brought into trouble on that account: *came Jesus and stood in the midst of them*; on a sudden, at once, and when they had no thought or fear of any one's coming upon them, without some previous notice; but he being the Almighty God, did, by his omnipotent power, cause the bars and bolts, and doors, in the most secret and unobserved manner, to give way to him, and let him in at once among them: when as a presage and pledge of the accomplishment of his promise to be with, and in the midst of his, when met together, either in private or public, he stood and presented himself in the midst of them: and to let them know at once he was no enemy, *he saith unto them, peace be unto you*: שלום לכם, *peace be unto you*, is an usual form of salutation among the Jews; see Gen. xliii. 23. expressive of all prosperity in soul and body, inward and outward, spiritual and temporal; and here may have a special regard to that peace he said he gave unto them, and left with them, upon his departure from them; and which he had obtained by the blood of his cross, and now preached unto them.

Ver. 20. *And when he had so said*, &c.] The above salutation, in the most kind, tender, and affectionate manner: and to put them out of all pain, and that they might know certainly who he was, *he shewed them his hands and his side*: his hands, which had been pierced with the nails, the marks of which were then to be seen; and which they all knew must be the case, since he was crucified; and his side, which was pierced with a spear, and which left a wide open wound, and which John, who was among them, was an eye-witness of. These he shewed, partly to convince them that he was not a spirit, or an apparition, which at first sight they took him to be, from his sudden appearance among them, the doors being locked and barred; and partly to assure them of the truth of his resurrection, and in the same body, as well as to lead them into a view of his great love in suffering the death of the cross for them; and also to observe to them from whence that peace and happiness sprung he had just now saluted them with. 'Tis needless to inquire, whether these marks in his hands, feet, and side, still continue; he was raised with them, that he might shew them, for the reasons above given; and should they be thought to continue till all the effects of his death are wrought, since he appears in the midst of the throne and elders, a lamb, as it had been slain, and till his second coming, when they that pierced his hands and feet, and side, shall look and mourn, it is not very unreasonable: *then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord*: for by these marks in his hands and feet, and side, they were fully convinced, and entirely satisfied, that it was he; and that he was risen from the dead; and who now appeared to them, than which a more delightful sight could not be enjoyed by them; whereby was fulfilled, what he had foretold and promised, ch. xvi. 22. So a spiritual sight of Christ is always rejoicing to a disciple of his; that is, one that has learned of Christ, and learned Christ, who has believed in him, and is enabled to deny sinful, righteous, civil, worldly, and natural self, for Christ; and is made willing to take up the cross, bear it, and follow after him: a sight of Christ as God and man, of his personal beauties and excellencies, of his fulness and suitableness, as a Saviour and Redeemer, and so as to have sensible communion with him, is exceeding delightful to such an one; especially when under a sense of sin, when accused or tempted by Satan, or when Christ has been long absent, or when under affliction, and on a death-bed; for Christ is a believer's all; he stands in all relations to him; and such a soul never sees Christ aright, but it receives something from him.

Ver. 21. *Then said Jesus to them again*, &c.] The words he said before: *peace be unto you*; which he repeated, to put them out of their fright, by reason of which they returned him no answer; and to raise and engage their attention to what he was about to say: and to pacify their consciences, distressed with a sense of their conduct towards him; and with a view to the Gospel of peace, he was now going to send them to preach: *as my father hath sent me, even so send I you*: Christ's mission of his disciples, supposes power in him, honour done to them, authority put upon them, qualifications given them, and hence success attended them; what they were sent to do, was to preach the Gospel, convert sinners, build up saints, plant churches, and administer ordinances. The pattern of their mission, is the mission of Christ by his father, which was into this world, to do his will, preach the Gospel, work miracles, and obtain eternal redemption for his people; and which mission does not suppose inferiority in his divine person, nor change of place, but harmony and agreement between the father and son: the likeness of these missions

lies in these things; their authority is both divine; they are both sent into the same place, the world; and in much the same condition, mean, despicable, hated and persecuted; and in part for the same end, to preach the Gospel, and work miracles, for the confirmation of it; but not to obtain redemption, that being a work done solely by Christ; in which he has no partner, and to whom the glory must be only ascribed.

Ver. 22. *And when he had said this,* &c.] That is, declared he sent them forth in like manner as his father sent him: *he breathed on them;* in allusion to God's breathing the breath of life into man, at his creation; or rather, to the spirit himself, who is the breath of God, and proceeds from him, as from the father; and who breathes both upon persons in regeneration, and in qualifying for ministerial service, at the instance and influence of Christ: and such an opinion the Jews have of the spirit of the Messiah, who say [p], that "the spirit went from between the wings of the "cherubim, ונשביה, *and breathed upon him (Menasseh)* "by the decree, or order of the word of the Lord." *And saith unto them, receive ye the Holy Ghost:* meaning not the grace of the Holy Ghost in regeneration, which they had received already; but the gifts of the spirit, to qualify them for the work he now sent them to do, and which were not now actually bestowed; but this breathing on them, and the words that attended it, were a symbol, pledge, and confirmation, of what they were to receive on the day of Pentecost: hence it appears, that it is the spirit of God, who, by his gifts and grace, makes and qualifies men to be ministers of the Gospel; and our Lord by this action, and these words, gives a very considerable proof of his deity: the Papists shew their impudence and wickedness, in imitating Christ by their insufflations, or breathing on men; pretending thereby to convey the Holy Spirit to them.

Ver. 23. *Whose soever sins ye remit,* &c.] God only can forgive sins, and Christ being God, has a power to do so likewise; but he never communicated any such power to his apostles; nor did they ever assume any such power to themselves, or pretend to exercise it; it is the mark of antichrist, to attempt any thing of the kind; who, in so doing, usurps the divine prerogative, places himself in his seat, and shews himself as if he was God: but this is to be understood only in a doctrinal, or ministerial way, by preaching the full and free remission of sins, through the blood of Christ, according to the riches of God's grace, to such as repent of their sins, and believe in Christ; declaring, that all such persons as do so repent and believe, all their sins are forgiven for Christ's sake: and accordingly, *they are remitted unto them:* in agreement with Christ's own words, in his declaration and commission to his disciples; see Mark xvi. 16. Luke xxiv. 47. On the other hand he signifies, that *whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained:* that is, that whatsoever sins ye declare are not forgiven, they are not forgiven; which is the case of all final unbelievers, and impenitent sinners; who dying without repentance towards God, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, according to the Gospel declaration, shall be damned, and are damned; for God stands by, and will stand by and confirm the Gospel of his son, faithfully preached by his ministering servants; and all the world will sooner or later be convinced of the validity, truth, and certainty, of the declarations on each of these heads, made by them.

Ver. 24. *But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus,* &c.] The person here spoken of, is described by his Hebrew name Thomas, and his Greek one Didymus, which both signify a twin; and perhaps he was one. It was common with the Jews to have two names, a Jewish and a Gentile one; by the one they went in the land of Israel, and by the other when without the land [q]; nay, they often went by one name in Judea, and by another in Galilee [r]; where Thomas might go by the name of Didymus with the Greeks, that might inhabit with the Jews in some of those parts: he is also said to be *one of the twelve* apostles, which was their number at first, though Judas now was gone off from them, and therefore are sometimes only called the *eleven;* but this having been their complement, it is still retained; but what is observed of him to his disadvantage and discredit is, that he *was not with them when Jesus came:* Beza's ancient copy reads, *he was not there with them;* and so read the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions; he either had not returned to the rest after their scattering one from another upon the apprehending of Christ; or did not choose to assemble with the rest, for fear of the Jews; or was taken up with some business and affair of life; however, he was not with the rest of the disciples, when they were assembled together, and Jesus appeared among them: as it is of good consequence to attend the assemblies of Christ's disciples and followers, so it is of bad consequence to neglect or forsake them: 'tis frequently to good purpose that persons attend them; here God comes and blesses his people, Jesus grants his presence, the graces of the spirit are increased, and drawn forth into exercise; souls that have lost sight of Christ find him, disconsolate ones are comforted, weak ones strengthened, and hungry ones fed: on the other hand, not to attend is of bad consequence; neglect of assembling together exposes to many snares and temptations; brings on a spiritual leanness; leads to an indifference and lukewarmness; issues in a low degree of grace, and a non-exercise of it, and in a loss of Christ's presence.

Ver. 25. *The other disciples therefore said unto him,* &c.] Some time in the same week, as they had opportunity of seeing him, with great joy, and full assurance of faith in Christ's resurrection: *we have seen the Lord:* they had not only the testimony of the women, and the declaration of the angels, but they saw him with their own eyes, and beheld even the very prints of the nails in his hands and feet, and of the spear in his side, and therefore could not be mistaken and imposed upon: a spiritual sight of Christ is a blessing often enjoyed by attending the assembly of the saints;

[p] Targum in 2 Chron. xxxiii. 13.
[q] T. Hieros. Gittin, fol. 43. 2.
[r] T. Hieros. Gittin, fol. 43. 2.

to see Christ, is the desire of every gracious soul; this is the end of their meeting together for social worship; the word and ordinances have a tendency in them to lead souls to a sight of him; and it may be expected, because it is promised; and whenever it is enjoyed, it is very delightful; and a soul that meets with Christ in an ordinance, can't but speak of it to others; and which he does with joy and pleasure, in an exulting, and even in a kind of a boasting manner; and that for the encouragement of others to attend likewise: *but he said unto them, except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.* That nails were used in the crucifixion of Christ, is certain from this place, though nowhere else mentioned; whereby the prophecy of him in Psal. xxii. 16. was fulfilled; for these were not always used in this kind of death. The bodies of men were sometimes fastened to the cross with cords, and not nails [s]. How many were used, whether three, as some, or four, as others, or more, as were sometimes used [t], is not certain, nor material to know. The Alexandrian copy, and some others, and the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Persic versions read, the *place of the nails*; that is, the place where the nails were drove. Thomas knew that Christ was fastened to the cross with nails, and that his side was pierced with a spear; which he, though not present, might have had from John, who was an eye-witness thereof; but though they had all seen him alive, he'll not trust to their testimony; nay, he was determined not to believe his own eyes; unless he put his finger into, as well as saw, the print of the nails, and thrust his hand into his side, as well as beheld the wound made by the spear, he is resolved not to believe. And his sin of unbelief is the more aggravated, inasmuch as this disciple was present at the raising of Lazarus from the dead by Christ, and had heard Christ himself say, that he should rise from the dead the third day. We may learn from hence how great is the sin of unbelief; that the best of men are subject to it; and that though this was over-ruled by divine providence to bring out another proof of Christ's resurrection, yet this did not excuse the sin of Thomas: and it may be observed, that as Thomas would not believe without seeing the marks of the nails and spear in Christ's flesh; so many will not believe, unless they find such and such marks in themselves, which often prove very ensnaring and distressing. Just such an unbeliever as Thomas was, the Jews make Moses to be, when Israel sinned: they say, "he did not believe that Israel had sinned, but said, "אם איני רואה איני מאמין, *if I do not see, I will not* "*believe* [u]."

Ver. 26. *And after eight days*, &c.] That is, after another week, that day se'nnight, which taking in the day in which Christ rose and appeared to Mary Magdalene, and his disciples, and the day in which he now appeared to the disciples with Thomas, made eight days; a like way of speaking see in Luke ix. 28. compared with Matt. xvii. 1. And Dr. Hammond has proved from Josephus [w], that the Jews used to express a week by eight days. *Again, his disciples were within*: within doors, in some private house; probably the same as before, in some part of the city of Jerusalem: *and Thomas with them*: which shews their harmony and agreement, their frequency and constancy in meeting together, and their Christian forbearance with Thomas, notwithstanding his unbelief; whom they looked upon as a good man, and retained in their company, hoping by one means or other he would be convinced: and it also shews Thomas's regard to them, and affection for them, by meeting with them, though he had not the same faith in the resurrection of Christ: *then came Jesus*; when the disciples, with Thomas, were together; so making good his promise to meet with his people when they meet; and thereby putting an honour upon, and giving encouragement to attendance with the saints: if it should be asked, why did not Christ come sooner? it may be replied, that the reason, on his part, was, it was his will and pleasure to come at this time, and not before; Christ has his set times to himself, when he will appear and manifest himself to his people: on Thomas's part the reasons might be, partly to rebuke him for his sin, and that the strength of his unbelief might appear the more, and that some desire might be stirred up in him to see Christ, if he was risen. And on the part of the disciples, because they did not meet together sooner; and for the further trial of their faith, whether it would continue or no, Thomas obstinately persisting in his unbelief: *the doors being shut*; as before, and for the same reason, for fear of the Jews, as well as for the privacy of their devotion and conversation: *and stood in the midst*; having in the same powerful manner as before caused the doors, locks, and bars to give way, when at once he appeared in the midst of them all, not to Thomas alone, but to all the eleven; and this the rather, because the disciples had bore a testimony to Christ's resurrection, and which he meant now to confirm; and to rebuke Thomas publicly, who had sinned before them all: *and said, peace be unto you*; which he had said before, and now, saluting Thomas in like manner as he did the rest, notwithstanding his unbelief.

Ver. 27. *Then saith he to Thomas*, &c.] For whose sake he chiefly came, and whom he at once singled out from the rest, and called by name in the most friendly manner, without upbraiding or reproaching him for not believing the testimony that had been given him: *reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands, and reach hither thine hand and thrust it into my side*: that is, make use of every way by seeing, feeling, and examining the scars in my hands, and the hole in my side, and satisfy thyself in the manner thou hast desired; which shews the omniscience of Christ, who knew what had passed between him and the other disciples, and the very words Thomas had expressed himself in; also his great humility and condescension in submitting himself to be examined in the very manner he had fixed; and likewise the reality of his resurrection: *and be not faithless, but believing*: in which words Christ dissuades him from unbelief, which is very evil in its own nature, and in its effects; it is

[s] Vid. Lipsium de Cruce, l. 2. c. 8. p. 87.
[t] Ib. c. 9. p. 91.

[u] Shemot Rabba, sect. 46. fol. 142. 2.
[w] Antiqu. l. 7. c. 9.

the root of all evil; it unfits for duty, and renders the word unprofitable, and leads men off from Christ; and is the more aggravated in the people of God, by the instances, declarations, and promises of grace, and discoveries of love made unto them: and he also encourages him to believe. The exercise of the grace of faith is well-pleasing to Christ; it gives glory to him, and makes for the soul's comfort; and a word from Christ, his power going along with it, will enable men to believe, as it did Thomas; which appears by what follows.

Ver. 28. *And Thomas answered and said unto him,* &c.] Without examining his hands and side, and as astonished at his condescension and grace, and ashamed of his unbelief: *my Lord and my God;* he owns him to be Lord, as he was both by creation and redemption: and God, of which he was fully assured from his omniscience, which he had given a full proof of, and from the power that went along with his words to his heart, and from a full conviction he now had of his resurrection from the dead. He asserts his interest in him as *his* Lord and *his* God; which denotes his subjection to him, his affection for him, and faith in him; so the divine word is called in Philo the Jew, κυριος μου, *my Lord*[x].

Ver. 29. *Jesus saith unto him, Thomas,* &c.] The word Thomas is omitted in the Alexandrian copy, and in Beza's ancient copy, and in some others, and in the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions. *Because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed:* which carries in it a tacit and gentle reproof for his unbelief, and suggests, that if he had not seen, he would not have believed; but is not so harsh as if that had been expressed; and which the Jews were wont to do in a severe manner[y]. "One said to R. Jochanan, expound Rabbi; for "'tis beautiful for thee to expound: for as thou sayest, "so I see: he replied to him, Raka, אלמלא לא ראית "לא האמנת, *if thou seest not, thou wilt not believe.*" Christ here allows that Thomas had believed, that he was risen from the dead, and that he was his Lord and God: and though his faith was late and slow, it was sure and certain, and was appropriating; it was a faith of interest, though upon sight, and not on hearing, or the report of the other disciples: now faith on sight may be in persons who have no true spiritual faith; as in some that saw both the person and miracles of Christ on earth, and in others who will see him come in the clouds of heaven; and it has been in others who have truly believed in Christ, as the apostles of the Lamb: but yet, though it may be, as in many it has been, right, yet not so commendable as that without it. From hence may be observed, that Christ allows of the epithets and titles given him by Thomas, and therefore must be Lord and God; and approves of Thomas's faith, and therefore that must be right; though he prefers faith without personal sight of him to it, in the next clause. *Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.* The author of the apocryphal book of Esdras 2. ch. i. 37. says of *the people to come, whose little ones rejoice in gladness,* in the person of the Almighty Lord, *though they have not seen me with bodily eyes, yet in spirit they believe the thing that I say.* It seems as if there were some at this time in the city of Jerusalem, who firmly believed that Christ was risen from the dead, upon the testimony of others, though they had not seen him themselves. Faith without sight, in other respects, may be considered as opposed to the beatific vision in heaven; and as destitute of sensible communion with God; and as giving credit to doctrines and things above carnal sense and reason; such as the doctrines of the Trinity, the sonship of Christ, his incarnation, and the union of the two natures in him, and the resurrection of the dead; and as believing whatever is said in the word of God, upon the credit of his testimony; and which has for its objects things past, as what were done in eternity, in the council and covenant of grace; the works of creation and providence in time, the birth, sufferings, death, and resurrection of Christ; and also things present, Christ, and the blessings of grace, and things to come, the invisible glories of the other world. Now such are happy that have true faith in these things, for they enjoy many blessings now, as a justifying righteousness, pardon of sin, adoption, freedom of access to God, and security from condemnation; they have spiritual peace, joy, and comfort in their souls, and shall at last be saved with an everlasting salvation.

Ver. 30. *And many other signs truly did Jesus,* &c.] Besides these wonderful appearances to his disciples once and again, when the doors were shut about them: and which signs refer not to what was done before, but after his resurrection; and which he did, *in the presence of his disciples;* for he appeared to, and conversed with no other but them after his resurrection: *which are not written in this book;* of John's Gospel; though they may be elsewhere; such as his appearing to the two disciples going to Emmaus, and to the eleven on a mountain in Galilee, and to five hundred brethren at once, which other inspired writers speak of: and many there are which he did, which are not particularly written in this, nor in any other book; for he was seen of his disciples forty days, and shewed himself alive, by many infallible proofs; all of which are not recorded.

Ver. 31. *But these are written,* &c.] The several ends of recording what is written in this book, in proof of Christ's resurrection, are as follow: one is, *that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the son of God:* that Jesus, who was diminutively called Jesus, the son of Mary, the son of Joseph, the carpenter's son, Jesus of Nazareth, and of Galilee, was the Christ, or true Messiah; which signifies anointed, and takes in all his offices of prophet, priest, and King, to which he was anointed; and is an article of faith of the greatest importance; and is to be believed through the signs proving his resurrection, who, according to the Scriptures, was to rise again; and which, by the signs here recorded, it appears he is risen indeed, and therefore must be the true Messiah of the prophets, and also *the son of God;* which was a known title of the Messiah among the Jews; and is not a name of office, but of nature and relation to God, and designs Christ in his divine nature, or as a divine person: and is an

[x] Lib. Allegor. l. 2. p. 101.

[y] T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 75. 1. & Sanhedr.

article of great moment, and well attested, by God, by angels, and men; and receives a further confirmation by the resurrection of Christ, who is thereby declared to be the son of God with power; and with this view did this evangelist write the signs, proving it, herein to be found. And his other end in recording them, is, *and that believing ye might have life through his name*: believers have their spiritual and eternal life through Christ; their life of grace, of justification on him, of sanctification from him, and communion with him; the support and maintenance of their spiritual life, and all the comforts of it: and also their life of glory, or eternal life, they have through, or in his name; it lies in his person, it comes to them through him as the procuring cause of it; 'tis for his sake bestowed upon them, yea, it is in his hands to give it, and who does give it to all that believe: not that believing is the cause of their enjoyment of this life, or is their title to it, which is the name, person, blood, and righteousness of Christ; but faith is the way and means in which they enjoy it; and therefore these signs are written by the evangelist for the encouragement of this faith in Christ, which is of such use in the enjoyment of life, in, through, and from him. Beza's ancient copy, two of Stephens's, the Coptic, Syriac, Arabic, Persic, and Ethiopic versions read, *eternal life*.

CHAP. XXI.

Ver. 1. *AFTER these things*, &c.] The resurrection of Christ from the dead, his appearance to Mary Magdalene, and twice to his disciples; once when Thomas was absent, and at another time when he was present: *Jesus shewed himself again to the disciples*: a third time, as in ver. 14. though not to them all; seven are only mentioned, as together, when he appeared to them: *at the sea of Tiberias*; the same with the sea of Galilee; see John vi. 1. for after the second appearance of Christ to his disciples, they went from Jerusalem to Galilee, by the order of Christ, who appointed to meet them there, Matt. xxviii. 10, 16. *and on this way shewed he himself*: the manner in which he made his appearance, and the persons to whom, are as follow.

Ver. 2. *There were together*, &c.] In one place, in one house, in some town, or city of Galilee, not far from the sea of Tiberias; nor, as very likely, far from the mountain where Christ had promised to meet them. Simon Peter; who though he had denied his Lord, dearly loved him, and truly believed in him, kept with the rest of his disciples, and was waiting for another interview with him: *and Thomas, called Didymus*; who, though for a while an unbeliever with respect to the resurrection of Christ, was now fully assured of it, and, for the future, was unwilling to lose any opportunity of meeting with his risen Lord. *And Nathanael of Cana in Galilee*; an Israelite indeed, in whom there was no guile. Dr. Lightfoot thinks he is the same with Bartholomew, and so one of the eleven. The Syriac version reads it, *Cotne*, and the Persic, Catneh of Galilee; no doubt the same place is meant, where Jesus turned water into wine, of which Nathanael was an inhabitant: *and the sons of Zebedee*; who were James, whom Herod killed with the sword, and John, the writer of this Gospel: *and two other of his disciples*: who are thought to be Andrew and Philip; which is very likely, since they were both of Bethsaida, John i. 44. a city in Galilee, and not far from the sea of Tiberias. Andrew is particularly mentioned by Nonnus: so that here were seven of them in all: four of them, according to this account, being wanting; who must be James the less, the brother of our Lord, Judas called Lebbeus, and surnamed Thaddeus, Simon the Canaanite, or Zelot, and Matthew the publican.

Ver. 3. *Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing*, &c.] Which was his business before his conversion; and now having nothing to do, and his Lord and master having, as yet, no service for him in the ministry of the word, until the spirit was poured down in an extraordinary manner, which was given to be expected, in the mean while he was inclined to, and resolved upon taking up his former employment; partly that he might not live an idle life, and partly to obtain a livelihood, which was now to be sought after in another manner, since the death of Christ; and these inclinations and resolutions of his he signifies to the rest of the disciples, who agreed with him: *they say unto him, we also go with thee*: that is, a fishing; for it seems to have been the business and employment of them all formerly: the place they went to was the sea of Tiberias, as appears from ver. 1. a place free for any to fish at. This is said to be one of the ten traditions which Joshua delivered to the children of Israel, when he divided the land among them [z]: "that any man should "be free to catch fish in the waters (or sea) of Tiberias; and he might fish with an hook only; but he "might not spread a net, or place a ship there, except "the children of the tribe to whom that sea belonged "in their division." But now these disciples, or the greater part of them at least, belonging to the tribe and division in which the sea was, had a right to carry a ship or boat thither, and make use of a net, as they did. Besides, there was another reason for fishing here, because there were no unclean fish; for the Jews say [a], that "in a place of running water no clean fish goes "along with unclean fish, and lo, the sea of Tiberias is "כגון המים מהלכין הן, *as running waters*." *They went forth*: from the house, town, or city where they were, whether Capernaum, or Bethsaida, or Tiberias itself: *and entered into a ship immediately*: which was either one of their own, that belonged to some one of them before their call; which though they had left, had reserved their right and claim unto; see Luke v. 3. or

[z] Maimon. Hilch. Nezike Mammon, c. 5. sect. 3. Vid. T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 81. 1.

[a] T. Hieros. Avoda Zara, fol. 42. 1.

which they hired for their present purpose: the word *immediately* is not in the Vulgate Latin, nor in the Syriac, Arabic, Persic, and Ethiopic versions, nor in Beza's ancient copy: *and that night they caught nothing*. They went out in the evening of the day, and fished all night, that being a proper time for such business, and the most likely to succeed in, but caught no fish, or very little: and so it is sometimes with Gospel ministers, who are fishers of men, though they take every opportunity, and the most proper methods to gain souls to Christ, yet sometimes do not succeed; which makes things look dark and gloomy in their apprehensions.

Ver. 4. *But when the morning was now come*, &c.] The day began to dawn, and light to appear, very early in the morning; for Christ visits his right early, and is a present help to them in their time of trouble. *Jesus stood on the shore:* on firm ground, whilst his disciples were beating about in the waves, and toiling to no purpose. So Christ, risen from the dead, is glorified, is in heaven; but not unmindful of his people amidst all their afflictions in this world: *but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus;* though he was so near them that they could hear what he said; but it not being broad day-light they could not distinctly discern him, or their eyes might be held that they could not know him. So Christ is sometimes near his people, and they know it not.

Ver. 5. *Then Jesus saith unto them, children*, &c.] And still they knew him not, though he used this endearing and familiar appellation, and which they had been wont to hear from him; and he had called them by a little before his departure from them, John xiii. 33. and which he uses here as expressive of his tender affection for them, their relation to him, and that he might be known by them: *have ye any meat?* that is, as the Syriac renders it, מדם למלעס, *any thing to eat;* meaning fish that they had catched; and whether they had got a sufficient quantity to make a meal of for him and them. *They answered him no:* they had got nothing at all; or at least what they had was far from being enough to make a breakfast of; for so a meal early in a morning may be most properly called, though it is afterwards called dining. Christ's children, true believers, are sometimes without spiritual food; there's always indeed enough in Christ, and he has an heart to give it; but either through prevailing iniquity they feed on something else, or don't go to him for food, or go elsewhere; but he will not suffer them to starve; for as he has made provisions for them in the ministry of the word and ordinances; and he himself is the bread of life; if they don't ask him for food, he'll ask them whether they have any; will kindly invite them to the provisions he himself makes; will bid them welcome, and bless them to them.

Ver. 6. *And he said unto them*, &c.] Willing to make himself known by a miracle, since they knew him not by his person, nor voice: *cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find:* that is, a large multitude of fish, as they did. The ship was an emblem of the church in its present afflicted state; the right side of it points to the elect, and where they are to be found in this world; the casting of the net signifies the preaching of the Gospel; the promise of finding fish, the assurance Christ gives of the success of his word, which he owns and blesses for the conversion of elect sinners: *they cast therefore:* the net, willing to try what success they might have at the instance of this person, whom they knew not. The Ethiopic version reads the passage thus, *and they said unto him, we have laboured all night, and have found nothing, but at thy word we will let down:* which seems to be taken out of Luke v. 5. However, they obeyed his orders and directions, as the faithful ministers of the Gospel do, and should, and succeeded. *And now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes.* The Syriac adds, *which it held;* being in number, as in ver. 11. an hundred and fifty, and three great fishes; which was an emblem and presage of that large number of souls both among the Jews and Gentiles, which they should be instrumental in bringing to Christ, through the preaching of the Gospel.

Ver. 7. *Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved*, &c.] Which was John the Evangelist and Apostle, the writer of this Gospel: *saith unto Peter, it is the Lord;* which two disciples were very intimate with each other, and communicated their thoughts freely to one another. John knew that it was the Lord, either by some special revelation, or from the multitude of fishes which were taken, and which shewed a divine hand and power to be concerned. So faithful ministers of the Gospel know when Christ is with them, by his power attending their ministrations to the conversion of souls. The Cambridge copy of Beza's reads, *our Lord;* as do the Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions; and it is reasonable to think, John speaking to a fellow-disciple, who had equal interest in him with himself, might so say. *Now when Simon heard that it was the Lord;* faith came by hearing, he was immediately convinced, and thoroughly satisfied, having received the hint upon a reflection on the surprising capture of the fishes, that it must be the Lord: *he girt his fisher's coat unto him.* The Greek word ἐπενδύτην, here used, is manifestly the אפונדת of the Hebrews; and which, the Jewish writers say [b], was a strait garment, which a man put on next his flesh to dry up the sweat; and a very proper one for Peter, who had been toiling all night, and very fit for him to swim in; and, by what follows, appears to be put on him next his flesh: *for he was naked:* for to suppose him entirely naked, whilst fishing, being only in company with men, and those parts of nature having a covering, which always require one, was not at all indecent and unbecoming: *and did cast himself into the sea;* the Syriac adds, *that he might come to Christ;* and the Persic, *and he came to Christ;* shewing his great love and eagerness to be with him; and, as fearless of danger, risks all to be with Christ; his love being such that many waters could not quench, nor floods drown.

Ver. 8. *And the other disciples came in a little ship*, &c.] The same that they were fishing in, in which they came to Christ as soon as they could, not choosing to expose themselves, as Peter did; nor was it proper that they should leave the ship, and, as it was, might

[b] Maimon. & Bartenora in Misn. Sabbat, c. 10. sect. 3.

have hands few enough to bring ship and net, so full of fish, safe to shore; and the rather, they did not think fit to do as he did, *for they were not far from land, but, as it were, two hundred cubits:* which was about an hundred yards: *dragging the net with fishes:* towing the net full of fishes all along in the water, till they came to land; an emblem of laborious Gospel ministers, who being once embarked in the work of the ministry, continue in it to the end, notwithstanding all toil, labour, and difficulties that attend them; and will at last bring the souls with them they have been made useful to, with great satisfaction and joy, to their dear Lord and master.

Ver. 9. *As soon then as they were come to land*, &c.] As soon as they were come out of the ship, and safe on shore, not only Peter, but all the rest of the disciples: *they saw a fire of coals there:* on the shore, to their great surprise: *and fish laid there:* which could not be any that they had taken, for, as yet, the net was not drawn up, and the fish took out: *and bread:* not upon the coals baking, but hard by, being ready prepared to eat with the fish, when sufficiently broiled. This was all of Christ's preparing, and a considerable proof of his deity; and a confirmation of that provision he'll make for his ministering servants, whilst they are about his work, and in this world; and a representation of that spiritual and eternal refreshment they shall have with him in heaven to all eternity, when they have done their work.

Ver. 10. *Jesus saith unto them*, &c.] The disciples: *bring of the fish which ye have now caught* for they might have caught some before, though so few and small, as scarcely to be reckoned any; nor were they bid to bring all they had taken, only some of them, to add to these Christ had prepared for them on land; they being both indeed of a miraculous production, and the effects of his divine power. Christ's view in ordering to bring some of them, and put to those that lay upon the coals, was partly that they might have enough to make a meal of for them all; and also, that they might have a more perfect knowledge of the miracle wrought, by seeing the number and largeness of the fishes, and by bringing the net full of them to shore unbroken; and may be an emblem of the bringing of souls to Christ by the ministry of the word, thereby adding to those that are already gathered.

Ver. 11. *Simon Peter went up*, &c.] Either to the sea, that being higher than the land, or to the ship which lay by the shore: he went aboard it, *and drew the net to land full of great fishes:* not alone, but others of the disciples with him: though he only is mentioned, being the leading person in this affair: an emblem of the whole number of God's elect being brought safe to shore, to Christ, and to heaven, through various tribulations and afflictions in the world, fitly signified by the waves of the sea. What mystery there may be in the number, I know not. The conjecture of Grotius, that it is a figure of the proselytes in the days of David and Solomon, seems to be without foundation; since they were not only so many thousands, but six hundred over. And as little to be regarded is the thought of others, that the larger number, one hundred, regards the converted among the Gentiles, and the lesser those among the Jews; much better is the observation of others, that it may design a collection, out of all sorts of people, to Christ, and his church. *And for all there were so many:* in number, and these so large and big, and the weight of them so great. The Syriac reads בכנא בלה יוקרא, *with all this weight*, or *burden*, and so the Persic; but the Arabic, *with such a number:* both ideas of number and weight are to be preserved, to make what follows the more observable: *yet was not the net broken:* which must be ascribed to the divine power of Christ; and is an emblem of the power of God attending the Gospel to the regeneration, conversion, and salvation of his people, and of the great usefulness of it, however mean and despicable it may be in the eyes of men, and of its permanence and duration, until all the elect of God are gathered in by it.

Ver. 12. *Jesus saith unto them, come and dine*, &c.] One would think it should rather have been said, come and take a breakfast than a dinner, since it was so early in the morning: but Grotius has observed, out of Homer, that αριστον is used for food taken in a morning; so that it may signify here, not what we properly call dining, but eating a morning's meal; and may be an emblem of that spiritual refreshment believers enjoy with Christ in his house and ordinances now, and of those everlasting pleasures they will partake with him in the resurrection-morn: and it is to be observed, that he does not say go and dine, but come and dine; that is, along with himself: he does not send his disciples elsewhere for food, but invites them to come to him, to hear his word, which is food for faith, to wait in his house, where plenty of provision is made, and to attend on his ordinances, and in all to feed upon himself, and to feed with him; to all which they are heartily welcome. *And none of the disciples durst ask him, who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord:* to ask such a question was altogether unnecessary, and would have been impertinent, and they might justly have been upbraided and rebuked for it: it would have looked like insolence, or unbelief, or both, and that greatly aggravated, when it was so clear a case that it was the Lord; who might be known by his voice and person, especially when they came near to him, and also by the miracles which he wrought: so at the last day, when every eye shall see him coming in the clouds of heaven, none will ask who he is; all will know him.

Ver. 13. *Jesus then cometh and taketh bread*, &c.] After they had taken the fish out of the net, and all was prepsred for the meal, and the disciples were set down to eat, Christ came and took his place as the master of the feast, and head of the family; and taking up the bread, as was his usual method, he asked a blessing over it, and gave thanks for it. Beza's ancient copy, and one of Stephens's read, *and having given thanks he gave*, &c. which is agreeably to his usual practice at meals. *And giveth them, and fish likewise:* he distributed both bread and fish to his disciples. So, in a spiritual sense, he provides plentifully for his people; gives them to eat of the hidden manna, and tree of life, and leads to fountains of living waters; encourages them to eat and drink freely, what is of his own preparing, and at his own expense provided for them.

Ver. 14. *This is now the third time*, &c.] Or day of Christ's appearance to his disciples: he appeared to them first on the same day he rose, and then a second time eight days after, or that day se'nnight, and now at the sea of Tiberias; for within this compass of time he had made more appearances than three, though to particular persons, and not to such a number of the disciples as at these three times: *that Jesus shewed himself to his disciples after that he was risen from the dead*: and thus, as by the mouth of two or three witnesses, every thing is established; so by these three principal appearances of Christ to his disciples, his resurrection from the dead was confirmed.

Ver. 15. *So when they had dined*, &c.] The Persic version adds, *Jesus turned his face to Simon Peter;* he did not interrupt them whilst they were eating; but when they had comfortably refreshed themselves, he looked at Peter, and singled him out from the rest, and directed his discourse to him; and saith unto Simon Peter, *Simon, son of Jonas;* not John, as the Vulgate Latin, and Nonnus, and some copies read; for this answers not to the Hebrew word Jochanan, but Jonah, the same name with the prophet. Some have observed, that Christ spoke to him particularly by his original name, and not by that which he himself had given him, with a view to his strong faith, as Cephas, or Peter; but it should be known that Christ calls him by this name of Simon bar Jonah, when he made the most ample profession of his faith in him, and was pronounced blessed by him, Matt. xvi. 16, 17. *lovest thou me more than these?* meaning, not than the fishes he had caught, nor the net and boat, or any worldly enjoyment, nor than he loved the disciples; but the question is, whether he loved Christ more than the rest of the disciples loved him: the reason of which was, because he had some time ago declared, though all the disciples were offended at Christ, and should deny him, he would not; and had just now thrown himself into the sea to come to him first, as if he loved him more than they did: which question is put, not out of ignorance, or as if Christ knew not whether he loved him or no, and what was the degree of his affection to him; but because the exercise of this grace, and the expressions of it, are very grateful to him; and that Peter also might have an opportunity of expressing it before others, who had so publicly denied him: *he saith unto him, yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee;* not in word and tongue, but in deed and in truth; in sincerity, and without dissimulation, fervently and superlatively; for the truth of which he appeals to Christ himself; for he was so conscious to himself of the reality of his love, and the sincerity of his affection, that he chooses to make Christ himself judge of it, rather than say any more of it himself; though he modestly declines saying that he loved him more than the rest of the disciples did, having had an experience of his vanity and self-confidence. He was sure he loved Christ heartily; but whether he loved him more than the rest did, he chose not to say: *he saith unto him, feed my lambs;* the younger and more tender part of the flock, weak believers, Christ's little children, new-born babes, the day of small things, which are not to be despised, the bruised reed that is not to be broken, and the smoking flax that is not to be quenched; but who are to be nourished, comforted, and strengthened, by feeding them with the milk of the Gospel, and by administering to them the ordinances and breasts of consolation. These Christ has an interest in, and therefore calls them *my lambs*, being given him by the father, and purchased by his blood, and for whom he has a tender concern and affection; and nothing he looks upon as a firmer and clearer proof and evidence of love to him, than to feed these lambs of his, and take care of them.

Ver. 16. *He saith unto him again the second time*, &c.] Willing to have the expressions of his love repeated and confirmed; *Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?* he leaves out the words, *more than these*, though Nonnus expresses them; he saw Peter's heart, and observed the modesty of his answer, and would not urge him any more in that comparative way, only required a repetition of his sincere and hearty love to him: *he saith unto him, yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee;* expressing himself in the same language as before; and it is, as if he should say, Lord, what can I say more? I can say no more than I have done, and by that I abide: *he saith unto him, feed my sheep;* both the lost sheep of the house of Israel, and his other sheep among the Gentiles, whom the father had given him, and he had paid a price for, and must be brought in; these being called, he would have fed with the word and ordinances, with the bread of life, and water of life, not lorded over, and fleeced, and much less worried and destroyed; every instance of care and love shewn to these, he takes as a mark of affection and respect to himself.

Ver. 17. *He saith unto him the third time*, &c.] That by these three testimonies, out of his mouth, the thing might be established, and be out of all doubt: *Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?* is it so indeed that thou lovest me? is thy love really so hearty and sincere as thou sayest? may it be depended upon? *Peter was grieved, because he said unto him the third time, lovest thou me?* because it put him in mind of his having denied his Lord three times; the remembrance of which cut him to the heart; and it added to his grief, that his love, which he knew was unfeigned, notwithstanding his conduct, should seem to be suspected: *and he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee:* he appeals with great warmth and earnestness to him, as the omniscient God, and the searcher of all hearts, who knows all persons and things, and the secret thoughts, dispositions, and affections of men's minds, for the truth of his love to him; for though he knew the treachery of his own heart, and durst not trust to it; and therefore chose not to be determined by his own assertions, and was well aware that the sincerity of his love might be called in question by fellow-Christians, because of his late conduct; but as every thing was naked and open to his Lord, with whom he had to do, he lodges and leaves the appeal with him; so every soul that truly loves Christ, whatever Satan, the world, professors, or their own hearts under unbelieving frames, may suggest to the contrary, can appeal to Christ, as the trier of the reins of the children of men, that he it is whom their souls love; and though their love may

be greatly tried, and they themselves be sorely tempted by Satan, and suffered to fall greatly; yet their love to Christ can never be lost; the fervency of it may be abated, the exercise of it may be very languid, but the principle itself always remains, as it did in Peter: *Jesus saith unto him, feed my sheep.* It may be observed from the repetition of this phrase following upon Peter's declaration of his love to Christ, that such only are proper persons to feed the lambs and sheep of Christ, who truly and sincerely love him: and in doing which they shew their love to him: and who indeed would be concerned in this service, but such? since the work is so laborious, the conduct of those to whom they minister oftentimes is so disagreeable, the reproach they meet with from the world, and the opposition made unto them by Satan, and all the powers of darkness: 'tis true indeed, there are some that take upon them this work, and pretend to do it, who don't love Christ; but then they are such who feed themselves, and not the flock; and who feed the world's goats, and not Christ's lambs and sheep, and in time of danger leave the flock; only the true lovers of Christ faithfully perform this service, and abide in it by preaching the pure Gospel of Christ, by administering his ordinances, in their right manner, and by directing souls in all to Christ, the heavenly manna, and bread of life. Dr. Lightfoot thinks that by the threefold repetition of the order to feed Christ's lambs and sheep, is meant the threefold object of Peter's ministry; the Jews in their own land, the Gentiles, and the Israelites of the ten tribes, that were in Babylon.

Ver. 18. *Verily, verily, I say unto thee,* &c.] A way of speaking often used by Christ, when about to deliver any thing of considerable moment, partly to raise the attention, and partly for the more strong asseveration of what is spoken; and may have reference both to what went before, confirming Peter's declaration of his love, which would be demonstrated by dying for him, and the testimony of his omniscience, by foretelling his death, and the kind of it; and to what follows after, which contains an account of Peter in his younger years, and a prophecy of what should befall him in old age: *when thou wast young;* not that he was old now, and capable he was of doing, and he did do but just now, what our Lord ascribes to his younger years: *thou girdest thyself, and walkest whither thou wouldst;* that is, he could put on his clothes himself, and gird them about him with a girdle, as was the custom of the eastern nations, who usually wore long garments; and as he, a little before, had girt his fisher's coat about him, and walked where he pleased; denoting the liberty of his will in things natural and civil, which every man is possessed of, though not in things spiritual, without the grace of God; and also his power of doing what was most grateful to him, without being hindered by, or obliged to ask the leave of others: *but when thou shalt be old:* implying, that he should live to a good old age, and be continued to be useful and serviceable in the cause of Christ, in preaching his Gospel, and feeding his lambs and sheep, as he did; for he lived to the times of Nero[c], under whom he suffered, about *forty years* after this: *thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee.* This refers not so much to an inability through old age to gird himself, and therefore should stretch forth his hands, that another might with more ease do it for him, and which would be the reverse of his former and present case; for the word *gird* is used in another sense than before, and signifies the binding of him as a prisoner with cords, or chains; so *girding*, with the Jews, is the same as הקשירה והאסירה, *tying and binding*[d]: but either to the stretching out of his hands upon the cross, when he should be girt and bound to that; for persons were sometimes fastened to the cross with cords, and not always with nails[e]: or, as others think, to his carrying of his cross on his shoulders, with his hands stretched out and bound to the piece of wood which went across; though his being girded or bound may as well be thought to follow the former, as this: indeed, what is added best suits with the latter, *and carry thee whither thou wouldst not;* to a painful, cruel, shameful, and accursed death, the death of the cross; not that Peter in spirit would be unwilling to die for Christ, nor was he; but it signifies, that he should die a death disagreeable to the flesh.

Ver. 19. *This spake he,* &c.] These are the words of the evangelist, explaining the meaning of Christ in like manner, as in chap. xii. 33. *signifying by what death he should glorify God;* for by the above words Christ not only intimated that Peter should die, not a natural, but a violent death, or that he should die a martyr in his cause, but the very kind of death he should die, namely, by crucifixion; and that Peter was crucified at Rome, ecclesiastical history confirms[f], when Christ was magnified, and God was glorified by his zeal and courage, faith and patience, constancy and perseverance to the end: *and when he had spoken this;* concerning the usage and treatment he should meet with, the sufferings he should undergo, and death he should die for his sake, for the present trial of him: *he saith unto him, follow me;* which may be understood literally, Jesus now rising up, and ordering him to come after him; and yet as a sign of his following him, in a spiritual sense, exercising every grace upon him, discharging every duty towards him, faithfully and constantly performing his work and office, as an apostle and preacher of the Gospel, in which he had now reinstated and confirmed him, and patiently bearing and suffering all kind of reproach, persecution, and death, for his name's sake.

Ver. 20. *Then Peter turning about,* &c.] After he was risen, and was following Christ: *seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following* also; by whom is designed John the Evangelist, and writer of this Gospel; who hearing Christ bid Peter follow him, rose up likewise, and went after him, in token of his willingness to serve him, and suffer for him too: *which also leaned on his breast at supper;* at the *paschal supper,* as the Persic version here reads it: *and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee?* This disciple had a peculiar share in the love of Christ, as man, and was admitted to great nearness and freedom with him, signified by

[c] Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. 2. c. 25

[d] R. David Kimchi, Sepher Shorash. rad. חגר.

[e] Lipsius de Cruce, l. 2. c. 8. Bartholinus de Cruce, p. 57. 112.

[f] Euseb. ut supra.

his leaning on his breast; and who being so near his person, and allowed to use a liberty with him, every one did not take, at the motion of Peter, asked our Lord at supper, who the person was he meant that should betray him; all this is said as descriptive of the disciple here spoken of, which leaves it without any doubt, that it was the Apostle John; and who, from ver. 2. appears to be one of this company, and is further confirmed at ver. 24.

Ver. 21. *Peter seeing him, saith to Jesus*, &c.] Peter took a great deal of notice of John, and very likely understood, that he meant by his rising up and following Christ, to signify his readiness for service and suffering in the cause of Christ: and therefore says, *Lord, and what shall this man* do? The phrase in the original is very short and concise, *Lord, and this what?* The Arabic version renders it, *and this, of what mind is he?* it looks as if he was of the same mind with me to follow thee; but it is better rendered by us, *what shall this man do?* in what work and service shall he be employed, who seems as willing as I am to serve thee? or it may be rendered thus, *and what shall this man suffer?* shall he suffer at all? and if he shall, what kind of death shall he undergo? what will become of him? what will be his end? how will it fare with him? this he said, partly out of curiosity, and partly out of concern for him, they two being associates and intimates, who had a strong affection for each other.

Ver. 22. *Jesus saith unto him*, &c.] Christ vouchsafes an answer to Peter, but not a very clear one, nor such an one as he wished for, and not without a rebuke to him: *if I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?* meaning, that if it was his pleasure that he should live, not till his second coming to judge the quick and dead at the last day, but till he should come in his power and take vengeance on the Jewish nation, in the destruction of their city and temple by the Romans, and in dispersing them through the nations of the world; till which time John did live, and many years after; and was the only one of the disciples that lived till that time, and who did not die a violent death; what was that to Peter? it was no concern of his. The question was too curious, improper, and impertinent; it became him to attend only to what concerned himself, and he was bid to do: *follow thou me*: whence it may be observed, that it becomes the saints to mind their duty in following Christ, and not concern themselves in things that don't belong to them. Christ is to be followed by his people as their leader and commander; as the shepherd of the flock; as a guide in the way, and the forerunner that is gone before; as the light of the world; as the pattern and example of the saints, and as their Lord and master; and that in the exercise of every grace, as humility and meekness, love, zeal, patience, and resignation to the will of God; and also in the discharge of duty, both with respect to moral life and conversation, and instituted worship, as attendance on public service, and submission to ordinances; and likewise in enduring sufferings patiently and cheerfully for his sake. Saints are under obligation to follow Christ; it is their interest so to do; 'tis honourable, safe, comfortable, and pleasant, and ends in happiness here and hereafter.

Ver. 23. *Then went this saying abroad among the brethren*, &c.] It not being rightly understood by some one or more of the disciples present; it was divulged with a wrong sense annexed to it among other persons; who, though not of the eleven, yet were followers of Christ, children of God, that belonged to the same family, and were, in a spiritual relation, brethren to each other, and to the apostles: *that that disciple should not die*: but should remain till the second coming of Christ, and be found among them that shall be then alive, and be changed. And such a notion not only was among the ancients; but Beza, in his notes on this text, tells us of a strolling wicked fellow, that gave out that he was the Apostle John; and was encouraged by some, particularly Postellus, a Sorbonic doctor, but was afterwards burnt at Tholouse. *Yet Jesus said not unto him he shall not die, but if I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?* These are the words of John himself, the disciple spoken of, who gives a true and just account of Christ's words, freeing them from the false sense that was put upon them; which shews his ingenuous disposition, his integrity and love of truth; being unwilling that such an error should obtain among the disciples, and pass in the world for truth.

Ver. 24. *This is the disciple which testifieth of these things*, &c.] Recorded in this chapter concerning the appearance of Christ to his disciples at the sea of Tiberias, and what were done by him in their presence, what passed between them; particularly the conversation he had with Peter, both concerning himself, and the disciple John: and also, of all things that are written in this whole Gospel. These are testified to be true by this very disciple John, concerning whom the above report went upon a mistaken sense of Christ's words, and who himself *wrote these things*; all that is contained in this book, as well as the particulars relating to this conversation of Christ with Peter: *and we know that his testimony is true*. The testimony of one that was an eye and ear-witness, as John was, of all that he testified and wrote, must be known, owned, and allowed by all to be true, firm, and unquestionable; and therefore the apostle speaks in the plural number, as being not only his own sense, but the sense of all men. Though some take this to be the attestation of the Ephesine church, or of the bishops of the Asiatic churches, who put John upon writing this Gospel; of which they give their judgment and testimony, as believing it to be a true and faithful narrative.

Ver. 25. *And there are also many other things which Jesus did*, &c.] Which refer not to his doctrines and discourses, his sermons and prayers, and the conversation he had with his disciples, and others, on different accounts; but to the signs, and wonders, and miraculous operations, which were done by him, that are neither recorded in this, nor in any of the evangelists: *the which, if they should be written every one*; with all the particular circumstances relating to them: *I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written*. The Arabic version renders it, *the things written in the books*; and the Syriac, *that the world would not be sufficient for the books that should be written*; and so the Persic, which adds,

and the Scribes of the world would fail, or *be deficient*; there would not be Scribes enough in the world to write them; nor could they be read by men, if they were written; the world would be overloaded with them; and therefore the Holy Ghost has not thought fit to lay such a burden on men they could not bear, as to read such numbers of volumes; but has reduced them into a brief compendium, which may be read with ease, delight, and pleasure; and which is abundantly sufficient to attest the truth of Christ's incarnation, miracles, doctrines, obedience, sufferings, death, resurrection, ascension, session at God's right hand, *&c.* and of the whole of Christianity, and all that appertains to it, or whatever is necessary to be known, for the salvation of men: for this cannot be understood of the carnal and unbelieving part of the world, not receiving and bearing what would be contained in such volumes, were they written; for they are not able to receive and bear what is now written, but reject and despise it as foolishness. Some understand this as an hyperbolical expression; but the sense above given, may be admitted without an hyperbole; though an hyperbole may very well be allowed of; nor, taken literally, will it appear greater than some others used in Scripture; as when the posterity of Abraham are said to be as numerous as the stars of the sky; and especially when said to be as the sand by the sea-shore, innumerable, Heb. xi. 12. Hos. i. 10. and when Capernaum is said to be exalted unto heaven, or to reach unto it, Matt. xi. 23. see Gen. xi. 4. and particularly the Jews have no reason to object, as one of them does[g], to such a way of speaking, whose writings abound in hyperbolical expressions, and in some like to this; as when one of their Rabbins says[h], "if all the seas were ink, and the bulrushes pens, and "the heavens and the earth volumes, and all the "children of men Scribes, אין מספיקן לכתוב תורה, "*they would not be sufficient to write the law*, which I "have learned, *&c.*" and it is commonly said[i] by them, if this, or that, or the other thing was done, לא יכיל עלמא למסבל, *the world would not be able to bear them*. And a later writer[k] of theirs, speaking of the different interpretations given by some of their Rabbins of a certain passage, says, they are so many, that an ass is not able to carry their books. And the intention of this expression, supposing it hyperbolical, is to shew, that but a few of the wonderful things done by Christ were recorded by the evangelist, in comparison of the many which he every day did, in all places where he came; for he was continually going about doing good, and healing all manner of diseases; but these that were written are sufficient to prove him to be the true Messiah, and to require faith in him as such. To all which the evangelist sets his *Amen*, as attesting and confirming the truth of all he had written; and which may be depended upon, and assented to, as truth, by all that read this Gospel. The Alexandrian copy, and Beza's Cambridge copy, have not the word *Amen*; nor have the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions. In some copies the following words are added, "the Gospel according to John was given out *thirty-two* years after the "ascension of Christ;" which would fall on the year of Christ 66, and so before the destruction of Jerusalem; which is contrary to the common opinion of learned men, some placing it in the year 97, others in the year 99.

MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI MAHAL. THE TANJORE

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

THIS book, in some copies, is called, *The Acts of the holy Apostles*. It contains an history of the ministry and miracles of the apostles of Christ, and is a sort of a journal of their actions, from whence it takes its name. It begins at the ascension of Christ, and reaches to the imprisonment of the Apostle Paul at Rome; and is a history of upwards of thirty years: it gives an account of the first Gospel-church at Jerusalem, and of the progress of the Gospel there, and in Judea, by the means of all the apostles, and particularly Peter, the minister of the circumcision, and who also first opened the door of faith to the Gentiles: it shews how the Gospel went forth from Jerusalem, and was spread in the Gentile world, especially by the Apostle Paul, whose companion Luke was, that was the writer of this book; for that it was written by him is very evident from the beginning of it, it being dedicated to the same person his Gospel is, and of which he makes mention; and in the Complutensian edition the book is called, *The Acts of the Apostles of Saint Luke the Evangelist*; and so the title of it in the Syriac version is, *the Book of the Acts; that is, the history of the blessed apostles, which my Lord Luke the Evangelist collected for the saints*. It was by him written in the Greek language; and we are told[a],

[g] Jacob Aben ben Amram, porta veritatis, N°. 1094. apud Kidder, Demonstration of the Messiah, par. 3. p. 67. Ed. fol.

[h] Shirhashirim Rabbo, fol. 4. 2.

[i] Zohar in Exod. fol. 106. 4. & in Lev. fol. 26. 2. & 49. 3. & in Num. fol. 52. 2. & 59. 3. & 63. 3. & 64. 4. & 82. 3, 4.

[k] R. Abraham Seba in Tzeror Hammor, fol. 79. 1.

[a] Epiphan. Contr. Hæres. l. 1. Hæres. 30.

that there was a version of it into the Hebrew language, and which was laid up in the library of the Jews at Tiberias; and is cited by R. Azarias [b] under the name of הפעלות, *the Acts*: of the authority of this book there has been no doubt, among the ancients, only Cerinthus the heretic endeavoured to discredit it; and it was not received by another sort of heretics called Severiani, from Severus, a disciple of Tatian [c]. It is a most excellent and useful work, shewing the first planting of Christianity, and of Christian churches, both among the Jews and Gentiles; the spread and progress of the Gospel in several parts of the world; what sufferings the apostles endured for the sake of it; and with what patience and courage they bore them; and what success attended them; and is a standing proof and confirmation of the Christian religion.

CHAP. I.

Ver. 1. *THE former treatise have I made*, &c.] Meaning the Gospel written by him the Evangelist Luke, for from that he makes a transition to this, beginning here where he there left off; namely, at the ascension of Christ; see Luke xxiv. 51. *O Theophilus*; see the note on Luke i. 3. *of all that Jesus began both to do and teach*. This is a summary of his former treatise, his Gospel, which gave an account of what Christ began to do, and did; not of the common and private actions of his life; or of what was done, either in public, or private, throughout the whole of his life: for excepting that of his disputing with the doctors at twelve years of age, no account is given by him of what he did, till he was about thirty years of age; but of his extraordinary actions, of the miracles he wrought; and these not all, and every one of them; but many of them, and which were sufficient to prove him the Messiah; and particularly of all things he did relating to the salvation of his people; of the whole of his obedience; of his compliance with the ceremonial law; of his submission to baptism; of his holy life and conversation, and entire conformity to the law; of his sufferings and death, how that thereby he made full atonement for sin, brought in an everlasting righteousness, and obtained eternal redemption for his people: and not only Luke, in his Gospel, gave an account of these his actions, but also of many of his excellent discourses, his parables, and his sermons, whether delivered to the people in common, or to his own disciples: and now, as this was the subject of his former book, he intended in this latter to treat, as he does, of what the apostles of Christ began to do and teach.

Ver. 2. *Until the day in which he was taken up*, &c.] That is, into heaven. The historian suggests, that his former treatise took in the main and principal things Jesus did and taught, until such time that he ascended to heaven: *after that he, through the Holy Ghost, had given commandments unto the apostles, whom he had chosen*: our Lord having chosen twelve of his own free grace and goodness, and not according to their worth and merit, to be his apostles, a little before his ascension to heaven, gave them more express and explicit commands and orders where they should go, into all the world, to all nations; and what they should preach, the whole Gospel, salvation by faith in him, and particularly repentance and remission of sins; and what ordinances they should require believers to attend to; and how they themselves should conduct and behave in their work: the phrase, *through the Holy Ghost*, may either be read in connexion with *had given commandments*, as the Vulgate and Arabic versions read, and as we do; and the sense be, that these commands which Christ gave to his apostles, were not merely his orders, as man, but were what the Holy Ghost was equally concerned in with him, and were from him as God, and so carried a divine authority with them; and at the same time that he gave them to them, he breathed into them the Holy Ghost, whereby they had a more clear view of his doctrines and ordinances, and were more qualified to minister them; and besides, had an intimation given them, that they might expect still greater gifts of the Holy Ghost: or it may be read with the latter clause, *whom he had chosen*; as in the Syriac and Ethiopic versions; and then the meaning is, that just before his being taken up to heaven, he gave some special orders and directions to his apostles, whom he had chosen to that office through the Holy Ghost, and not through human affection in him, or according to any desert of theirs; but as under the influence of the Holy Spirit, with which, as man, he was anointed without measure; and whose gifts and graces he communicated to his disciples, to fit them for the service to which they were appointed: or with *the apostles*: they being sent by the Holy Ghost, as well as by Christ.

Ver. 3. *To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion*, &c.] That is, after his sufferings and death; for that he suffered many things, and at last death itself, is certain from the acknowledgment of the Jews themselves, who own, that they put him to death on the passover eve [d]; as well as from the accounts of the evangelists; and from the soldiers not breaking his legs, when the rest that were crucified with him were broken, because he was already dead; and from his *pericardium* being pierced with a spear, from whence blood and water sprung, after which it was impossible he should be alive; and from the testimony of the centurion who watched him, to whom Pilate sent to know if he was dead, and how long he had been dead; and from his being buried, and lying in the grave so long as he did: and yet after, and notwithstanding this, *he shewed himself alive*; he raised himself from the dead, and hereby declared himself to be the son of God with power, which cannot be said of others; there were others that were alive after death, but not by their own power; as the widow of Sarepta's son, the daughter of Jairus, Lazarus, and the widow of Naim's son; but these did not *shew themselves alive*, as Christ did, who appeared often to his apostles:

[b] Meor Enayim, p. 167.
[c] Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. 4. c. 29.
[d] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 43. 1.

for after he had first appeared to Mary Magdalene, he shewed himself to the two disciples going to Emmaus; then to ten of them, Thomas being absent; after that to them all, Thomas being present, when he convinced him of the truth of his resurrection; after that he appeared to seven of the disciples at the sea of Tiberias; and then to all the apostles; and to five hundred brethren at once on a mountain in Galilee; and once to James alone, and to them all again when he was parted from them and went up to heaven; and so they must be proper and sufficient witnesses of his resurrection: and this evidence of his being alive, he gave to them, *by many infallible proofs*: or by many signs and tokens, and which were most sure and unquestionable arguments of his being alive; as his eating and drinking with them, walking and talking with them in a free and familiar manner, shewing them his hands and his feet, and side, that they might see the scars which the nails and spear had made; and which were not only a proof that he was risen again, but risen again in the same body in which he suffered; and that they might feel and handle him, and know that he was not a spirit, a phantom, a mere apparition, but was really risen and alive: *being seen of them forty days*; not that he was seen by them for forty days together continually, but at certain times, within the space of forty days; for between his first and last appearance, many others intervening, such a length of time run out; so that it was not a single and sudden appearance that surprised them; but there were many of them, and a distance between them, and this for a considerable term of time; hence they had opportunity of reflecting upon these appearances, and of satisfying themselves of the truth of things. This number of *forty days* is a remarkable one in Scripture. The flood was forty days upon the earth; and so long Moses was in the mount with God; such a number of days the spies were searching the land of Canaan; so many days Goliath presented himself to the armies of Israel; and so long a time Elijah went in the strength of the meat the angel provided for him; and for such a length of time the prophet Ezekiel was to bear the iniquity of the house of Judah; and such a term of time was given out by Jonah for the destruction of Nineveh; and so many days Christ fasted, and was tempted in the wilderness. The Jews pretend [e], that *forty days* before Jesus was put to death he was led forth, and a crier went before him, declaring, that whoever would, had liberty to testify to his innocence if they could, but no man appeared for him: but this is false; the truth of the matter is, that for forty days after his resurrection he shewed himself to his disciples, and by proving the truth of his resurrection, he proved his own innocence and uprightness. If the testimony of Rabbenu Hakadosh, as cited by Galatinus, could be depended on, the Jews had a notion of this forty-days' conversation of the Messiah with his disciples, after his resurrection; who say [f], "the Messiah, after his resurrection, shall converse with the righteous, and they "shall hear his precepts *forty days*, answerable to "those forty days in which he shall be in the wilderness to afflict his soul, before they shall kill him; "and these being finished, he shall ascend to heaven, "and sit at the right hand of God, as it is said, Psal. "cx. 1." But this seems rather to be the pious fraud of some Christian, than the words of a Jew: however, they do say [g], that "the days of the Messiah are *forty* "*days*, as it is said, Psal. xcv. 10. *forty years long was* "*I grieved*; or, as they interpret it, *shall I be grieved* "*with this generation*:" intimating, that the generation of the Messiah, and of the wilderness, would be much alike, and equally grieving to God, and reckoning a day for a year, as the Lord did with that generation, Numb. xiv. 33, 34. These forty days Christ was with his disciples, may be an emblem of the forty years which were to run out from his death, to his coming again to take vengeance on the Jewish nation; for so long time was there from thence to the destruction of Jerusalem. And Christ was not only seen of the disciples at certain seasons during this space of time, but he was also heard by them: for it follows, *and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God*; the kingdom of the Messiah, the Gospel dispensation; concerning the doctrines of the Gospel they were to preach, and the ordinances of it they were to administer; concerning the church of God, the nature, order, and officers of it, and the laws and rules by which it should be governed; concerning the kingdom of grace, what it consists of, and wherein it lies; and of the kingdom of glory, of meetness for it, his own grace, and of the right unto it, his own justifying righteousness: some of these things they might have before but very little knowledge of; and may be these are the things he had to say to them, and which, till now, they could not bear; and being no more to be with them in person, he instructs them in them.

Ver. 4. *And being assembled together with them, &c.*] At their last meeting at Bethany, or Mount Olivet, which was by appointment: some render the words, as the Vulgate Latin, *and eating with them*: which was one of the proofs he gave of his being alive; and so the Syriac version renders it, *and when he had ate bread with them*, and the Ethiopic version, *and dining with them*, which he might do more than once; see John xxi. 12, 15. this was the last time, when he *commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem*: which does not necessarily infer, that they were then at Jerusalem; for they might be, and they seem rather to be at Bethany, or on the Mount of Olives, from whence they afterwards returned to Jerusalem; and from thence they had orders not to depart, where the blood of Christ had been shed, and where were his greatest enemies, and where the disciples might have no inclination to have gone, and much less to abide, but so it must be, partly for the glorifying of Christ by the effusion of his spirit on the apostles in the place where he had suffered the most reproach; and partly because the Gospel, the word of the Lord, was to go out of this place, according to the prophecy in Isa. ii. 3. as also because a Gospel church was to be fixed there, and a very large number of souls to be converted, and added to it; wherefore they were bid to go thither, and not stir from thence, *but wait for the promise of the father*; that is, the pouring forth of the spirit, which God the father of Christ,

[e] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 43. 1.
[f] Gale Rezeya apud Galatin. de Arcan. Cathol. ver. l. 8. c. 22.
[g] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 99. 1.

and of his people, had promised should be in the last days, Joel ii. 28. and which Christ had promised his disciples from the father, John xiv. 16. and xv. 26. and xvi. 7. *which*, saith he, *ye have heard of me*: or *by*, or *out of my mouth*, as the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions, and Beza's most ancient copy read; referring to the above passages, or to what follows: and which he the rather mentions, to assure them of its accomplishment, since it was both a promise of the father, all whose promises are yea and amen; and he had also told them of it, neither of whose words could possibly fall to the ground.

Ver. 5. *For John truly baptized with water*, &c.] Or *in water*, as he himself says, Matt. iii. 11. John's baptism was water-baptism, an immersion of persons in water: he was the first administrator of it, and therefore is here mentioned by name; and his, and the baptism of the spirit, are opposed; for there were others, as the disciples of Christ, that baptized in water as well as John: and these words are not to be understood of the words of the Lord, by the mouth of John, which the disciples heard, for they were not then called when John spoke the words in Matt. iii. 11. nor indeed are they the same with these; but these are the words of Christ himself, and which the apostles heard from his own mouth, as is clear from Acts xi. 16. though they are not recorded by any of the evangelists; and these are not the only words which Luke repeats, that the evangelists are silent about; see ch. xx. 35. *but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost*; that is, by himself; for it is Christ's prerogative to baptize with the spirit, as John foretold of him, and it designs such an extraordinary and plentiful donation of the gifts of the spirit, as may be expressed by a baptism; in which the apostles, on the day of *Pentecost*, were, as it were, to be immersed, and with them covered; as Cyril of Jerusalem[h] observes, "as "he, ὁ ἐνδύνων ἐν τοῖς ὕδασι, *who is plunged in water, and* "*baptized*, is encompassed by the water on every side, "so are they that are wholly baptized by the spirit." *Not many days hence*; within ten days, for this was on the fortieth day from his death, which was at the passover, these words were said; and on the fiftieth day from thence was the feast of *Pentecost*, when this had its fulfilment.

Ver. 6. *When they therefore were come together*, &c.] That is, Christ, and his eleven apostles; for not the hundred and twenty disciples hereafter mentioned, nor the five hundred brethren Christ appeared to at once, are here intended, but the apostles, as appears from ver. 2, 3, 4. *they asked of him, saying, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?* The kingdom had been for some time taken away from the Jews, Judea was reduced to a Roman province, and was now actually under the power of a Roman governor. And the nation in general was in great expectation, that upon the Messiah's coming they should be delivered from the yoke of the Romans, and that the son of David would be king over them. The disciples of Christ had imbibed the same notions, and were in the same expectation of a temporal kingdom to be set up by their master, as is evident from Matt. xx. 21. and though his sufferings and death had greatly damped their spirits, and almost destroyed their hopes, see Luke xxiv. 21. yet his resurrection from the dead, and his discoursing with them about the kingdom of God, and ordering them to wait at Jerusalem, the metropolis of that nation, for some thing extraordinary, revived their hopes, and emboldened them to put this question to him: and this general expectation of the Jews is expressed by them in the same language as here; "the days of the Messiah will be the time when "שתשוב המלכות לישראל, *the kingdom shall return*, or "*be restored to Israel*; and they shall return to the "land of Israel, and that king shall be exceeding "great, and the house of his kingdom shall be in "Zion, and his name shall be magnified, and his "fame shall fill the Gentiles more than King Solomon; "all nations shall be at peace with him, and all lands "shall serve him, because of his great righteousness, "and the wonderful things which shall be done by "him; and whoever rises up against him God will "destroy, and he shall deliver him into his hands; "and all the passages of Scripture testify of him "and our prosperity with him; and there shall be "no difference in any thing from what it is now, "only *the kingdom shall return to Israel*[i]."

Ver. 7. *And he said unto them*, &c.] To his disciples, *it is not for you to know the times or the seasons*; meaning, not the times that are past from Adam to Christ; as how long the world stood; when the flood came; when Sodom and Gomorrha were burned to ashes; when the children of Israel came out of Egypt, and the law was given to them; when the kingdom of Israel began, and when the Jews were carried captive, and when they returned; when the sceptre departed from Judah, and Daniel's weeks had an end: or the particular seasons of the year, and the times for planting, ploughing, sowing, reaping, &c. but when should be the time, the day, and hour of the coming of the son of man, when he shall set up his kingdom in a more glorious manner, and the kingdoms of this world shall become his; or when the kingdom shall be restored to Israel. This, by the Jews, is said to be one of the seven things hid from men[k]: "seven "things are hid from the children of men, and these "are they; the day of death, and the day of consolation, and the depth of judgment, and a man knows "not what is in the heart of his neighbour, nor with "what he shall be rewarded, and *when the kingdom* "*of the house of David shall return*, and when the "kingdom of Persia shall fall." *Which the father hath put in his own power*; and not in the power of a creature, no, not of the angels; see Matt. xxiv. 36. wherefore it is vain and sinful, as well as fruitless, to indulge a curious inquiry into these things, or into the times and seasons of what is future; as of the time of a man's death, of the end of the world, of the second coming of Christ; only those things should be looked into which God has revealed, and put into the power of man to know by diligent search and inquiry. Says R. Simeon[l], "flesh and blood, (*i. e.* man), which knows

[h] Catecheo. 17. sect. 8. p. 247.
[i] Maimon. in Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 11. sect. 1.

[k] T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 54. 2. Vid. Bereshit Rabba, sect. 65. fol. 57. 4.
[l] Apud R. Sol. Jarchi in Gen. ii. 2.

" not עתיו ורגעיו, *its times and its moments*, (and so " the Vulgate Latin renders the words here), ought to " add a void space to the blessed God, who knows the " times and moments."

Ver. 8. *But ye shall receive power*, &c.] From on high, with which they were to be endured, Luke xxiv. 49. meaning the power of the Holy Ghost, strength from him to preach the Gospel, and work miracles in confirmation of it, and courage and greatness of mind, amidst all reproaches and persecutions, to face and oppose their enemies, profess the name of Christ, abide by his truths and ordinances, make their way through all opposition and difficulties, and spread the Gospel all over the world; for intead of enjoying wordly ease, honour, wealth, and riches, they were looking for, our Lord gives them to understand that they must expect labour, service, afflictions, and trials, which would require power and strength, and which they should have: *after that the Holy Ghost shall come upon you;* from above, from heaven, as he did, and sat upon them in the form of cloven tongues, and of fire; upon which they were filled with knowledge and zeal, with strength and courage, and with all gifts and abilities necessary for their work: *and ye shall be witnesses unto me;* of the person of Christ, of his deity and sonship, of his incarnation, his ministry, and his miracles, of his suffering and death, of his resurrection from the dead, and his ascension to heaven. This was to be their work, and what belong to them, and not to enquire about a temporal kingdom, and the setting up of that, and the times and seasons of it; their business was to testify of the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that followed, and to preach a crucified Jesus, as the only Saviour of lost sinners: and this *both in Jerusalem*, the *metropolis* of the nation, and there, in the first place, where such dwelt who had been concerned in the crucifixion of Christ, many of whom were to be called by grace, and converted through their ministry: *and in all Judea;* that part of the land of Israel which was distinct from Samaria and Galilee, and from beyond Jordan; where churches were to be planted, as afterwards they were; see ch. ix. 31. *And in Samaria;* where Christ had before forbid his disciples to go; but now their commission is enlarged, and they are sent there; and here Philip went upon the persecution raised against the church at Jerusalem, and preached Christ with great success, to the conversion of many; and hither Peter and John went to lay their hands on them, and confirm them; see ch. viii. 5, 14. *and unto the uttermost part of the earth;* throughout the whole world, whither the sound of the apostles, and their words went, Rom. x. 18.

Ver. 9. *And when he had spoken these things*, &c.] That the times and seasons were not to be known by them, but to be kept a secret by the father: that they should tarry at Jerusalem, and in a few days be baptized with the Holy Ghost, and receive such power, abilities, strength, and courage thereby, as to bear a noble testimony for Christ, not only there, but in all the world; and when he had given them a fresh commission, and told them where they should go, what they should preach, and what miracles they should perform, and blessed them. *While they beheld;* all the Oriental versions, add, *him;* that is Christ, while they looked wistly at him, being attentive to what he said to them, so that they were not asleep; nor did Christ become invisible to them, or disappear before his ascension, but was visible to them in it; hence they were eye-witnesses of it: *he was taken up.* Luke in his Gospel says, *carried up;* very likely by angels, since these not only attended him in his ascension, but are the chariots of the Lord, in which he went up to heaven; see Psal. lxviii. 17, 18. nor is this at all inconsistent with his proper deity, or that divine power he had of elevating himself, which he could do without the assistance of others; but this makes for the glory of his majesty. *And a cloud received him out of their sight;* which was done partly for the same purpose, to add to the grandeur and magnificence of Christ's ascension; and partly to check the curiosity of the disciples, and prevent their gazing any more at him; and it may be that this cloud was no other than a number of angels that appeared in this form; just as Elijah was taken up to heaven by angels, who appeared in the form of horses and chariots of fire; and the rather this may be the sense here, since it is certain, that there was a large number of angels which attended Christ at his ascension; and by whom he was then seen, Psal. lxviii. 17, 18. John i. 51. 1 Tim. iii. 16. whereas, if these are not intended by the cloud, no more than two are here taken notice of, and these not as going along with Christ, but staying behind to converse with his disciples; to which may be added, that Christ was *received* by this cloud which descended to meet him, and joining him, escorted him to heaven: at least it may be thought, if it was a real cloud, that there was a multitude of angels in it, which accompanied him to the heavenly regions; for it can hardly be thought that a multitude of the heavenly host should descend at his birth, and sing glory to God upon his coming into this world; and not as large a number attend him with shouts and acclamations, at his going out of it, when he had done his work he came about, and was ascending to his God and father, to take his place at his right hand on his throne; see Psal. xlvii. 5. The Ethiopic version adds, *and he ascended to heaven.*

Ver. 10. *And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven*, &c.] For though he was taken out of their sight by the cloud, they kept looking upwards, and after him, if they could see him again, or any more of him: *as he went up;* they looked up to heaven after him, as he went up from the earth, before the cloud took him out of their sight: and still they continued looking, as the cloud carried him up, until it was out of the reach of their sight, being willing to see the last of him in this way: *behold, two men stood by them in white apparel;* that is, two angels in the form of men; it being usual with them to appear in human form: these on a sudden appeared and stood on the earth just by them; though the Ethiopic version renders it, *they stood above them*, as if they were in the air over their heads; and they appeared in white apparel, as the angel at the sepulchre in Matt. xxviii. 2, 3. which was a symbol both of their purity and holiness, and of their lustre and glory. The Ethiopic version renders it, *they were clothed with lightning;* they

appeared in such a dazzling form, that it looked as if they were covered with lightning; as the angel that appeared at Christ's resurrection, his countenance is said to be as lightning; which must at once fix the attention of the disciples to them, and strike them with surprise: hence a *behold* is prefixed to this: and hereby they knew that they were not common and ordinary men, or mere men, but angels in such a form.

Ver. 11. *Which also said, ye men of Galilee*, &c.] And which was said by them, not to reproach them with their country, but partly to let them know that they knew them, who they were, and from whence they came; and partly to observe the rich and distinguishing grace of God in choosing such mean and contemptible persons to be the apostles of Christ, and eye-witnesses of his majesty: *why stand ye gazing up into heaven?* reproving them for their curiosity in looking after Christ with their bodily eyes, who was no more in common to be seen this way, but with an eye of faith; and for their desire after his corporeal presence, which they were not to look for; and as if they expected he would return again immediately, whereas his return will not be till the end of the world: and besides, they were not to remain on that spot, or stand gazing there; they were to go to Jerusalem, and abide there, as Christ had ordered, till they should receive the Holy Spirit in an extraordinary way; and then they were to preach a crucified Christ, and declare that he was risen from the dead, and was gone to heaven, and was ordained to be the Judge of quick and dead. *This same Jesus;* and not another; the same in person, in body and soul: *which is taken up from you into heaven;* who was taken up in a cloud out of their sight, and received into heaven, where he will be till the times of the restitution of all things; and which might be matter of grief to them, because of the loss of his bodily presence; though it should have been rather joyful to them, since he was gone to the father, and as their fore-runner, to prepare a place, and make intercession for them: *shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven:* he shall come in the same flesh, in the same human nature; he shall come in the clouds of heaven, and shall be attended with his mighty angels, as he now was; he shall descend himself in person, as he now ascended in person; and as he went up with a shout, and with the sound of a trumpet, see Psal. xlvii. 5. so he shall descend with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God; and, it may be, he shall descend upon the very spot from whence he ascended; see Zech. xiv. 4. and it is a notion of the Jews, that the resurrection of the Israelites will be there: they say [m], that "when the "dead shall live, the Mount of Olives shall be cleaved "asunder, and all the dead of Israel shall come out "from under it; yea, even the righteous which die in "captivity shall pass through subterraneous caverns, "and come out from under the Mount of Olives."

Ver. 12. *Then returned they unto Jerusalem*, &c.] With great joy, after the angels had told them that he should come again in like manner: *from the mount called Olivet;* which was on the east side of Jerusalem, a mountain Christ much frequented, and from whence he ascended to heaven. This is the hill which in 1 Kings xi. 7. is said to be *before Jerusalem;* and accordingly Jarchi interprets it of the Mount of Olives; and in Zech. xiv. 4. it is expressly said to be *before Jerusalem on the east:* hence, when our Lord sat upon it, he is said to be over-against the temple, Mark xiii. 3. It has its name from the multitude of olive-trees which grew upon it: it is by the Jewish writers sometimes called הר הזיתים, *the Mount of Olives* [n], as in Zech. xiv. 4. and sometimes הר המשחה [o], and טור משחא [p], *the Mount of Oil: i. e.* of olive oil, which was made out of the olives that grew upon it. It is said, that in an old edition of the Latin version of this text it is called *the Mountain of Three Lights;* and this reason is given for it, because on the west side it was enlightened in the night by the continual fire of the altar in the temple; and on the east side it had the first beams of the sun before the city was enlightened with them; and it produced plenty of olives, by which the light is maintained in the lamps. Josephus [q] relates, that in the earthquake in the times of Uzziah, half part of this mountain, which was to the west, was divided from it, and was rolled four furlongs to the eastern part of it, so that the ways and king's gardens were stopped up. *Which is from Jerusalem a sabbath-day's journey.* The Syriac version renders it, *about seven furlongs*, or near a mile; though Josephus [r] writes, that the Mount of Olives was but five furlongs from Jerusalem: perhaps this may be a mistake in the present copies of Josephus, since Chrysostom on this place cites this passage of Josephus, and reads seven furlongs; which exactly agrees with the Syriac version. A sabbath-day's journey, according to the Jews, was two thousand cubits from any city or town, and which they often called, תחום שבת, *the bound of the sabbath* [s]; and which they collect partly from Numb. xxxv. 4, 5. which they understand thus [t]: "a thousand cubits are the suburbs (of the city), and "two thousand cubits the bounds of the sabbath." And these were so many middling paces; for so they say [u], "a walk of two thousand middling paces, this "is the bound of the sabbath." And that this was the proper space they also gather from Josh. iii. 4. it being the distance between the ark and the people when they marched; and though this was not fixed by the law, yet being a tradition of the elders, was strictly observed by them: so when Ruth desired to become a proselytess, the Targumist on Ruth i. 16. introduces Naomi thus speaking to her; "says Naomi, we are "commanded to keep the sabbaths, and the good days, "(or feasts,) and not to walk above *two thousand cubits;*" *i. e.* on those days; for to go further was reckoned a profanation of them: so it is said [w], "the sabbath-"day is profaned with the hands by work, and with "the feet by walking more than *two thousand cubits.*"

[m] Targum in Cant. viii. 5.
[n] Prefat. Echa Rabbati, fol. 40. 4. Jarchi in 1 Kings xi. 7.
[o] Misn. Parah, c. 3. sect. 6. Echa Rabbati, fol. 52. 4. Misn. Roshhashanah, c. 2. sect. 4
[p] Targum in Cant. viii. 5.
[q] Antiqu. l. 9. c. 10. sect. 4.
[r] Antiqu. l. 20. c. 7. sect. 6.
[s] Midrash Kohelet, fol. 75. 2. Vid. Maimon. Hilchot Sabbat, c. 27. & 28. & Origin. Philocal. p. 14.
[t] Misna Sota, c. 5. sect 3.
[u] T. Bab. Erubin, fol. 42. 1. Maimon. Hilch. Sabbat, c. 27. sect. 4.
[w] Zohar in Exod. fol. 27. 1. & 83. 2.

Yea, this was punishable with beating[x]: "a man "might go on the sabbath without the city two thou-"sand cubits on every side——but if he went beyond "two thousand cubits, they beat him with the beating "of rebels," or in the same manner a rebellious son was beaten. Nay, not only they might not go out of a city or town where they were, further than this, but from whatsoever place they happened to be, as appears by these following rules[y]; "if any one falls asleep in "the way (or on the road), and he does not know that "it was dark (and so that the sabbath is begun), he "has two thousand cubits (allowed him) on every side. "—Whoever is on a journey, and it is dark, and he "knows a tree, or a hedge, and says, let my sabbath "(or sabbatical seat) be under it, he says nothing; "but if he says, let my sabbath be at the root of it, "then he may go from the place of his feet, and to "the root of it, two thousand cubits, and from the "root of it to his house two thousand cubits; by "which means he may go four thousand cubits after "it is dark. But if he does not know (any), and is "not expert in walking, and says, let my sabbath be "in my place, (*i. e.* in which he stands,) then from his "place he has two thousand cubits on every side." Hence, in some copies it is here inserted, *such being the distance that the Jews could walk*; that is, were allowed to walk by their canons. They call two thousand cubits a mile[z]; and if the Mount of Olives was seven furlongs from Jerusalem, it was pretty near a mile; but if but five furlongs, it was little more than half a mile: perhaps the true distance might be six furlongs, since Josephus says[a], the tenth legion was ordered to encamp six furlongs from Jerusalem, at the Mount of Olives, which was over-against the city to the east; agreeably to which Epiphanius[b], who had been a Jew, and was born in Palestine, says, "it was not lawful to "go on the sabbath-day beyond six furlongs," which were three quarters of a mile.

Ver. 13. *And when they were come in*, &c.] *Into it*, as the Arabic version reads; that is, into the city of Jerusalem, and into some house in that city; but what house it was is needless to inquire, since it cannot be known. Some think it was the house of John the Evangelist, whither he had taken Mary the mother of our Lord, John xix. 27. which is not improbable: others, that it was the house of Mary, the mother of John Mark, where the disciples met for prayer when Peter was put into prison, Acts xii. 12. others, that it was the house of Simon the leper; but his house was not at Jerusalem, but in Bethany, Matt. xxvi. 6. Some have thought it was the house of Nicodemus, or of Joseph of Arimathea; but after all it seems most likely, that it was not any private house, but the temple into which the disciples immediately went, and where they continued; see Luke xxiv. 52, 53. and Acts ii. 46. *they went up into an upper room*; which, if in a private house, they might choose for retirement and secrecy; and might be the same in which they had eaten the passover; and so a Syriac scholiast, in manuscript, on the place, says it was the same. It was usual to meet in upper rooms for devotion and religious conversation; see the note on Mark ii. 4. though this upper room might be one of the chambers in the temple; for not only from the scriptural account of the temple, there were chambers round about it, and upper chambers; see 1 Kings vi. 5. 1 Chron. xxviii. 11. 2 Chron. iii. 9. and one of these is called the chamber of Gemariah, in which Baruch read the prophecies of Jeremiah, Jer. xxxvi. 10. but also from the Jewish writings, in which frequent mention is made of the chamber Palhedrin, where the high-priest was brought seven days before the day of atonement[c]; and the chamber of the counsellors[d]; and the chamber Gazith, where the sanhedrim sat; and the chamber of the house of Abtines[e]; and the chamber of wood; and the chamber of the lepers; and the chamber of the house of oil[f]; and the chamber of salt; and the chamber of Parvah; and the chamber of them that wash, besides others[g]. And into a chamber, or upper room in the temple they might be let by Joses Barnabas, a Levite, one of their own company, Acts iv. 36. who might have the care of it, for they are said to be continually in the temple, Luke xxiv. 53. *Where abode both Peter, and James, and John*. The Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions read, *Peter, and John, and James*; and so the Alexandrian copy. These were the three favourite disciples of Christ, and oftened mentioned together, as here first; *and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew*. The Syriac and Ethiopic versions put Matthew before Bartholomew. *James the son of Alpheus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas*, the brother *of James*; all the Oriental versions read, *Judas the son of James*: of the names of the apostles, see the notes on Matt. x. 2, 3, 4. They are all here mentioned but Judas the betrayer, who was dead, to shew, that though one had disbelieved the resurrection of Christ, another had denied him, and all of them had forsook him, and fled; yet they were got together again, and were firm and steadfast in the faith of Christ, waiting for the pouring forth of the spirit.

Ver. 14. *These all continued, with one accord, in prayer and supplication*, &c.] For the promise of the spirit Christ had given them reason to expect; and that they might be preserved from their enemies, and kept faithful to their Lord; and be abundantly qualified for the preaching of the Gospel, and succeeded in it; and that their hearts might be comforted, and knit together in love: and they were unanimous in their requests, and so were under the promise of being heard; and in this work they were constant, and assiduous, and followed it with importunity. The Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions leave out the last clause, *and supplication*; and so likewise the Alexandrian copy: *with the women*: that followed Christ from Galilee, and were at his cross, and at his grave; among whom were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Salome the wife of Zebedee. Some render the words, *with their wives*: the wives of the apostles; and as many

[x] Maimon. Hilchot Sabbat, c. 27. sect. 1, 2.
[y] Misna Erubin, c. 4. sect. 5, 7, 8.
[z] Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 2. fol. 178. 4.
[a] De Bello Jud. l. 5. c. 2. sect. 3.
[b] Contra Hæres. l. 2. Hæres. 66.

[c] Misn. Yoma, c. 1. sect. 1.
[d] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 8. 2.
[e] Ib. fol. 19. 1.
[f] Misn. Middot, c. 2. sect. 5.
[g] Ib. c. 5. sect. 2, 3.

as had wives, no doubt but they were with them: and it was necessary they should be, that they might be strengthened and confirmed in the faith of Christ. Beza's most ancient copy adds, *and children; and Mary the mother of Jesus.* This is the last we hear of her; how long she lived after this, is not certain: her continuance with the apostles of Christ shews her religion and piety, and was both for the increase of her faith, and spiritual comfort: *and with his brethren;* see Matt. xiii. 55. and the note there.

Ver. 15. *And in those days Peter stood up,* &c.] That is, in one of the days after Christ's ascension, and before the day of Pentecost, whilst the disciples were waiting for the promise of the spirit. The Ethiopic version reads, *on that day:* as if it was the same day they came first into Jerusalem, and went into the upper room; and which is likely enough; for no time was to be lost in choosing one in the room of Judas; when Peter, not only as a forward person, and who had been used to be the first mover and actor in any affair; but as willing to shew his zeal for Christ, whom he had so lately denied, and as being the senior man in company, as well as the minister of the circumcision, rises, and stands up, as persons used to do, when about to make an oration, and in respect and reverence to the persons addressed: *in the midst of the disciples;* not only the other ten, but the whole hundred and twenty. The Alexandrian copy, and some others, read, *in the midst of the brethren,* and so reads the Vulgate Latin version; and the Ethiopic version, *in the midst of his own brethren; and he said* what is expressed in the following verses, which before the historian relates, he inserts in a parenthesis this clause, *the number of the names;* that is, of persons; see Rev. xi. 13. Some copies read, *of the men,* and so the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions; who *together,* all put together in one sum, or as meeting together in one and the same place, or as agreeing in the same faith and judgment, so the Arabic version, *and there was there a company whose names and wills agreed in this same opinion;* they were all in one place, and of the same mind; and the sum of them *were about an hundred and twenty;* among whom were the eleven apostles, and seventy disciples, which made eighty-one; so that there were thirty-nine persons more in this company: not that it is to be thought that these were all that were in Jerusalem that believed in Christ; but these were the number of the persons that met and embodied together in a church-state, and who not only gave themselves to the Lord, but to one another, by the will of God; and their names being taken and registered, the historian calls the account of them, the number of the names, and not persons; though he means persons. This was a number pretty famous among the Jews; the sanhedrim of Ezra, called the men of the great synagogue, consisted of an *hundred and twenty* elders; the last of which was Simeon the just, and he comprehended the hundred and twenty[h]. And such a number was requisite for a sanhedrim in any place; it is asked, "how many must "there be in a city, that it may be fit for a sanhedrim? "*an hundred and twenty:* R. Nehemiah says two hun-"dred and thirty[i]:" but the decision is according to the former: hence they say[k], that "they fix in every "city in Israel, where there is an *hundred and twenty,* "or more, a lesser sanhedrim.——A city in which "there is not an *hundred and twenty,* they place three "judges, for there is no sanhedrim less than three."

Ver. 16. *Men and brethren,* &c.] Which is said not so much by Peter to express his modesty, and humility, and his brotherly love; or on account of the spiritual relation that subsisted between him and the persons he speaks to, as it was a common form used in addresses; see Acts vii. 2. and xv. 7. and xxii. 1. and xxiii. 1. it should seem, that the women were not reckoned into the number of the hundred and twenty here addressed; and the Syriac version calls that number, the *number of men,* unless they are supposed to be included in them: *this Scripture must needs have been fulfilled;* or *must needs be fulfilled;* referring either to Psal. xli. 9. or rather to the passages after cited out of Psal. lxix. 25. and cix. 8. There was a necessity of the fulfilling of it, consistent with the prescience of God, his counsel, and decree, and the veracity of the Scripture; which necessity does not at all excuse the sin of Judas, who acted freely from the wickedness of his own heart, and not from any force that this laid upon him: and the apostle might observe this also, to make the minds of the disciples easy, under this awful providence, since it was no other than what was predicted: and *which the Holy Ghost, by the mouth of David, spake before;* even many hundreds of years before the event; and which shews the omniscience, and so the deity of the Holy Ghost, and the divine authority of David's Psalms; as well as the honour that was put upon him to be the instrument by which the Holy Ghost speaks, and to be his amanuensis: the particular referred to, is, *concerning* Judas; who is sometimes called Iscariot, to distinguish him from another apostle of the same name; and what is hereafter said sufficiently does that; or *concerning that Judas,* as the Syriac version renders it: *which was a guide to them that took Jesus;* to the band of soldiers and officers, who came with swords and staves, as to take a thief, or a robber; before these Judas went and shewed them, not only the place where he was, but gave them a sign by which they should know him, and also advice to take him and hold him fast, and lead him away safely; so that he was not only a guide as to the way, but was a director, and conductor, and manager of the whole affair. And it may be observed, that though Peter did not conceal, but declares the sin of Judas; yet not in a rough manner, aggravating it, but with much softness and tenderness; though with no design to lessen it, as appears by what follows, and which may be instructive to us in speaking of other men's sins.

Ver. 17. *For he was numbered with us,* &c.] He was chosen an apostle with the rest, and was ordained into that office when they were, and was always reckoned one of the twelve, and stands in the catalogue when they are mentioned: *and had obtained part of this ministry;* by lot, as the word signifies; the providence

[h] Juchasin, fol. 13. 2. Bartenora in Pirke Abot, c. 1. sect. 1. Elias Levit. prefat. 3. ad Sepher Masoret.

[i] Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 1. sect. 6. Vid. Maimon. & Bartenora in ib. & T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 17. 2.

[k] Maimon. Hilchot Sanhedrin, c. 1. sect. 3, 4.

of God so ordering it, according to his eternal purpose and decree, that he was not only called an apostle, and enrolled among them, but he really had a part in that ministry; he preached, and baptized, and wrought miracles; and besides all this, carried the bag, was the treasurer, and a sort of a steward in Christ's family, and provided for it.

Ver. 18. *Now this man purchased a field,* &c.] This verse, with the following, seem to be the words of Luke the historian, which should be read in a parenthesis; for there was no need to have acquainted the disciples with the manner of Judas's death, which was so well known to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem; nor would Jerusalem, and the inhabitants of it, be mentioned with that propriety by Peter, when he, and those he spoke of, were upon the spot; nor could there be any necessity of his explaining a word in their own tongue, which they understood, and that in a language unknown unto them; nor does it seem likely, that in so short a time as five or six weeks, the field should have obtained the name of *Aceldama*, and be commonly known by it. The Ethiopic version calls this field, *a vineyard;* and so it might be, and yet the potter's field too. It is somewhat difficult, that Judas should be said to purchase it, when Matthew says the chief priests bought it, Matt. xxvii. 7. Both are true; Judas having received his money of the chief priests two days ago, might not only intend to purchase, but might really strike a bargain with the potter for his field; but repenting of his sin, instead of carrying the money to make good the agreement, went and threw it to the chief priests, and then hanged himself; when they, by a secret providence, might be directed to make a purchase of the same field with his money; or he may be said to purchase it, because it was purchased with his money. The Vulgate Latin, and Arabic versions render it, *he possessed* it; not in person, unless he was buried there, as he might be; and so all that he got by his wretched bargain, was only so much ground as to be buried in; or the sense may be, *he caused it to be possessed;* by returning the money which the chief priests used this way; *with the reward of his iniquity;* that is, with the thirty pieces of silver, given him as a reward for that vile action of his betraying of his Lord and master: so the reward of divination, or what Balaam got by soothsaying, which was an iniquitous and wicked practice, is called, *the wages of unrighteousness,* 2 Peter ii. 15. *and falling headlong he burst in the midst;* either falling from the gallows, or tree on which he hanged himself, the rope breaking, upon a stone, or stump, his belly was broke, and burst; or falling from the air, whither he was violently snatched up by Satan, who was in him, and by whom he was thrown down to the earth, and who went out of him by a rupture made in his belly; or being in deep melancholy, he was strangled with the squinancy, and fell down on his face to the ground, as the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions render it, *and burst asunder: and all his bowels gushed out;* through the rupture that was made. So we read of a man that fell from the roof of a house, פקעה כרסיה ונפקין מעיינה, *and his belly burst, and his bowels came out* [l]. And this was the miserable end of Judas. The death of Arius, as related by Athanasius [m], from Macarius the presbyter, who was present, was much after the same manner; who reports, that having swore to the orthodox faith, and being about to be introduced into the church at Constantinople, after the prayer of Alexander, the bishop of it, he went out to the seat, to ease nature; when he, on a sudden, fell down headlong, and burst in the middle, and immediately expired: and Epiphanius [n] compares his exit with this of Judas, who observes, that he went out in the night to the vault, as before related, and burst asunder, as Judas of old did; and came to his end in a filthy and unclean place. Ruffinus says [o], that as he sat, his entrails, and all his bowels, came from him into the vault; and so he died in such a place, a death worthy of his blasphemous and corrupt mind. As to the seeming difference between the Evangelist Matthew and the Apostle Peter, it may be reconciled by either of the ways before mentioned; see the note on Matt. xxvii. 5. though it seems most likely, that Judas not being able to bear the torments of his mind, he hanged himself, as Achitophel did, and was not strangled by the devil, or by any disease; and that he fell down from the tree on which he hung, either the rope breaking, or the tree falling; and so the things happened to him which are recorded: or he might fall from hence, either through a violent strong wind which blew him down; or through the rushing of wild beasts against the gallows, on which he hung; or by the devil himself, who might throw him down from hence after he had dispatched himself, as some have conjectured: or, which seems best of all, he might be cast down from hence by men, either of themselves, or by the order of the civil magistrates, not enduring such a sight, that one that had destroyed himself should hang long there; and which, according to the law, was not to be admitted; and these not taking him down, in a gentle manner, but using some violence, or cutting the rope, the body fell, and burst asunder, as is here said: and it should be observed, that the Evangelist Matthew speaks of the death of Judas, in which he himself was concerned; and the Apostle Peter reports what befell his carcass after his death, and in which others were concerned. The Vulgate Latin renders it, *and being hanged, he burst in the middle;* as if this happened to him upon the gallows, without falling.

Ver. 19. *And it was known unto all the dwellers at Jerusalem,* &c.] As that he betrayed Jesus of Nazareth into the hands of the chief priests, for thirty pieces of silver; that this was the reward of his iniquity; and that with this a field was purchased for the burying of strangers in; and that he died in such a miserable way: there was scarce an inhabitant in Jerusalem but knew all this, *insomuch as that field is called in their proper tongue;* or *in their own dialect,* the *Jerusalem dialect,* which was now Chaldee, or Syriac; and such is the word that follows, *Aceldama: that is to say, the field of blood:* because it was bought with the price of Christ's blood: and if, as some say, Judas hanged him-

[l] T. Bab. Cholin, fol. 56. 2.
[m] Epist. ad. Serapion, Vol. I. p. 523.

[n] Contra Hæres. l. 2. Hæres. 68.
[o] L. 1. c. 13.

self here, or was thrown headlong here by Satan, and that this was the place where his bowels gushed out; then it may be likewise so called, because it was sprinkled with his blood. It is called in the Alexandrian copy *Acheldamach*; and often by Jerom[p] *Acheldemach*, but very wrongly; for not *Demach*, but *Dema*, in the Syriac and Chaldee dialect, signifies *blood*: which Peter calls the dialect of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, being now spoken by them, in distinction from the Galilean dialect used by him; which, it is plain, was different from the Jerusalem dialect by what is said, Mark xiv. 70. This field, as it is reported by some, was by the appointment of the Empress Helena compassed about with four walls, in the manner of a tower, upon the top of which are seven distinct doors, like windows, by which the dead bodies of Christians are let down into it; and that it is fifty feet wide, and seventy-two long: it stands not far from the valley of Hinnom, and is upon the south side of Mount Zion, where, as Jerom says[q], it was shewed in his time. Masius[r] affirms, there was a very high mountain near Jerusalem, called Mount Aceldema, from the adjacent field, which was bought with the price of Christ's blood, to bury strangers in.

Ver. 20. *For it is written in the book of Psalms, &c.*] In Psal. lxix. 25. These are the words of Peter, citing the Scripture he had said must be fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost, by David, had spoke concerning Judas: *let his habitation be desolate.* The Arabic and Ethiopic versions render it, *his city;* meaning, perhaps, the city of Jerusalem; and which afterwards did become desolate, and was utterly destroyed: *and let no man dwell therein;* in his habitation. The psalm, out of which these words are cited, is a psalm concerning the Messiah, and there are many passages cited out of it in the New Testament, and applied to him, or referred unto; see John ii. 17. and xv. 25. and xix. 28. Rom. xv. 3. compared with Psal. lxix. 4, 9, 21. and what the psalmist says of the enemies of the Messiah in general, is applied by the apostle to Judas in particular. In the Hebrew text, in Psal. lxix. 25. the words are in the plural number, *let their habitation be desolate*, and *let none dwell in their tents;* and refer to all the enemies of Christ, the chief priests, elders of the people, Scribes and Pharisees, who covenanted with Judas to give him so much money to betray Christ into their hands; and who delivered him to the Roman governor, by whom, at their instigation, he was crucified; and particularly may well be thought to include Judas, who betrayed him to them; and therefore are very fitly interpreted of him: though not to be understood to the exclusion of the others, whose house was to be left desolate, and was left desolate, as our Lord predicted, Matt. xxiii. 38. The first word in the Hebrew text rendered *habitation*, signifies a very magnificent dwelling; it is sometimes translated a *castle*, Gen. xxv. 16. Numb. xxxi. 10. 1 Chron. vi. 54. and sometimes a *palace*, Cant. viii. 9. Ezek. xxv. 4. and it is interpreted by ארמון, *a palace*, here, by several Jewish writers[s]; and so may intend the dwelling-places of the richer sort of Christ's enemies, as the palaces of the high-priest, and of the prince, or president of the sanhedrim, and the stately houses of the members of it, of the chief priests and elders of the people, and of the Scribes and Pharisees; all which became desolate at the destruction of Jerusalem: the other word, rendered *tents*, may design the cottages of the meaner sort of people, who, with united voices, cried aloud for the crucifixion of Christ; and which also shared the same fate when Jerusalem was destroyed: now inasmuch as Judas was of the meaner sort, the apostle here makes use of a word which signifies but a poor and mean habitation, though it is sometimes used of grander ones, and which seems to answer to the latter; for as there are two words in the original text expressive of habitation, he might choose which he would, and did choose that which was most pertinent in the application of the passage to Judas. However, a Jew has no reason to find fault with this version, since the Targum renders both words by *habitation*, thus; *let their habitation be desolate*, and *in their habitations let no one dwell:* where Judas's habitation was is not certain; but that he might have one as well as the Apostle John, is not at all improbable, and from hence seems evident: *and his bishopric let another take;* which passage stands in Psal. cix. 8. and is fitly applied to Judas, and was verified in him, who not only died a violent and infamous death, by which he was in consequence stripped of his office, as a bishop, or overseer; but another was to be put into it, invested with it, and exercise it; and therefore very pertinently does Peter produce it, his intention being to move the disciples to choose another in his room. These words are produced by the apostle, as if they were to be found in the same place with the preceding; whereas they stand in another psalm, as has been observed: and this is no unusual thing with the writers of the New Testament, to put several passages of Scripture together, as if they were in one place, when they are to be sought for in different places; an instance of this, among many, that might be mentioned, is in Rom. iii. 10—18. and this is a very common way of citing Scripture with the Jews. Surenhusius[t] has given a variety of instances, in proof of this, out of their writings, as in the margin[u], which the learned reader may consult and compare at leisure. The psalm, out of which this passage is cited, is not to be understood of David literally, and of what he met with from his enemies, and of his imprecations upon them, either Doeg the Edomite, as Kimchi interprets it, or Achitophel, as others, but of the Messiah, with whom the whole agrees; against whom the mouth of the wicked Jews, and particularly of the deceitful Pharisees, were opened; and against whom the false witnesses spoke with lying tongues; and who, all of them, compassed him with words of hatred to take away his life, and acted a most ungenerous and ungrateful part; opposed him without a cause, and became his enemies for his love shewed to them, both to soul and body, preaching the Gospel, and healing diseases, ver. 2, 3, 4, 5. The poverty and distress he

[p] Comment. in Psal. 108. fol. 73. D. & de locis Hebraicis, fol. 89. C. & 95. H. & de Nominibus Hebraicis, fol. 105. H.
[q] De locis Hebraicis, ib.
[r] Comment. in Josuam, p. 282.

[s] Kimchi & Sol. ben Melech in Psal. 69. 25. R. Nathan. Concordant.
[t] Biblos Katallages, p. 45, 46.
[u] T. Bab. Roshhoshana, fol. 4. 2. Beracot, fol. 18. 1. Sabbat, fol. 20. 1. Maccot, fol. 12. 2. & 16. 1. Tanchuma, fol. 17. 1, 4. & 25. 1, 4.

submitted to; the griefs and sorrows which he bore; the fatigues he underwent at his examination; and the weakness of body he was then reduced to, as well as the reproach cast upon him on the cross, when his enemies shook their heads at him, are in a very lively manner described, ver. 22, 23, 24, 25. and whereas one of his enemies particularly is singled out from the rest, what is said concerning him, by way of imprecation, suits with Judas, and had its accomplishment in him, ver. 6, 7, 8. who had a wicked man set over him, as over the rest of the Jews, Pilate, the Roman governor, a very wicked man; and at whose right hand Satan stood, as one of his council, as Aben Ezra interprets it, and put it into his heart to betray his master, and prompted him to it, and then accused him of it, and brought him to black despair for it; and who, when this affair was brought home to his own conscience, and there arraigned for it, was convicted and self-condemned, as he also will be at the general judgment; and as he found no place of mercy then, whatever prayers or entreaties he might make, so neither will he hereafter: his days were but few, being cut off in the prime of them, as may be concluded from the many years which some of his fellow-apostles lived after him; and his bishopric, or office, as an apostle, was taken by another, even by Matthias, who was chosen in his room, of which we have an account in the following part of this chapter; for this is to be understood neither of his money, nor of his wife, nor of his own soul committed to his trust, as some of the Jewish writers* explain it; but of his apostleship, with which he was invested by Christ. The word signifies an oversight, care, or charge; and so the Hebrew word פקודה is rendered in Numb. iii. 32, 36. and designs any office, as the office of the priests and Levites in the house of God: see Numb. iv. 16. Jarchi interprets it here by גדולתו, *his greatness*, or *dignity;* and explains it by the Spanish word *provostia*, an office of honour and authority, as this of being an apostle of Christ was; than which, a greater external dignity could not be enjoyed in the church of God, in which he has set first apostles, 1 Cor. xii. 28. That this psalm refers to Judas Iscariot, and to his affair, was so clear a point with the ancients, that they used to call it the Iscariotic Psalm. I lay no stress upon the observation some have made, that thirty curses are contained in it, the number of the pieces of silver for which he betrayed his master, since this may be thought to be too curious.

Ver. 21. *Wherefore of these men which have companied with us, &c.*] Seeing there was such an imprecation, which carried in it the nature of a prophecy, that another should take the bishopric of Judas, or be made an apostle in his room, it was absolutely necessary that one should be immediately chosen to that office; and this is the force of the illative particle, *wherefore:* and it was highly proper that this choice should be of one among the men, and not the women; whom it did not become to bear any office, and exercise any authority in the church; hence it is said, *of these men*, to the exclusion of women: and it was exceeding right, and a very good notion, that the choice should be of one from among themselves, and who was known unto them; with whose abilities, integrity, wisdom, and holy conversation, they were acquainted: and therefore 'tis added, *which have companied with us;* one of our own company, and not a stranger; with whom we have familiarly conversed, and whose character is well known to us: a rule which ought to be attended to, in the choice of inferior officers, as pastors and deacons; who ought to be of the body and community, among whom they are chosen to an office; and their qualifications for it be well known, and that for some time past, as follows: *all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us;* that is, ever since Christ called them to be his disciples and followers; and conversed with them, and discharged his office among them, governed, directed, taught, and instructed them; for it was not proper that a novice, a new plant, or one that was lately become a disciple, should be put into such an office; and the same holds good in proportion in other offices; men called to office should be of some standing, as well as of superior gifts.

Ver. 22. *Beginning from the baptism of John, &c.*] Not from the time that John first administered the ordinance of baptism; for Christ was not so soon made known, or had followers; but from the time of the administration of it by John, to Christ, when he was made known to Israel; and quickly upon this, he called his disciples, and entered on his public ministry: now Peter moves, that one who had been so early a follower of Christ, who had heard his excellent discourses, and seen his miracles, and who had steadfastly and constantly adhered to him, might be chosen in the room of Judas; one whose faith in Christ, love to him, and firmness of mind to abide by him, had been sufficiently tried and proved; who had continued with Christ and his apostles, from the beginning of his ministry, to that time: or as Peter adds, *unto the same day that he was taken up from us;* by angels, and received by a cloud, and carried up to heaven; or *he ascended from us*, as the Ethiopic version renders it; or *lifted up himself from us*, as the Arabic version; for as he raised himself from the dead by his own power, by the same he could raise himself up from earth to heaven; the sense is, to the time of his ascension to heaven, whether by himself, or by the ministry of angels: *must one be ordained;* there was a necessity of this, partly on the account of the above prophecy, and partly to keep up the number of the twelve apostles, Christ had thought fit to pitch upon; answering to the twelve tribes of Israel, and to the twelve gates, and twelve foundations of the new Jerusalem: and this choice or ordination was moved to be made, and was made, not by the other eleven apostles, but by the whole company of an hundred and twenty; for these are the persons addressed by the apostle, and to whom he said, as the Arabic version renders it, *one of these men ye must choose:* and if the choice and ordination of such an extraordinary officer was made by the whole community, then much more ought the choice and ordination of inferior officers be by them: the end of this choice was, *to be a witness with us of his resurrection;* the resurrection of Christ from the dead, which supposes his incarnation

* Aben Ezra, Kimchi, & Sol. ben Melech in loc.

and life, and so his obedience, ministry, and miracles in it; and also his sufferings and death, with all the benefits and advantages thereof; and is particularly mentioned, because it not only supposes and includes the above things, but is the principal article, basis, and foundation of the Christian religion; and the sign which Christ gave to the Jews, of the truth of his being the Messiah; and was what the disciples were chosen to be witnesses of; and a principal part of their ministry was to testify it to men: and since this was their work and business, it was necessary that one should be chosen, and joined with them, who had been with them, and with Jesus, from the beginning, to the time of his ascension; and who was an eye-witness of his resurrection, that he might join with the apostles in their testimony.

Ver. 23. *And they appointed two*, &c.] The motion made by Peter was attended to by the whole company; they approved of it, and accordingly proposed two persons by name; one of which was to be chosen, not by the apostles, but by the whole assembly. The Arabic version reads, *he appointed two*, as if Peter singly did this: contrary to all copies, and other versions, and to the context; which shews, that the whole body of the people were concerned in this affair, who prayed and gave forth their lots and suffrages: the persons nominated were, *Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias*. The former of these has three names; in one ancient copy of Beza's he is called Joses; and by some thought to be the same with Joses, surnamed Barnabas, in ch. iv. 36. partly because in one copy, and in the Syriac version there, that Joses is called Joseph; and partly, because of the nearness in sound between Barsabas and Barnabas: hence the Ethiopic version here reads, *Joseph, who was called Barnabas*, and so Beza's most ancient copy; but though Joses is here meant for Jose, or Joses is, with the Jews, an abbreviation of Joseph; yet not Joses the Levite, who was of the country of Cyprus, but Joses of Galilee, the son of Alpheus and Mary; and who had two brothers, James and Jude, already apostles; see Matt. xiii. 55. Mark xv. 40. Moreover, though the two names, Barnabas and Barsabas, differ little in sound, yet much in sense: the former is interpreted *the son of consolation*, ch. iv. 36. but the latter signifies much the same with Bathsheba; as that may be interpreted *the daughter*, this *the son of an oath*; or as others, *a son of wisdom*; and by others, *the son of fulness*; I should choose to take it to be the same name with בר סבא, and interpret it, *the son of an old man*: as Alpheus might be, when Joses, or Joseph was born, and he be the younger brother of James and Jude; as for his surname Justus, this was a name not only in use among the Grecians and Romans, especially the latter, but among the Jews: hence we often read of Rabbi יוסטא, *Justa*, and sometimes, יוסטי, *Justi*, and at other times, יוסטאי *Justai* [x]: whether he had this surname from his being a very just man, as

[x] T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 12. 3. & Trumot. fol. 45. 1. & Erubin, fol. 19. 3. & 23. 3. T. Bab. Zebachim, fol. 99. 1. & Juchasin, fol. 95. 2. & 96. 1. Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 17. 4.

[y] Pirke Abot, c. 1. sect. 2.

[z] Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. 2. c. 23.

Aristides was called Aristides the just; and so Simeon the high-priest, the last of Ezra's great synagogue, was called Simeon the just [y]; and so James the brother of this Joseph, or Joses, was called by the Jews [z]; and it may be, that he himself might have his name from the patriarch Joseph, who used to be called by them, Joseph, הצדיק, *the just* [a]: for Matthias, his name is Jewish, and he was no doubt a Jew; hence we read of ר' מתיא, *Rabbi Matthia ben Charash* [b]; his name signifying the same as Nathanael does, namely, the gift of God, made Dr. Lightfoot conjecture they might be the same; but this agrees not with another conjecture of that learned man, who elsewhere thinks, that Bartholomew and Nathanael were the same; and if so, he must have been an apostle already; Clemens of Alexandria was of opinion, that this Matthias was Zaccheus [c].

Ver. 24. *And they prayed and said*, &c.] Having proposed the above two persons, and not well knowing which to pitch upon, they being both very agreeable and fit for such service; they chose not to determine the affair without seeking to God for direction; a method to be taken in all cases, and especially in matters of importance: and the substance of their petition, though perhaps not in just the same words, was, *thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men*; which is a character peculiar to the one only living, and true God; for none knows the hearts of men, but God, who is the Maker of them; and he knows all the thoughts, counsels, and purposes of them, and the good or bad that is in them: *shew whether of these two thou hast chosen*; being desirous of having their choice directed by the choice God had made, in his eternal mind; and which they desired might be signified and pointed out to them, in some way or another, that they might be certain of the mind and will of God, and act according to it.

Ver. 25. *That he may take part of this ministry and apostleship*, &c.] Of the ministry of the apostles, or of the apostolical ministration; which lay in preaching the Gospel, administering ordinances, planting churches, and working miracles; and which part, lot, or inheritance, Judas had; see ver. 17. *And from which Judas by transgression fell*; by betraying his Lord, whose apostle he was, he was turned out of his office, and had no longer part in the apostolical ministry: *that he might go to his own place*; which may be understood of Judas, and of his going to hell, as the just punishment of his sin; which is commonly so called by the Jews, who often explain this phrase, *his place*, by hell; as when it is said of Laban, Gen. xxxi. 55. that he *returned to his place*, it intimates, say they [d], that he returned to his place, which was prepared for him in hell; and so likewise when it is said of Balaam, Numb. xxiv. 25. that he *returned to his place*, they observe [e], that "he did not return from his evil way, "but returned to his place; and so intimates by saying, "to his place, that which was prepared for him in

[a] Zohar in Exod. fol. 104. 1.

[b] T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 61. 2. & Juchasin, fol. 108. 1.

[c] Stromat, l. 4. p. 488.

[d] Tzeror Hammor, fol. 43. 2.

[e] Ib. fol. 127. 1.

"hell, as the Rabbins of blessed memory say [f]; *they* "*came every one from his own place*, Job ii. 11. a man "from his house, a man from his country it is not "written, but a man from his place, which was pre- "pared for him in hell; and because they came to "shew mercy to Job, they were delivered from hell, "and became worthy of the world to come; and so "here, and *he returned to his place*, המוכן לו בגהינם, "*which was prepared for him in hell.*" And another of their writers [g], on the same passage, has this remark, *and he returned to his place*, and he does not say, "he "went on his way, for he was driven out of his way, "and went down to hell." And agreeably to what is said of Job's friends, the Targumist on Job ii. 11. paraphrases the words thus; "and there came a man, or "every one from his place, and by this merit they "were delivered from the place, prepared for them "in hell." And which place the same Targumist on Job viii. 4. calls אתר מרדיהון, *the place of their rebellion*; that is, procured by it: and so Judas's own place was what he had merited by his sin, and was righteously appointed for him; and though it was not peculiar to him, but common to all impenitent sinners, yet very proper for him, as a betrayer; for it is a settled point with the Jews [h], that "he that betrays an "Israelite into the hands of the Gentiles (so Judas be- "trayed his master), whether in his body, or in his "substance, has no part in the world to come." This clause is by some understood not of Judas, but of Matthias, or of him that was to come in the room of Judas; and by *his own place* 'tis thought is meant, the *part of the ministry and apostleship*, in the former clause, and which the Alexandrian copy reads, *the place of this ministry*, he was to take; and now Judas by his iniquity falling from it, made way for another, for Matthias to go to his own place, which God had in his counsel and purposes designed for him; or *into his place*, as the Syriac and Arabic versions render it; that is, into the place of Judas, to take his place among the apostles, in his room and stead: the Alexandrian copy reads, *into that righteous place.*

Ver. 26. *And they gave forth their lots*, &c.] Or *gave forth lots for them*, as the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions; for Joseph and Matthias; some for one, and some for another; and which were cast into a man's lap, or into a vessel, and was no other than balloting for them; and so he that had the majority upon casting them up, when taken out, was declared the person chosen; or *they cast their lots*; that is, into an urn, or vessel; which lots had the names of the two persons on them; and into another vessel, as is thought, were put two other lots; the one had the name of *apostle* upon it, and the other nothing; and these being taken out by persons appointed for that purpose, the lot with Matthias's name on it, was taken out against that which had the name of apostle on it, upon which he was declared to be the apostle: it may be that this was done in the same manner, as the goats on the day of atonement had lots cast on them, Lev. xvi. 8. which the Jews say was thus performed: there was a vessel which they call *Kalphi*, set in the court, into which two lots, which were made of wood, or stone, or metal, were put; the one had written on it, *for Jehovah*, and on the other was written, *for the scape goat*; the two goats being, the one at the right-hand of the priest, and the other at the left; the priest shook the vessel, and with his two hands took out the two lots, and laid the lots on the two goats; the right on that which was at his right-hand, and the left on that which was at his left [i]; and so the goat which had the lot put upon him, on which was written, *for the Lord*, was killed; and that which had the other lot, on which was written, *for the scape goat*, was presented alive; so the lot here is said to fall upon Matthias: or the lots being cast into the vessel, as above related, these two drew them out themselves; and Matthias taking out that which had the word apostle on it, the lot fell on him: the manner of Moses's choosing the seventy elders, is said to be this [k]: "Moses took seventy-two papers, and on "seventy of them he wrote, זקן, *an elder*; and upon "two, חלק, *a part*; and he chose six out of every tribe, "and there were seventy-two; he said unto them, "take your papers out of the vessel; he into whose "hand came up *an elder* (*i. e.* the paper on which it "was so written) he was sanctified (or set apart to the "office); and he, in whose hand came up *a part* (the "paper that had that on it), to him he said, the Lord "does not delight in thee." *And the lot fell upon Matthias*; that is, either he had the largest number for him, their minds being so disposed by the providence of God; and it may be, contrary to the first thoughts and general sense of the body; since Joseph is mentioned first, and was a man of great character, and of many names and titles; but God, who knows the hearts of men, and can turn them as he pleases, and to whom they sought for direction, inclined their minds to vote for the latter; or it was so ordered by divine providence, that in the casting or drawing the lots, the lot of the apostleship should fall on him: *and he was numbered with the eleven apostles*; either chosen by the common suffrages of the people, as the word used signifies; or rather, he took his place among the apostles; he was registered among them, and ever after was reckoned one of them; Beza's ancient copy reads, *with the twelve apostles*, their number being now complete.

CHAP. II.

Ver. 1. *AND when the day of Pentecost was fully come*, &c.] Or *was come*, was begun and entered upon; for it was not over, or ended, it being but the third hour of the day, or nine of the clock in the morning,

[f] Vid. Midrash Kohelet, fol. 74. 3.
[g] Baal Hatturim in Numb. xxiv. 25.
[h] Maimon. Hilchot Chobel, &c. c. 8. sect. 9.

[i] Maimon. Hilchot Yom Hacippurim, c. 3. sect. 1, 2, 3. Misn. Yoma, c. 4. 1. & Bartenora in ib.
[k] Jarchi in Numb. xi. 26. Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 15. fol. 218. 2.

when Peter began his sermon; see ver. 15. The Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions read, *when the days of Pentecost were fulfilled*: not that there were more days than one, kept at this festival; for though the feasts of passover and tabernacles were observed each of them seven days, according to the law, and eight days according to the Scribes, yet the feast of Pentecost was kept but one day; and hence it is often said by the Jews, that Atzereth, which is one of the names they call this feast by, is but one day [l]; in the captivity they kept two days [m], as they did for the beginning of the year, because of the uncertainty of calculations; but the sense is, when the whole fifty days from the passover to this time were fully come, or fulfilled, when the fiftieth day from thence, which was properly the day of Pentecost, was come: on the second day of the passover, on the sixteenth of Nisan, the sheaf of the first-fruits was offered up; after which, and not before, it was lawful to reap the corn, Levit. xxiii. 10, 11. from this time the Jews reckoned their feast of weeks, or seven weeks, or fifty days; see Exod. xxxiv. 22. Deut. xvi. 9. Levit. xxiii. 15, 16. which measured out the time of their harvest. Now the last of these fifty days was the day of Pentecost, on which day was offered the two wave-loaves, as a thanksgiving that their harvest was ended. Josephus calls [n] this feast by the same name that Luke here does; and says [o], the Jews so call it, from the number of the days, that is fifty; and so R. Sol Jarchi [p] calls this day, יום חמישים, *the fiftieth day*: on this day, the Jews say [q], the law was given; and observe [r], that "from the day that "Israel went out of Egypt, unto the day that the law "was given, were fifty days." And on this day, and which was the first day of the week, the spirit was poured forth upon the disciples; the Gospel began to be preached to all nations, and a harvest of souls was gathered in: *they were all with one accord in one place*: in two ancient copies of Beza's, and in some others 'tis read, *all the apostles*; Matthias, and the eleven, with whom he was numbered, who are last spoken of, in ch. i. 26. Though this need not be restrained to the twelve apostles, but may be understood of the hundred and twenty, on whom, as well as on the apostles, the Holy Ghost might be poured forth, that so they might speak with tongues; since among these were many ministers of the Gospel, as the seventy disciples, and it may be more; and that his extraordinary gifts should be bestowed on others, is but what was afterwards done; see ch. viii. 17. and x. 14. and xi. 15. and though there were so many of them together, they were very unanimous and peaceable; there were no jars nor contentions among them; they were of the same mind and judgment in faith and practice, and of one heart and soul, and had a cordial affection for one another; and were all in one place, which seems to be the temple; see ver. 46. And indeed, no other place or house could hold so many as came to hear them, of which number three thousand were converted.

Ver. 2. *And suddenly there came a sound from heaven*, &c.] Which is expressive of the original of the gifts and graces of the spirit of God, which come from above, from heaven, from the father of lights; and of the freeness of them, being unmerited; and so come suddenly, at an unawares, being unthought of, undesired, and unexpected, and so certainly undeserved; and may be a symbol of the sound of the Gospel, which from hence was to go forth into all the earth; and may likewise express the rise of that, and the freeness of the grace of God in it, and its sudden spread throughout the world: *as of a rushing mighty wind*: it was not a wind, but like one; and the noise it made, was like the rushing noise of a strong and boisterous wind, that carries all before it: the spirit of God is sometimes compared to the wind, because of the freeness of his operations; as that blows where it listeth, so he works when and where, and on whom he pleases; and also because of the power and efficacy of his grace, which is mighty and irresistible, and works with great energy upon the minds of men; and as the wind is secret and invisible, so the operations of the spirit are in a manner secret and imperceptible unto men: this may likewise be applied to the Gospel, when it comes with the Holy Ghost, and with power; it makes its way into the heart, and throws down the strong holds of sin and Satan; there it works effectually, though secretly, and is the power of God to salvation: *and it filled all the house where they were sitting*; which was the temple, or the upper room or chamber in it, where they were assembled; so in the Ethiopic confession of faith [s] it is said, "the Holy Ghost descended upon the apostles, "in the upper room of Zion;" this may be a symbol of the Gospel filling the whole world.

Ver. 3. *And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire*, &c.] An emblem of the various tongues and languages, in which they were to preach the Gospel; these appearances were like flames of fire parted, and these parted flames looked like tongues; so a flame of fire is with the Jews called, לשון אש, *a tongue of fire*, Isa. v. 24. hence the Apostle James compares a tongue to fire, James iii. 6. this was the baptism with fire, John the Baptist speaks of, in Matt. iii. 11. see the note there; and the Jews say [t], "the "holy blessed God baptizeth with fire, and the wise "shall understand." Through this baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire, the apostles became more knowing, and had a greater understanding of the mysteries of the Gospel, and were more qualified to preach it to people of all nations and languages. The Holy Spirit, in his gifts and graces, is compared to fire, because of its purity, light, and heat, as well as consuming nature; the spirit sanctifies, and makes men pure and holy, purges from the dross of sin, error and superstition; and enlightens the minds of men, and gives them knowledge of divine and spiritual things; and fills them with zeal and fervour for the glory of God and Christ, and the good of his church and interest, and for the doctrines and ordinances of the Gospel; as well as fortifies them against their enemies, whom he

[l] T. Bab. Menachot, fol. 65. 1. Gloss. in T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 17. 2. Bereshit Rabba, sect. 100. fol. 88. 2.
[m] T. Bab. Erachin, fol. 10. 1.
[n] Antiqu. l. 3. c. 10. sect. 6.
[o] De Bello Jud. l. 2. c. 3. sect. 1.
[p] In Lev. xxiii. 15.
[q] T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 68. 2.
[r] Zohar in Exod. fol. 34. 4. Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 9. 4.
[s] Vid. Ludolph. not. in Claud. reg. Ethiop. Confess. p. 13.
[t] R. Menachem in Lev. viii. apud Ainsworth in Gen. xvii. 12.

consumes, according to Zech. ii. 5. a passage of Scripture the Jews make use of in an uncommon sense; for they say [x], that as "Jerusalem was destroyed by fire, "*by fire it shall be built again;* as it is said, Zech. ii. "5. *For I, saith the Lord, will be unto her a wall of "fire round about.*" The pouring forth of the spirit upon the apostles, in this form of cloven tongues, as of fire, was indeed the means of rebuilding Jerusalem, in a spiritual sense; or of founding the Gospel church-state in the world: *and it sat upon each of them;* the fire, or the Holy Ghost in the appearance of fire. The Syriac and Arabic versions read, *and they sat upon each of them;* and so Beza's most ancient copy; that is, the cloven tongues sat on them; either one upon one of them and another upon another, or many upon each of them: where they sat, whether on their lips, or on their heads, it not certain, probably on the latter; nor how long they sat; however, their sitting upon them may denote the continuance of the gifts and graces of the spirit with them. These cloven tongues cannot but bring to mind the division and confusion of the tongues or languages at Babel; which gave rise to different nations, and different religions; but these divided tongues gave rise to the spreading of the Gospel, and settling the true religion among the nations of the world. The Jews [y] seem to have respect to this account, when they tell us of "lights from "above, that came forth and dwelt in the synagogues, "ברישיהון, *on the heads* of those that prayed, and "the lights מתפלגין, *were divided* upon their heads."

Ver. 4. *And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost,* &c.] With the gifts of the Holy Spirit; they had received the spirit before, as a spirit of grace, and were endowed with great gifts; but now they had great plenty of them, a large abundance; they were like vessels filled to the brim; they were as it were covered with them; there was an overflow of them upon them; and now it was, that they were baptized with him; see the note on ch. i. 5. Not only the twelve apostles, but the seventy disciples; and it may be all the hundred and twenty, that were together, even women as well as men: see ver. 17, 18. *And began to speak with other tongues;* besides, and different from that in which they were born and brought up, and usually spake; they spake divers languages, one spoke one language, and another, another; and the same person spoke with various tongues, sometimes one language, and sometimes another. These are *the new tongues,* Christ told them they should speak with, Mark xvi. 17. such as they had never heard, learned, nor known before: *as the spirit gave them utterance;* they did not utter any thing of themselves, and what came into their minds, things of little or no importance; nor in a confused and disorderly manner; but they were wise and weighty sentences they delivered, as the word signifies; even the wonderful works of God, ver. 11. the great doctrines of the Gospel; and though in different languages, yet in a very orderly and distinct manner, so as to be heard and understood by the people. The Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions read, *as the Holy Spirit,* &c.

Ver. 5. *And there were dwelling at Jerusalem, Jews,* &c.] The Ethiopic version adds, *proselytes;* but they were not all such, as appears from the following account of them; many, and it seems the most of them were of Jewish extract and descent, and others were proselytes to the Jewish religion: these were not natives of Jerusalem, but such as were born in other countries, ver. 8. but were come to Jerusalem, either to learn the Hebrew language, which was necessary to their reading and understanding the books of Moses, and the prophets written in it; or for an increase of spiritual knowledge and piety; or, as is generally thought, to keep the feast of Pentecost; or rather, as Dr. Lightfoot thinks, they were come hither in great numbers from all parts, in expectation of the Messiah and his kingdom; the time being up, according to Daniel's weeks, and other prophecies, that he should appear: and these were *devout men;* men of religion and piety, of faith and holiness; and as the Syriac version renders it, *who feared God;* for in these worst of times, among this wicked generation of men, there were some who had the fear of God before their eyes, and on their hearts; and these were collected from different quarters, to be witnesses of this amazing dispensation: for they came *out of every nation under heaven;* that is, wherever the Jews were dispersed; being the descendants of those that were carried captive at different times, and into different places; as by Salmanezer, Nebuchadnezzar, Ptolomy Lagus, Antiochus, and in other lesser dispersions.

Ver. 6. *Now when this was noised abroad,* &c.] Or *when this voice was made;* referring either to the sound, as of a mighty rushing wind, which came from heaven; and might not only be heard by those in the house, into which it came, but by the inhabitants of the city, as it came down from heaven; so the Arabic version renders it, *when the aforesaid sound was made:* or else to the apostles' voice, and their speaking with divers tongues; which being heard by some, was told to others, and a rumour of it being made through the city, *the multitude came together;* to the house, or temple, where the disciples were; and this multitude did not consist only of the devout Jews, before mentioned; but of others who scoffed and mocked at the apostles, and who had been concerned in the crucifying of Christ: *and were confounded;* or *confused;* they ran and came together in a disorderly and tumultuous manner; the whole city was in an uproar, the assembly on this occasion was a perfect mob; their numbers were so large, that they were ready to thrust each other down, and trample one another under foot: the Vulgate Latin adds, *in mind;* they did not know what to think of things, they were so astonished at what they heard, that they were scarcely themselves; they were as persons stupid and senseless; being filled partly with shame and confusion, and partly with wonder and amazement, that these illiterate men, the followers of Jesus of Nazareth, whom they had crucified, and whose disciples they had in so much contempt, should have such extraordinary gifts bestowed on them: *because that every man heard them speak in his own language;* which shews, what has been before observed, that one spake in one language,

[x] T. Hieros. Taaniot, fol. 65. 3. Seder Tepillot, fol. 23. 2. Ed. Basil.

[y] Zohar in Num. fol. 79. 2.

and another in another language; or the same person sometimes spoke one language, and sometimes another; so that in course, all languages were spoken by them; whence it appears, that it was not one language only which was spoken by the apostles, which men of different languages heard and understood, as if it was their own; for then the miracle must have been in the hearers, and not in the speakers; and the cloven tongues, as of fire, should rather have sat on them, than on the disciples; and these men be said to be filled with the gifts of the Holy Ghost, rather than they.

Ver. 7. *And they were all amazed, and marvelled,* &c.] They were struck with surprise, they were as it were out of themselves, like persons in an ecstacy, not knowing what could be the cause or meaning of this: *saying one to another:* the phrase *one to another,* is left out in the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions, and so it is in the Alexandrian copy: *behold, are not all these which speak Galileans?* rude, unpolished, and unlearned men; who had never been brought up in any school of learning, and had never learned any language but their mother tongue; and that they pronounced with an ill grace, and in a very odd manner; and which made the thing the more astonishing to them. The apostles were inhabitants of Galilee, and so very likely were the greatest part of those that were with them: hence the Christians afterwards, by way of contempt, were called *Galileans;* as they are by Julian [x] the apostate, and others [y].

Ver. 8. *And how hear we every man in our own tongue,* &c.] *Them speaking,* as the Ethiopic version reads; that is, we every one of us hear one or another, speak in the same language, *wherein we were born;* our native language; for though these men were Jews by descent, yet were born and brought up in other countries, which language they spake; and not the Hebrew, or Syriac, or Chaldee.

Ver. 9. *Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites,* &c.] These are the words of the men continued, and not of the historian, as appears from ver. 10. and so the Arabic version reads, *of us Persians, Parthians, and Medes;* that is, we hear them speak in the language of every one of us: the order in this version is inverted, otherwise the same persons are intended; for the Elamites and Persians are the same: by the Parthians are meant, Jews that were born in Parthia, and had dwelt there, and who spoke the language of that country; and that there were Jews, in those parts, is clear from Josephus [z], who speaks of them together with the Jews of other nations. Many of the Parthian Jews were afterwards converted to the Christian faith; to whom the Apostle John is thought, by some, to have written his first epistle; and which, by some of the ancients, is called the epistle to the Parthians. The kingdom of Parthia, according to Pliny [a], Ptolomy [b], and Solinus [c], had Media on the west, Hyrcania on the north, Aria, or Ariana, on the east, and the desert of Carmania on the south; the metropolis of it was Hecatompylos, so called from the hundred gates that belonged to it; and which, 'tis thought, stood on the same spot of ground that Ispahan does now, the seat of the Sophies of Persia. And by the Medes are intended the Jews that were natives of Media: so called from *Madai,* one of the sons of Japhet, Gen. x. 2. and this, according to Ptolomy [d], has on the north the Hyrcanian, or Caspian sea, on the west Armenia Major and Assyria, and on the east Hyrcania and Parthia, and on the south Parthia. The Elamites are so called, from Elam the son of Shem, Gen. x. 22. and these, according to Josephus [e], were the founders of the Persians, or from whom they sprung; and so we find Elam and Media, and the kings of Elam, and the kings of the Medes, mentioned together in Scripture, Isa. xxi. 2. Jer. xxv. 25. And certain it is, that Elam was at least a part of the empire of Persia, in Daniel's time; for Shushan, where the kings of Persia then kept their palace, was in the province of Elam, Dan. viii. 2. and it is evident, that hither the Jews were carried captive, Isa. xi. 11. Jer. xlix. 34—39. So that there might be some remaining in those parts, that were their descendants; and from hence also were people brought by Asnapper, into the cities of Samaria, to supply the room of those who were carried captive, and are called Elamites, Ezra iv. 9. And that there were Elamite Jews, may be concluded from the writings of the Jews; for so they say [f], that "the Hagiographa, or holy writings, which were "written in the Coptic, Median, Hebrew, עילמית, "*Elamite,* and Greek tongues; though they did not "read in them (on the sabbath-day in time of service) "they delivered them from the fire," when in danger of being burned: so the Megilla, or book of Esther, might not be read in the Coptic, Hebrew, Elamite, Median, and Greek languages; but it might be read in Coptic to Coptites, in Hebrew to Hebrews, עילמית לעילמים, in *Elamite* to the *Elamites,* and in Greek to the Greeks [g]; and such sort of Jews as the Elamite ones, were these in the text: the Syriac version reads *Elanites;* and so R. Benjamin in his Itinerary [h], makes mention of a country called, אלניה, *Alania,* and of a people called, אלאן, *Alan;* and whom he speaks of in company with Babylon, Persia, Choresan, Sheba, and Mesopotamia; and may intend the same people as here: now these Parthian, Median, and Elamite Jews were such who descended from the captives of the ten tribes, carried away by Shalmanesar king of Assyria, whom he placed in Halah and Habor, and in the cities of the Medes, 2 Kings xvii. 6. and xviii. 11. But besides these, there were also at Jerusalem, at this time, those who are next mentioned: *and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus and Asia:* who came not quite so far off as the former: Mesopotamia is the same with what is called in the Hebrew text of the Old Testament, Aram-Naharaim, or Syria between the two rivers; that is, Tigris and Euphrates; the former

[x] Opera, par. 1. Fragment. p. 557. & par. 2. Ep. 49. p. 203, 204.
[y] Arrian. Epictet. l. 4. c. 7.
[z] Procem. ad Lib. de Bello Jud. sect. 2. & l. 2. c. 16.
[a] Nat. Hist. l. 6. c. 15, 25.
[b] Geograph. l. 6. c. 5.
[c] Polyhistor. c. 69.
[d] Geograph. l. 6. c. 2.
[e] Antiqu. l. 1. c. 6. sect. 4.
[f] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 115. 1.
[g] T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 18. 1.
[h] P. 75.

was on the east of it, and the latter on the west, and Babylon was on the south, and Caucasus on the north; and so the Greek word *Mesopotamia* signifies a place between two rivers; see Gen. xxiv. 10. Deut. xxiii. 4. Judg. iii. 8, 10. and 1 Chron. ix. 6. And the Jews have adopted it into their own language, calling it, מספוטמיא, *Mespotamia*[i]; and the same name obtains with other writers[k], and it has since been called Azania and Halopia; it belonged to that part of Assyria, called Chaldea; and these Mesopotamian Jews were the remains of those who were carried captive by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon; and though the Chaldean, or Syriac language was now spoken by the Jews, yet in a different manner than it was in Chaldea and Syria: and there were also the dwellers in Judea; by which is meant, that part of the land of Israel, which was distinct from Galilee, and where they used a different dialect from the Galilean Jews; and there were others, who were born, and had lived in Cappadocia. This was a country in Asia, in which were many famous cities; as Archalais, where Claudius Cæsar put a Roman colony; and Neo Cæsarea (the birth-place of Gregory Thaumaturgus); and Melita, built by Semiramis; and Mazaca[l], which was the chief city; and so called from Meshech, the son of Japhet, since called Cæsarea. The inhabitants of this country, Herodotus says[m], "were "by the Greeks called Syrians, and they were Sy-"rians; and before the Persians had the government, "they were subject to the Medes, and then to Cyrus." And by Pliny[n] they are called, Leucosyrians. This country, according to Ptolomy[o], had Galatia, and part of Pamphylia on the west, and on the south Cilicia, and part of Syria, and on the east Armenia the great, and on the north, part of the Euxine Pontus; it is now called Amasia, or Almasia: here were many Jews scattered abroad, some of which were afterwards believers in Christ, to whom Peter sent his epistles, 1 Pet. i. 1. It had its former name from the river Cappadox, which, as Pliny[p] says, divided the Galatians and Leucosyrians, and this indeed is the reason of its name; in the Syriac language it is called, קפדך, *Capdac*, which comes from קפד; which signifies to cut off, or divide, as this river did the above people from one another; and hence the country was called Cappadocia, and the inhabitants Cappadocians: in the Jewish writings it is called, קפוטקיא, Capotakia; and which Maimonides[q] says, is the same with Caphtor; and in the Arabic language, is called Tamiati; and so Caphtor is rendered Cappadocia, and the Caphtorim Cappadocians, in the Targums of Onkelos, Jonathan, and Jerusalem, in Gen. x. 14. Deut. ii. 23. Jer. xlvii. 4. and Amos ix. 7. and so in the Septuagint version of Deut. ii. 23. and Amos ix. 7. This country was near the land of Israel, and in it dwelt many Jews; they had schools of learning here, and had traditions peculiarly relating to it: as for instance, "if a man mar-"ried a wife in the land of Israel, and divorced her "in Cappadocia, he must give her (her dowry) of the "money of the land of Israel; and if he marries a "wife in Cappadocia, and divorces her in the land of "Israel, he may give her of the money of the land of "Israel; Rabban Simeon ben Gamaliel says, he must "give her of the money of Cappadocia[r];" for it seems the Cappadocian money was larger, and weighed more than that in the land of Israel: however, "if a "man marries a wife in Cappadocia, and divorces her "in Cappadocia, he must give her of the money of "Cappadocia." And so R. Akiba speaks[s] of one, that he saw shipwrecked at sea; and when, says he, I came to the province of Cappadocia, he came and sat, and judged before me in the constitutions and traditions of the elders: from whence it is manifest, that here were people of the Jewish nation that dwelt in this country, and so at this time. As also in Pontus; hence the first epistle of Peter is sometimes called the epistle to the Pontians; that is, to the Jews of Pontus, then become Christians; Pontus was a country in lesser Asia, and according to Ptolomy[t], it had on the west the mouth of Pontus, and the Thracian Bosphorus, and part of Propontis, on the north, part of the Euxine sea, and on the south the country which is properly called Asia, and on the east Galatia by Paphlagonia; it was the birth-place of Marcion the heretic, of which Tertullian gives a most dismal account[u]: Asia here intends, neither Asia the greater, nor the less, but Asia properly so called; which had Lycia and Phrygia on the east, the Ægean shores on the west, the Egyptian sea on the south, and Paphlagonia on the north[w]; in which were Ephesus the chief city, and Smyrna and Pergamus, and where were many Jews; these might be the remains of those that were carried captive, and dispersed by Ptolomy Lagus; those who dwelt in the three last places spoke the Greek language.

Ver. 10. *Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt*, &c.] Phrygia was a country in Asia, and had part of Galatia on the north, Lycaonia, Pisidia, and Mygdonia on the south, and on the east Cappadocia[x]; here the Apostle Paul afterwards travelled, and strengthened the Christians; see Acts xvi. 6. and xviii. 23. Pamphylia, now called Setilia, is another country in Asia, formerly called Mopsopia[y]; which had on the west Lycia, and part of Asia, on the north Galatia, on the east Cilicia, and part of Cappadocia, and on the south the sea of Pamphylia[z], of which mention is made in Acts xxvii. 5. The chief city in it was Perga, where was a temple of Diana[a], and here the Apostle Paul also was; see Acts xiii. 13. and xiv. 24, 25. and xv. 38. Others of these sojourning Jews lived in Egypt, which was a large country in Africa; which had on the east the deserts of Arabia, on the west Libya, on the

[i] Bereshit Rabba, sect. 30. fol. 25. 1. & sect. 44. fol. 38. 3.
[k] Plin. l. 5. c. 12, 26. & 6. 26, 27. Ptolom. l. 5. c. 18.
[l] Solin. Polyhistor. c. 57.
[m] L. 1. c. 72.
[n] L. 6. c. 3.
[o] L. 5. c. 6.
[p] Nat. Hist. l. 6. c. 3.
[q] In Misn. Cetubot, c. 13. sect. 11. & Bartenora in ib.
[r] Misn. Cetubot, c. 13. sect. 11. T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 110. 2.
[s] T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 121. 1.
[t] L. 5. c. 1.
[u] Adv. Marcion. l. 1. c. 1.
[w] Solinus, ib. c. 52.
[x] Plin. l. 5. c. 32.
[y] Ib. c. 27.
[z] Ptolom. l. 5. c. 5.
[a] Plin. l. 5. c. 27. Ptolom. ib. & Mela, l. 1. c. 14.

south Ethiopia, and on the north the Mediterranean sea; hither many Jews were carried captive by Ptolomy Lagus, and these spoke the Egyptian language: *and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene;* there were others at Jerusalem, which came from hence. The Arabic version reads this clause, *and in the parts of Africa, which is our country;* and Pliny says[b], the Greeks call Africa, Libya. The Jews say[c], Libya in Egypt; and for proselytes from Libya, they wait three generations; that is, before they receive them: Cyrene, or Cyreniaca, which is no other than upper Libya, is called by Pliny[d], the Pentapolitan country, from the five cities in it; Berenice, Arsinoe, Ptolemais, Apollonia, and Cyrene: to these are added, *and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes:* that is, as the Syriac version renders it, *those that came from Rome;* to which the Arabic agrees: they were natives and inhabitants of the city of Rome, though now they were at Jerusalem; and some of these were Jews by birth, and lineal descent, though born at Rome; and others were such as were proselytes of righteousness, who were originally Gentiles, but were now circumcised, and had embraced the Jewish religion; concerning such, see the note on Matt. xxiii. 15. These doubtless spoke in the Roman, or Latin tongue.

Ver. 11. *Cretes* and *Arabians,* &c.] The former are either the same with the Cretians, Tit. i. 12. the inhabitants of the island of Crete, Acts xxvii. 7. now called Candia or Candy, which has on the north the Ægean sea, on the south the Libyan or African sea, on the west the Adriatic sea, and on the east the Carpathian sea. In it were an hundred cities; the most famous of which were, Gnosos, Cortyna, Lyctos, Lycastos, Holopixos, Phæstos, Cydon, Manethusa, Dyctynna[e], and others; these spoke the Greek language; yet not the Attic, for the Cretian and Attic speech are distinguished[f]: or else, as Dr. Lightfoot thinks, these were the same with the Cherethim or Cherethites, in Ezek. xxv. 16. Zeph. ii. 5. whom the Septuagint interpreters call Cretes, as here; since these are mentioned with the Philistines, to whose land Arabia joined; the inhabitants of which are next mentioned here. There were three Arabias; Arabia Petræa, which had on the west part of Egypt, and on the north Judea, and part of Syria, on the south the Red sea, and on the east Arabia Felix. The second was called Arabia Deserta, and had on the north part of Mesopotamia, and on the east Babylonia, on the south Arabia Felix, and on the west, part of Syria and Arabia Petræa. The third was called Arabia Felix, and had on the north the south sides of Petræa and Arabia Deserta, and the more southern part of the Persian gulph, on the west the gulph of Arabia, and on the south the Red sea, and on the east, part of the Persian gulph[g]; and here dwelt Jews who spoke the Arabic language. Now these Jews, of different nations, declared concerning the apostles, saying, *we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God;* not the works of creation and providence, though these are great and wonderful; but of redemption, pardon, atonement, justification, and salvation, by the Messiah, by his obedience, sufferings, and death, and also of his resurrection from the dead; things which struck them with amazement, and the more, that such illiterate persons should have such knowledge of them, and should be able to speak of them in such a clear, distinct, and powerful manner; and still the more, that they should speak of them in their several tongues in which they were born, and to which they were used, and which the apostles had never learned: and this they heard with their own ears, and were fully satisfied that they did speak divers languages.

Ver. 12. *And they were all amazed,* &c.] That is, all these devout men, Jews and proselytes, which came from other nations before mentioned: *and were in doubt;* not whether the apostles spoke in various languages, nor about the sense of their words; for they not only heard them with their ears, and were assured of the facts, but they seem also to understand what was said, since they call the things delivered, the great or wonderful things of God; but they were at a loss in their minds what should be the cause of this, or the reason of such a dispensation, *saying, one to another, what meaneth this?* from whence is it? what is the design of it? or what the end to be answered by it? or what will follow upon it? surely something considerable.

Ver. 13. *Others mocking, said,* &c.] These were the native inhabitants of Jerusalem, the common people; and it may be also the Scribes and Pharisees, who did not understand the languages in which the apostles spake, and therefore derided them both by words and gestures: *these men are full of new wine;* the Syriac version adds, *and are drunk;* a very foolish and impertinent cavil this; there was, at this time of the year, no new wine, just pressed, or in the fat; and if there had been any, and they were full of it, it could never have furnished them with a faculty of speaking with many tongues; men generally lose their tongues by intemperance. They were indeed filled with wine, but not with wine, the juice of the grape, either new or old; but with spiritual wine, with the gifts of the spirit of God, by which they spake with divers tongues. They might hope this insinuation, that they were drunk with wine, would take and be received, since it was a feasting time, the feast of Pentecost; though, as Peter afterwards observes, it was too early in the day to imagine this to be their case.

Ver. 14. *But Peter standing up with the eleven,* &c.] Apostles; their number being now complete, Matthias being chosen in the room of Judas. These all at once rose up, as abhorring the fact they were charged with, and to shew the falsehood of it, and to vindicate themselves; when Peter, as their mouth, stood *in the midst* of them, as the Ethiopic version reads, with great courage, boldness, and intrepidity of mind: and *lift up his voice;* that he might be heard by the whole multitude, that was gathered together, as well as to shew his zeal and fervour of spirit, and fortitude of

[b] L. 5. in principio.
[c] T. Hieros. Kilaim, fol. 31. 3. & Sabbat, fol. 7. 2.
[d] L. 5. c. 5.

[e] Mela, l. 2. c. 14. Vid. Salin. c. 16. & Plin. l. 4. c. 12.
[f] Laert. in vit. Epimenidis.
[g] Ptolom. Geograph. l. 5. c. 17. & 19. & l. 6. c. 7.

mind; for being endued with the spirit from on high, he was fearless of men, who but a little while ago was frightened by a servant-maid. *And said unto them, ye men of Judea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem;* which shews that they were the natives and citizens of Jerusalem that mocked and scoffed; for to these the apostle addresses himself. *Be this known unto you, and hearken to my words;* as follow.

Ver. 15. *For these are not drunken,* &c.] Meaning not only the eleven apostles, but the rest of the hundred and twenty, on whom also the spirit was poured forth, and who were endowed with his extraordinary gifts: *as ye suppose;* and had given out that they were: and this shews the sense of being *filled with new wine;* that they meant that they were really drunk, and which they believed, or at least would have had others believe it; the unreasonableness of which supposition and suggestion the apostle argues from the time of day: *seeing it is but the third hour of the day;* or nine of the clock in the morning: for till this time it was not usual with the Jews, if men of any sobriety or religion, so much as to taste any thing: the rules are these[h], "it is forbidden a man to taste any thing, or do any "work after break of day, until he has prayed the "morning prayer." Now "the morning prayer, the "precept concerning it is, that a man should begin to "pray as soon as the sun shines out; and its time is "until the end of the fourth hour, which is the third "part of the day[i]." So that a man might not taste any thing, either of eatables or drinkables, until the fourth hour, or ten o'clock in the morning: hence it is said[k], that "after they offered the daily sacrifice they "ate bread, בזמן ארבע שעין, *at the time of four "hours:*" or on the fourth hour, and sooner than this it was not lawful to eat, even ever so little; and whoever did, was not reckoned fit to be conversed with. "Says R. Isaac[l], whoever eats a green or herb before "the fourth hour, it is forbidden to converse with "him; and the same says, it is unlawful to eat a raw "herb before the fourth hour. Amemar, and Mar "Zutra, and Rab Ashe were sitting, and they brought "before them a raw herb before the fourth hour. "Amemar and Rab Ashe ate, and Mar Zutra did not "eat: they said to him, what's thy meaning? (he replied) that R. Isaac said, whoever eats a herb be- "fore the fourth hour, it is forbidden to converse with "him." The time for taking food by persons of different characters, is thus expressed by them: "the "first hour is the time of eating for the Lydians, the "second for thieves, the third for heirs, the fourth for "labourers, the fifth for every man; is it not so? Saith "R. Papa, the fourth is the time of repast for every "man; but (the truth is) the fourth is the time of "eating for every man, the fifth for labourers, and the "sixth for the disciples of the wise men[m]." Hence that advice[n], "*at the fourth hour,* go into a cook's shop, "(or tavern,) if thou seest a man drinking wine, and "holding the cup in his hands, and slumbering, in- "quire about him, if he is one of the wise doctors, *&c.*" The *gloss* upon it is, "*at the fourth hour,* for that is the "time of eating, when all go into the shops (or ta- "verns) to eat." Now whereas they that are drunken are drunken in the night, and not in the day, and much less so soon in the day, when it was not usual, at least with religious men, to have tasted any thing by this time; and whereas the apostles, and their company, were sober and religious men, and had never done any thing to forfeit their character, it was unreasonable to suppose any thing of this kind in them.

Ver. 16. *But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel.*] This affair, which is a matter of wonder and amazement with some, and of speculation with others, and of ridicule and contempt with the most, is not the effect of wine, but the fulfilment of a prophecy in Joel ii. 28—32. and is that effusion of the spirit there foretold; and this prophecy is by the Jews themselves allowed to belong to the world to come, or to the times of the Messiah. Some of their commentators[o] say, that it refers לעתיד, *to time to come;* by which they frequently mean the times of the Messiah; and another says[p] expressly, that they belong לימות המשיח, *to the days of the Messiah;* and in one of their Midrashes[q], 'tis observed, that "the holy blessed God says in this world "they prophesy single, (particular persons,) but *in the "world to come* all *Israel* shall become prophets, as it is "said, Joel ii. 28. *and it shall come to pass afterward, that "I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh, and your sons "and your daughters shall prophesy, and your old men,* "&c. So expounds R. Tanchuma with R. Aba."

Ver. 17. *And it shall come to pass in the last days,* &c.] In Joel it is, *afterwards;* instead of which Peter puts, *in the last days;* the sense is the same: and so R. David Kimchi, a celebrated commentator with the Jews, observes, that *afterwards* is the same *as in the last days,* and which design the times of the Messiah; for according to a rule given by the same writer on Isa. ii. 2. wherever the last days are mentioned, the days of the Messiah are intended. *Saith God,* or *the Lord,* as the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions read. This clause is added by Peter, and is not in Joel; and very rightly, since what follow are the words of God speaking in his own person: *I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh;* not *upon every animal,* as the Ethiopic version renders it: this is extending the sense too far, as the interpretation the above-named Jewish writer gives limits it too much, restraining it to the people of Israel. It being a maxim with them, that the Shekinah does not dwell but in the land of Israel; and also that prophecy, or a spirit of prophecy, does not dwell on any but in the holy land[r]. For though as it regards the first times of the Gospel, it may chiefly respect some persons among the Jews, yet not to the exclusion of the Gentiles; and it designs all sorts of persons of every age, sex, state, and condition, as the distribution afterwards shews. Jarchi's note upon it is, "upon every "one whose heart is made as tender as flesh; as for "example, *and I will give an heart of flesh,* Ezek. "xxxvi. 26." By the spirit is meant the gifts of the

[h] Maimon. Hilch. Tephilla, c. 6. sect. 4. T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 28. 2.
[i] Ib. c. 3. sect. 1. Vid. T. Beracot, fol. 26. 2.
[k] Targum in Eccl. x. 17.
[l] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 44. 2.
[m] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 10. 1.
[n] T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 83. 2.
[o] Jarchi in Joel ii. 28. & R. Jeshuah in Aben Ezra in loc.
[p] R. David Kimchi in loc.
[q] Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 15. fol. 219. 2.
[r] Zohar in Gen. fol. 112. 4. & 128. 4.

spirit, the spirit of wisdom and knowledge, of understanding the mysteries of the Gospel, of explaining the Scriptures, and of speaking with tongues; and by the pouring of it out, is intended the abundance and great plenty of the gifts and graces of the spirit bestowed; but yet not all of him, or all his gifts and grace in the large extent of them: therefore it is said, not *my spirit*, but *of my spirit*, or *out of it*; as out of an unfathomable, immeasurable, and inexhaustible fountain and fulness: *and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy*; or foretel things to come, as Agabus, and the four daughters of Philip the Evangelist, ch. xx. 9, 10, *and your young men shall see visions*; as Ananias, ch. ix. 10. and Peter, ch. x. 17. and Paul when a young man, ch. xxii. 18. and xxvi. 19. and John, the youngest of the apostles, Rev. i. 10. though he was in years, when he saw the visions in the Revelations: *and your old men shall dream dreams*; or shall have night-visions, as Paul at Troas, ch. xvi. 9. and in his voyage when at sea, ch. xxvii. 23. The order of the words is inverted, this last clause stands first in Joel; perhaps the change is made, because the apostles were young men, on whom the spirit was poured; and the thing was the more wonderful that so it should be, than if they had been old men.

Ver. 18. *And on my servants, and on my handmaidens*, &c.] In Joel it is only *the servants* and *the handmaids*: and which Kimchi interprets of strangers that should stand in the land of Israel, and serve the Israelites. But these phrases do not seem so much to describe the civil state and condition of those persons, as their religious character, being such as were brought, by the power of divine grace, to yield a cheerful obedience to the will of God; though it may also regard the former, and shew, that with God there is no distinction and difference of bond or free, of rich or poor; contrary to a maxim of the Jews [s], that the Shekinah does not dwell but upon a wise man, a mighty man, and a rich man. *I will pour out, in those days, of my spirit, and they shall prophesy*: see the note on the preceding verse, from whence this clause, *and they shall prophesy*, is repeated; for it is not in the text in Joel; which is done to point at the end and effect of the spirit being poured down upon them.

Ver. 19. *And I will shew wonders in heaven above*, &c.] The word *above* is not in Joel, nor in the Syriac version here, as neither the word *beneath*, in the next clause. This may refer either to the appearance of angels, and of an extraordinary star at the birth of Christ; or rather to comets and blazing stars, and particularly to that comet which, in the form of a flaming sword, hung over Jerusalem, and the forms of armies in the heavens engaged together, which were seen before, and portended the destruction of that city [t]: *and signs in the earth beneath*; meaning either the miracles done by Christ, and his apostles, on earth; or those surprising events in Judea and in Jerusalem, a flame was seen in the temple, the doors of it opened of themselves, and a voice was heard in it, saying, let us go hence; and an ideot went about several years together, saying, woe to the people, woe to the city, *&c.* *blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke*: by *blood* is meant not the blood of Christ, either his bloody sweat in the garden, or what he shed on the cross, but the blood of the Jews, shed in war, and in intestine seditions and murders: and by *fire* is designed not the Holy Ghost, who now appeared in cloven tongues, as of fire, but the conflagration of the city and temple of Jerusalem, and of many other towns and villages. And by *vapours of smoke*; or, as in the Hebrew text, *pillars of smoke*, ascending in upright columns, like palm-trees, are intended literally, the vast quantities of smoke that would arise from such burnings; so that the very heavens would be clouded and darkened with them, and sun and moon appear in the following form.

Ver. 20. *The sun shall be turned into darkness*, &c.] As at the death of Christ, by a total eclipse of it: *and the moon into blood*; as at the opening of the sixth seal, Rev. vi. 12. *before that great and notable day of the Lord come*; when he shall come in power and great glory, as he did in a few years after this, to take vengeance on the Jews, and destroy their nation, city, and temple; in which there was a display of his greatness, and power, and which was awful and *terrible* to them, as in Joel it is called; see the note on Matt. xxiv. 29.

Ver. 21. *And it shall come to pass*, &c.] Even at that time, when these signs shall appear, and the destruction is hastening on, that *whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord*; shall believe in the Lord Jesus Christ with the heart, and shall confess him with the mouth, and shall worship him in spirit and in truth, and submit to all his ordinances and commands; for invocation of the Lord includes the whole of worship, internal and external: *shall be saved*; or delivered from that temporal destruction which came upon the Jews, as the Christians were by removing from Jerusalem to Pella, as they were directed [u]; and shall be saved with a spiritual and everlasting salvation by Jesus Christ; see the note on Rom. x. 13.

Ver. 22. *Ye men of Israel hear these words*, &c.] The Arabic version prefaces this passage with these words, *in those days Peter stood and said unto the people*; as if it was not on the same day, and the following oration was a new one, and not a continued discourse with the former; whereas it was delivered at the same time, and is in connexion with what goes before. Only the apostle having finished the vindication of his brethren, and the whole society, and set that matter in a clear light; and being willing to take this opportunity of preaching Christ to the Jews, addresses them under another character in a new form of words, though to the same sense as in ver. 14. in order to soften their minds, and raise their attention, and proceeds to describe the person, the subject of his following discourse: *Jesus of Nazareth*; first by his name Jesus, which the angel gave him before his birth; and that for this reason, because he is the Saviour of his people from their sins, and which his name signifies; and next by the place, not where he was born, for that was Bethlehem, but where he was educated and brought up, and where he lived the greatest part of his life, Nazareth, a city in Galilee; whence he was so called, generally by way of

[s] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 92. 1.
[t] Joseph. de Bello Jud. l. 6. c. 5. sect. 3.
[u] Vid. Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. 3. c. 5.

contempt, and not so much to distinguish him from any of the same name: *a man approved of God;* he was truly and really *a man*, who in his incarnation assumed a true body, and a reasonable soul; but he was not a mere man, and much less a common and ordinary man: he was the famous son of man the Scriptures speak of; the man of God's right hand, the man his fellow, a great, mighty, and wonderful man: *approved by God;* or shewn, declared, and demonstrated by him, to be sent by him in human nature, to be the true Messiah and Saviour of the world, who was the chosen of God, loved and honoured by him, whom he sealed, and bore a testimony to; and that not privately, but openly and publicly: *among you;* in the face of all the people in Jerusalem, and in the temple, and at the time of public feasts: *by miracles, and wonders, and signs;* by dispossessing devils, cleansing lepers, restoring sight to the blind, causing the deaf to hear, the dumb to speak, and the lame to walk, and by raising the dead: *which God did by him in the midst of you;* not but that he did the miracles himself, as God, and the son of God; but as he was man, God did them, by his human nature, as the instrument: the meaning is, that his miracles were wrought by a divine power, and not by a diabolical influence, by Beelzebub the prince of devils, as the Pharisees blasphemously said of him; and these were done, not in a corner, but in the midst of them: *as ye yourselves also know;* for they must be sensible and convicted in their own consciences, not only that these things were done by him, but that they could not be done by him, unless God was with him, or he was from God; and so were testimonies both of the divine approbation of him, and of his deity and Messiahship.

Ver. 23. *Him being delivered,* &c.] By himself, according to his own will, for he gave, or delivered himself for his people; and by his father, who spared him not, but delivered him up for us all; and by Judas, one of his disciples, who, for a sum of money, delivered him into the hands of the Jews; and by them he was delivered up to Pilate, the Roman governor; and by him back again to the Jews, and to the soldiers, to crucify him: and all this *by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God;* God not only foreknew that it would be, but determined that it should be, who does all things after the counsel of his own will; and this for the salvation of his people, and for the glorifying of his divine perfections: though this fixed resolution, settled purpose, and wise determination of God, did not in the least excuse the sin of Judas in betraying him, or of Pilate in condemning him, or of the Jews in crucifying him; nor did it at all infringe the liberty of their wills in acting, who did what they did, not by force, but voluntarily: *ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain;* they took him in the garden, and bound him, and had him first before the high-priest, then before Pilate, the Roman governor, and cried out with one voice, in a most vehement manner, for the crucifying of him, which, at their importunity, was granted, though no fault was found in him; and therefore are justly charged with slaying, or murdering him.

Ver. 24. *Whom God raised up,* &c.] From the dead; for though his life was taken away by men, he was raised to life again by God the father, to whom the resurrection of Christ is generally ascribed, though not to the exclusion of Christ himself, and the blessed spirit; and this being what the apostles were witnesses of, and the Jews endeavoured to stifle as much as they could, it being the sign Christ gave them of the truth of his Messiahship; and this being also a fundamental article of the Christian religion, the apostle enlarges upon it: *having loosed the pains of death;* this may be understood either of what Christ had done for his people by dying for them; he had abolished death; he had took away its sting, and delivered them from the curse of it, having fulfilled the law, satisfied justice, and made full atonement for their sin; so that though they die, death is not a penal evil to them, nor shall they always continue under the power of it: or of what God did in raising Christ from the dead; he delivered him from the power of death, by which he was held in the grave, and which is expressed by a word which signifies pains and sorrows, even those of a woman in travail; which though he felt not now, he had gone through them; his low state in the grave was the effect of them; and these are said to be loosed when he was raised up, he being so entirely delivered from them, as that they should never come upon him more: and it is to be observed, that the same word in the Hebrew language, and so in the Chaldee and Syriac, in which Peter might speak, signifies both cords and sorrows; and we often read in Talmudic and Rabbinic * writings, of חבלו של משיח, *the sorrows*, or *pains* of the Messiah. The death which Christ died, being the death of the cross, was a very painful one: he endured great pains in his body, by being smote with rods, and buffeted with the hands of men; by being scourged and whipped, and having a crown of thorns platted on his head; but the pains of the cross were still greater, his body being stretched out upon it, and fastened to it by nails drove through his hands and feet, and then reared up, and jogged in the earth, where he hung upon it in extreme agony, till he expired: and these pains he endured, not through want of love to him in his father, who, as he does not willingly grieve and afflict the children of men, so neither would he his own son; nor was it on account of any sin of his, for he knew none, nor did he commit any; but he was wounded, and bruised, and endured these sorrows and pains for the sins of his people; as he was their surety, it was necessary he should die, because the wages of sin is death, and the justice and veracity of God required it; and it was proper he should die the painful death of the cross, because of the types and prophecies of it, and chiefly that he might appear to be made a curse for his people: though more must be meant here than the pains he endured in the moment and article of death, since they ceased at death, and he was then freed from them; whereas the text speaks of a loosing him from them at his resurrection, which supposes that they continued on him until that time; wherefore these pains of death also signify the power and dominion death had over him, and continued to have over him

* T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 118. 2. & Sanhedrin, fol. 98. 2. Alkath Rocel, l. 1. p. 1. & passim.

in the grave; with the cords of which he was bound and held, till he was loosed by raising him from the dead. Dr. Goodwin is of opinion, that these words are to be understood, not of the resurrection of Christ's body from the pains and power of death, but at least chiefly of the recovery and revival of his soul from those spiritual agonies which attended him, and from which he was loosed and delivered before his death: and the rather, because as before observed, at death the pains of it are gone, the bitterness of it is over, and nothing is felt in the grave; besides, the word here used signifies the pains of a woman in travail, 1 Thess. v. 3. and seems best to agree with those inward sufferings of Christ, which are called *the travail of his soul*, Isa. liii. 11. and which, like the pangs of a woman in labour, came upon him gradually: four or five days before his death he said, *now is my soul troubled*, John xii. 27. The night in which he was betrayed, when he came into the garden, he began to be sorrowful, and heavy, and sore amazed; and at length he breaks out, and says, *my soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death*, Matt. xxvi. 37, 38. and after some time his pains increase, and being in agony, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was, as it were, great drops of blood, Luke xxii. 44. but the sharpest pains were yet to come, and which he endured when on the cross, being forsaken by his God and father, Matt. xxvii. 46. and which arose partly from the sins of his people, the filth and guilt of them laid upon him, which must be very distressing to his pure and holy mind; and from the wrath of God, and curse of the law, which he sustained as the punishment for them; and it was necessary that he should bear the whole punishment due to sin, the punishment of sense, or feel the wrath of God, and the strokes of divine justice, and the punishment of loss, or be deprived of the divine presence; and these sorrows of soul may be well called the pains or sorrows of death, because they were unto death, and issued in it; a corporeal death followed upon them; and when he was in the garden, and on the cross, it might be truly said, *the sorrows of death compassed him about*, Psal. xviii. 4. but from these he was loosed just before his death, when he said, *it is finished*: the darkness was over; the light of God's countenance broke out upon him; he heard his cry, and helped him in the acceptable time, in the day of salvation; his anger, as a judge, was turned away from him, justice being entirely satisfied; and therefore it was not possible he should be held any longer with these cords and sorrows of death; for he being an infinite person, was able to bear all the wrath of God at once, which was due to sin, and therefore did not bring on him an eternal death as on the wicked, he sustaining and satisfying for all at once; and, like another Samson, broke asunder these cords like threads, and was loosed from them. But after all, though these are very great truths; yet, according to the order in which these words lie, being placed after the account of the crucifixion and death of Christ, they seem rather to respect the resurrection of his body, and the loosing it from the power and dominion of death; and in such sense as never to return to it, or any more feel the pains of it. One of Stephen's copies reads, *the pains of Hades*, or the invisible state; and the Vulgate Latin version, *the pains of hell*; as in Psal. xviii. 5. where the grave is meant; and the Syriac version, חבליה דשאול, *the pains, or cords of the grave*: the word *cords*, or *bands*, best agrees with the word *loosing*; and the Ethiopic version renders it, *the bands of death*. *Because it was not possible he should be holden of it*; of death, and under the power of it; partly, because of the power and dignity of his person, as the son of God, he being still the Prince of life, and who by dying abolished death, and him that had the power of it; and partly, because as the surety of his people he had made full satisfaction for sin, and had brought in an everlasting righteousness, and therefore ought in justice to be discharged, and detained a prisoner no longer; as also because of the prophecies of the Old Testament concerning his resurrection, which must be fulfilled, as follows.

Ver. 25. *For David speaketh concerning him, &c.*] The Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, in Psal. xvi. 8, 9, 10, 11. The whole psalm belongs to the Messiah, and every thing concerning the person in it agrees with him; such as his trust in God, ver. 1. as he was man and Mediator; his very great regard to the saints, and delight in them, ver. 2, 3. his disregard to others who were hastening after another God, or another Saviour, whose sacrifices, as an high-priest, he would not offer up, nor make intercession for them, ver. 4. his exceeding great satisfaction in having the God of Israel for his portion, and in having his lot cast among his peculiar people, who were a delightful inheritance to him, ver. 5, 6. his thankfulness for advice and direction in the time of his sorrows and sufferings; and his dependence on the almighty power of God to support and protect him, ver. 7, 8. and the joy and comfort he was filled with in the view of his resurrection from the dead, and his enjoyment of the heavenly glory, ver. 9, 10, 11. *I foresaw the Lord always before my face*: Christ always had Jehovah in view throughout the whole of his life; and in his last moments he had respect unto the glory of his perfections, as the ultimate end of his obedience and sufferings; and to his purposes, council, and covenant, which were to be accomplished by him; and to his will and command in preaching the Gospel, working miracles, going about to do good, in obeying the precept, and bearing the penalty of the law; as well as to his promises, and his power to assist, support, and preserve him, as man and Mediator: *for he is on my right hand*; which expresses his nearness to him, his presence with him, his readiness to assist him, and his protection of him; as if he was his second that stood by him, to take his part, and, if need be, to take up his cause, and defend him from his enemies; see Psal. cix. 31. and cx. 5. *that I should not be moved*: from his station, place, and duty; from the cause he was engaged in, so as to relinquish it; or with the fear of men, or fury of devils, or wrath of God, whilst he was doing and suffering, according to the will of God.

Ver. 26. *Therefore did my heart rejoice, &c.*] Because that he had always the truth, faithfulness, and power of God in his view, and the presence and protection of God with him; and which are sufficient to make the hearts of his people, as well as of him, to rejoice: *and my tongue was glad*; in the Hebrew text it is, *my glory*; and so the Syriac version renders it

here; which Kimchi explains of the soul, because that is the glory of the body; but our apostle rightly interprets it of the tongue, which is so called, Psal. xxx. 12. and lvii. 8. and cviii. 1. because it is both the glory of man, for that being endowed with the faculty of speaking, gives him a glory above the brute creatures; and because it is that by which he glorifies God, by ascribing greatness to him, speaking of his marvellous works, and singing his praises, as Christ did, in the great congregation, among his apostles, a little before his death. *Moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope*, or *safely*; meaning, that his body should lie quietly in the grave, as in its resting-place from all toil and labour, pains and sorrows, and be secure from worms, or any corruption. Or this may be understood of his person being in a quiet, firm, and full hope of the resurrection of the dead, and of eternal life and glory.

Ver. 27. *Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell*, &c.] This is an apostrophe, or an address to his father, who he believed would not leave his soul, as separate from his body, in Hades, in the invisible world of souls, in the place where the souls of departed saints are, but would quickly return it to its body, and reunite them: or else, that he would not leave his dead body, for so נפש sometimes signifies; see Lev. xix. 28. and xxi. 1. Numb. ix. 10. and xix. 11, 13. in the grave; which is no unusual sense of שאול; see Gen. xlii. 38. Isa. xxxviii. 18. that is, so long as to be corrupted and putrefy, as the next clause shews: *neither wilt thou suffer thine holy one to see corruption.* The character of an *holy one* well agrees with Christ, both as God, or with respect to his divine nature, holiness being a perfection in it, and in which he is glorious; and as man, he being holy in his nature, harmless in his life and conversation: all his doctrines were pure and holy, and so were all his works; and all his administrations in the discharge of every branch of his office; and he is the efficient cause and fountain of all the holiness of his people: they are sanctified in him, and by him, and have all their sanctification from him. The word may be rendered, *thy merciful*, or *bountiful one;* and such Christ is, a merciful, as well as faithful high-priest; and who has shewn great compassion both to the bodies and souls of men, and has been very beneficent and liberal in the distributions of his grace and goodness. Now, though he died, and was laid in the grave, and buried, yet God would not suffer him to lie there so long as to be corrupted and putrified, which is the sense of seeing corruption: and so the Jews themselves explain the last clause of the preceding verse, in connexion with this, *my flesh shall rest in hope*, that no worm or maggot should have power over it, or corrupt it. "Seven fathers (they say [x]) dwell in eternal glory, "and there is no רמה ותולעה, *worm or maggot*, rules "over them; and these are they, Abraham, Isaac, "and Jacob, and Moses, and Aaron, and Amram "their father; and there are that say also David, as "it is said, Psal. xvi. *therefore my heart is glad, and* "*my glory rejoiceth, my flesh also shall rest in hope.*" And which sense also is mentioned by one of their commentators of note [y], who thus paraphrases the words: "whilst I am alive it shall rest safely, for "thou wilt deliver me from all hurt; and in the "mystical sense, or according to the Midrash, after "death; intimating, that no maggot or worm should "have power over him;" which was not true of David, but is of the Messiah.

Ver. 28. *Thou hast made known to me the ways of life*, &c.] That is, thou hast raised me from the dead. When God raised Christ from the dead, he shewed him, or made him to know experimentally the way of life, or the way of the resurrection from death to life; and this path of life, or of the resurrection to an immortal and eternal life, was first shewn to Christ, who is the first-fruits of them that slept, and the first-begotten from the dead. *Thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance;* or glorious presence, in which is fulness of joy; which Christ, as man, is in, and fully possessed of, being exalted at the right hand of God, and crowned with glory and honour, and has all the joy that was set before him in his sufferings and death.

Ver. 29. *Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you*, &c.] The apostle calls the Jews, *brethren*, whom he before only styled men of Judea, and men of Israel, because they were his brethren according to the flesh, as many of them afterwards were in a spiritual relation; and the rather he adds this affectionate appellation to soften their minds, and prepare them to receive the account he was about to give of David, and of his prophecy of the Messiah, and his resurrection; in which he used much freedom of speech, consistent with truth, good sense, and strong reasoning; which he thought he might be allowed to take, and they would not be displeased at, in discoursing to them *of the patriarch David:* who was a *head of the fathers*, as the Syriac and Arabic versions render it; a prince of the tribes of Israel; one of the greatest kings the tribes of Israel ever had; and therefore this name well becomes him; though it is more commonly given to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the heads of the twelve tribes: *that he is both dead, and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day;* it is a plain case, and a certain matter of fact, which nobody disputes or denies, that David really died, and was laid in the grave, and that his monument, or tomb, was still extant, so that he was not risen from the dead; and therefore the above citation could not respect him, but another, even the Messiah, and had been literally fulfilled in Jesus. The Jews say [z], that David died on the day of Pentecost; which was the very day on which Peter was now preaching: he was buried in Jerusalem, and his sepulchral monument was in being when Peter said these words. And Josephus relates [a], that the sepulchre of David was opened by Hyrcanus, who took out of it three thousand talents; and that it was afterwards opened by Herod [b]: which, if true, may serve to render credible what Peter says concerning its continuance to that day. Though it may be questioned whether any such treasure was ever in it, or taken out of it; and still less credible is the account which R. Benjamin [c] gives of two men in

[x] Massecheth Derech Eretz Zuta, c. 1. fol. 19. 1.
[y] Kimchi in Psal. xvi. 9.
[z] T. Hieros. Chagiga, fol. 78. 1.

[a] De Bello Jud. l. 1. c. 2. sect. 5. & Antiqu. l. 7. c. 15. sect. 3.
[b] Ib. l. 16. c. 7. sect. 1.
[c] Itinerar. p. 45, 49.

his time, who, under the wall of Zion, found a cave, which led them to a large palace built on pillars of marble, and covered with gold and silver; and within it was a table, and a golden sceptre, and a crown of gold; and this, says the author, was the sepulchre of David, king of Israel.

Ver. 30. *Therefore being a prophet,* &c.] Who could foretel things to come, as he did many things concerning the sufferings and death of Christ, and the circumstances attending it, concerning his resurrection, ascension, and session at the right hand of God. So the title of his *Psalms,* in the Syriac version, runs thus; the "Book of the Psalms of David, King and *Prophet*:" and in the Arabic version, "the First Book of the "Psalms of David *the Prophet,* King of the Children "of Israel." Though the Jews[d] will not allow him, nor Solomon, nor Daniel, to be strictly and properly prophets. They make a difference between prophecy, and the Holy Spirit. They own, that the book of Psalms was written under the influence of the Holy Spirit, but not by prophecy; and therefore they place it among the *Hagiographa,* or holy writings, but not among the Prophets: though after all, Kimchi allows David to be a prophet, since he is called a man of God; for he says this name is not said of any but על נביא, *of a prophet*[e]; and Peter is right in calling him so: *and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him;* as he did in Psal. cxxxii. 11. *that of the fruit of his loins;* of one that should be of his seed, that should spring from him, even the Virgin Mary, who was of the house and lineage of David: *according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ;* would send him forth, according to the human nature; for this phrase respects not his resurrection from the dead, but his incarnation or exhibition in the flesh, as in ch. iii. 26. and xiii. 23. This clause is wanting in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, and in the Alexandrian copy, and should be read in a parenthesis; since it is not in the text in Psal. cxxxii. 11. *to sit on his throne;* on the throne of David his father; see Luke i. 32. and the note upon it.

Ver. 31. *He seeing this before,* &c.] Or by a spirit of prophecy foreseeing it, that according to God's promise and oath, the Messiah would be raised up, and spring from his seed; and also by the same spirit foresaw that he would suffer and die, and be laid in the grave, the pit of corruption: *spake of the resurrection of Christ;* from the dead, to the sense of the following words, in Psal. xvi. 10. *that his soul was not left in hell;* neither his separate soul in *Hades,* nor his body in the grave; *neither his flesh did see corruption;* or his body, or his *carcass,* as the Syriac version renders it, did not lie so long in the grave as to rot and putrefy.

Ver. 32. *This Jesus hath God raised up,* &c.] That is, from the dead, *whereof we are all witnesses;* namely, of his resurrection, they having seen him, and heard him, and ate, and drank, and conversed with him since his resurrection; and which was true, not of the twelve apostles only, but of the whole company: or *we are all his witnesses;* either of God, who raised Christ from the dead; or of Christ who was raised by him; and indeed, they bore testimony to the whole of this, to Christ, and to his resurrection, and to its being done by God the father.

Ver. 33. *Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted,* &c.] After his resurrection he ascended to heaven, and was exalted in human nature; *to the right hand of God,* as the Ethiopic version, and the Arabic version used by De Dieu read; an honour that never was conferred on any creature, angels or men, besides: or he was exalted and raised to the high honour and dignity of a Prince and Saviour, of Lord, Head, and King, so as to have a name, dominion, and authority over all, by the mighty power of God, which is sometimes called his right hand; see Psal. cxviii. 15, 16. *and having received of the father the promise of the Holy Ghost;* which the father had promised to pour forth in the last days, Isa. xliv. 3. Joel ii. 28. and which Christ had promised to send from the father, John xiv. 16, 26. and xv. 26. and xvi. 7. and which, upon his ascension and exaltation, he received as Mediator from him; see Psal. lxviii. 18. compared with Ephes. iv. 8. *he hath shed forth this;* this Holy Spirit, or promised spirit, these gifts of his; and so the Syriac version renders it, *he hath shed forth this gift;* which expresses both the plenty and abundance of the gifts bestowed, and the liberality of Christ in the donation of them: 'tis added, *which ye now see and hear;* meaning the cloven tongues, as of fire, which they saw sitting on the disciples, and the various languages which they heard them speak. The Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions, leave out the word *now;* and the Syriac, in the room of it, reads, *behold.*

Ver. 34. *For David is not ascended into the heavens,* &c.] In his body, that being still in the grave, in his sepulchre, which remained to that day, though in his soul he was ascended to heaven; his spirit had returned to God that gave it, and was among the spirits of just men made perfect: *but he saith himself,* in Psal. cx. 1. *the Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou on my right hand;* see the note on Matt. xxii. 44.

Ver. 35. *Until I make thy foes thy footstool.*] See the note on Matt. xxii. 44.

Ver. 36. *Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly,* &c.] *With certain knowledge,* as the Arabic version renders it; with full assurance of it: this is a case that is plain and clear, a matter of fact that may be depended on; which all the people of Israel, called *the house of Israel,* a phrase frequently used of that people in the Old Testament, which every individual of that body of men might be assured of: *that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ;* that is, that God the father had not only constituted and appointed Jesus of Nazareth to be the Messiah, the Lord of lords, and King of kings, and had invested him with that office, power, and authority, but he had made him manifest to be so by the Holy Spirit which he had received, and now poured forth the same, and not another; even him whom they had rejected with so much contempt; whom they had treated in such a scornful and brutish manner; had spit upon, buffeted, and scourged, and at last crucified; and yet, now, even he had all power in heaven, and in

[d] Maimon. More Nevochim, par. 2. c. 45. Vid. Procop. Gazæum in Reg. l. 2. c. 23. sect. 2.

[e] Kimchi Præfat. ad Psalm.

earth, given him, and was exalted above every name; that in his name every knee should bow. The phrase of *making a Messiah*, or *Christ*, is used in the Talmudic writings [f]. "The holy blessed God sought to *make* "*Hezekiah the Messiah*, or *Christ*, and *Sennacherib Gog* "and *Magog*; the property or attribute of justice said "before the holy blessed God, Lord of the world, and "what was David, the king of Israel, who said so "many songs and hymns before thee, and thou didst "not *make him Christ?* Hezekiah, for whom thou hast "done all these wonders, and he hath not said a song "before thee, wilt thou *make him the Messiah*, or "*Christ?* wherefore his mouth was shut up; and the "earth opened, and said a song before him; Lord of "the world, I have said a song before thee, for this "righteous one, ועשהו משיח, *and he made him Messiah*, "or *Christ*."

Ver. 37. *Now when they heard* this, &c.] Or *him*, as the Arabic version; that is, Peter speaking these things, describing the character of Jesus of Nazareth; opening the prophecies concerning him; asserting his resurrection from the dead, and exaltation at the right hand of God; ascribing this wonderful affair, of speaking with divers tongues, to his effusion of the spirit; and charging them home with the iniquity of crucifying him: *they were pricked in their hearts*: the word of God entered into them, and was as a sharp sword in them, which cut and laid open their hearts, and the sin and wickedness of them; they saw themselves guilty of the crime laid to their charge, and were filled with remorse of conscience for it; they felt pain at their hearts, and much uneasiness, and were seized with horror and trembling; they were wounded in their spirits, being hewn and cut down by the prophets and apostles of the Lord, and slain by the words of his mouth; they were as dead men in their own apprehension; and indeed, a prick, a cut, or wound in the heart is mortal: *and said unto Peter, and to the rest of the apostles, men and brethren, what shall we do?* the persons they before mocked at, they are glad to advise with, what should be done in this their sad and wretched case; what they should do to obtain the favour of God, the forgiveness of their sins, and everlasting salvation. Convinced, awakened sinners, are generally at first upon a covenant of works; are for doing something to atone for their past crimes, to set themselves right in the sight of God, to ingratiate themselves into his favour, and procure the pardon of their sins, and the inheritance of eternal life. And they seem also to be at a loss about the way of salvation, what is to be done to attain it, or how, and by what means it is to be come at; and are almost ready to despair of it, their sin appearing in so dreadful a light, and attended with such aggravating circumstances. Beza's ancient copy reads, *some of them said to Peter*, &c. not all that heard, but those that were pricked to the heart.

Ver. 38. *Then Peter said unto them*, &c.] Being the mouth of the apostles, and being ready to give advice, and speak a word of comfort to their distressed minds: *repent*; change your minds, entertain other thoughts, and a different opinion of Jesus of Nazareth, than you have done; consider him, and believe in him, as the true Messiah and Saviour of the world; look upon him, not any more as an impostor, and a blasphemer, but as sent of God, and the only Redeemer of Israel; change your voice and way of speaking of him, and your conduct towards his disciples and followers; a change of mind will produce a change of actions in life and conversation: bring forth fruits meet for repentance; and make an open and hearty profession of repentance for this your sin. And this the apostle said, to distinguish between a legal and an evangelical repentance; the former is expressed in their being pricked to the heart, on which they were not to depend; the latter he was desirous they might have, and shew forth; which springs from the love of God, is attended with views, or at least hopes of pardoning grace and mercy, and with faith in Christ Jesus: it lies in a true sight and sense of sin, under the illuminations and convictions of the spirit of God; in a sorrow for it, after a godly sort, and because it is committed against a God of love, grace, and mercy, and it shews itself in loathing sin, and in shame for it, in an ingenuous acknowledgement of it, and in forsaking it: and this is moreover urged, to shew the necessity of it, as to salvation, for such that God would not have perish, he will have come to repentance; so to their admission to the ordinance of baptism, to which repentance is a pre-requisite; and to which the apostle next advises: *and be baptized every one of you*; that repents and believes; that is, in water, in which John administered the ordinance of baptism; in which Christ himself was baptized, and in which the apostles of Christ administered it; in this Philip baptized the eunuch; and in this were the persons baptized that were converted in Cornelius's house; and it is distinguished from the baptism of the spirit, or with fire, the extraordinary gifts of the spirit mentioned in the last clause of this verse; and which ordinance of water-baptism was administered by immersion, as the places, Jordan and Ænon, where John performed it, and the instances of it particularly in Christ, and in the eunuch, and the end of it, which is to represent the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, as well as the primary signification of the word, shew. And this is to be done, *in the name of Jesus Christ*; not to the exclusion of the father, and of the spirit, in whose name also this ordinance is to be administered, Matt. xxviii. 19. but the name of Jesus Christ is particularly mentioned, because of these Jews, who had before rejected and denied him as the Messiah; but now, upon their repentance and faith, they are to be baptized in his name, by his authority, according to his command; professing their faith in him, devoting themselves to him, and calling on his name. The end for which this was to be submitted to, is, *for the remission of sins*; not that forgiveness of sin could be procured either by repentance, or by baptism; for this is only obtained by the blood of Christ; but the apostle advises these awakened, sensible, repenting, and believing souls, to submit to baptism, that by it their faith might be led to Christ, who suffered and died for their sins, who left them buried in his grave, and who rose again for their justification from them; all which is, in a most lively manner, represented in the ordinance of baptism

[f] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 94. 1.

by immersion: the encouragement to it follows, *and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost;* not the grace of the spirit, as a regenerator and sanctifier; for that they had already; and is necessary, as previous to baptism; unless it should mean confirmation of that grace, and stability in it, as it appears from ver. 42. they afterwards had; but rather the extraordinary gifts of the spirit, particularly the gift of speaking with tongues, which Christ had received from the father, and had now shed on his apostles; see Acts xix. 5, 6.

Ver. 39. *For the promise is unto you,* &c.] Either of the Messiah, and salvation by him, which was particularly given forth to the people of the Jews; or of the remission of sins, which was a branch of the new covenant made with the house of Israel, in a spiritual sense, even the whole household of God; or of the pouring forth of the spirit: and this promise was not only to them, but to theirs, even to as many of them as belonged to the election of grace; and whom the Lord their God would effectually call by his grace, as the last and limiting clause of the text, and which is to be connected with every part of it, shews: *and to your children;* this is the rather mentioned, because these awakened, and converted souls, were not only in great concern about themselves, for their sin of crucifying Christ, but were in great distress about their children, on whom they had imprecated the guilt of Christ's blood, as upon themselves; the thought of which cut them to the heart, and made their hearts bleed, within them: wherefore to relieve them, and administer comfort to them in this their distress, the apostle informs them, that the promise of Christ, and of his grace, was not only to them, who were now called, but it was also to their children; to as many of them as the Lord God should call; and who are the children of the promise, which all the children of the flesh were not, Rom. ix. 6. and to these the promise should be applied, notwithstanding this dreadful imprecation of theirs: *and to all that are afar off;* either in place, as those that were dispersed among the several nations of the world; and so carried in it a comfortable aspect on the multitude of Jews, that were of every nation under heaven; or in time, who should live in ages to come; or else the Gentiles are intended, who were afar off from God and Christ, and the way of life and salvation by him; see Ephes. ii. 12, 13, 17. *even as many as the Lord our God shall call;* not externally only, by the ministry of the word, but internally, by his grace and spirit; with that calling, which is according to the purpose and grace of God, and is inseparably connected with eternal glory; the promise is to all such, and is made good to all such, whether they be Jews or Gentiles, fathers, or children, greater or lesser sinners. The Syriac version reads, *whom God himself shall call.*

Ver. 40. *And with many other words did he testify and exhort,* &c.] For Luke does not give the sermons of the apostles at length, but a compendium, or specimen of them, and some of the more remarkable things in them; and which, it seems, lay partly in *testifying* concerning Christ, his person, office, grace, righteousness, and salvation; and against sins and errors, and false doctrine: and in *exhorting* to the exercise of grace, and the discharge of duty; or in comforting distressed minds: for the word used signifies to comfort as well as to exhort; though it seems to have the latter sense here, since it follows: *saying, save yourselves from this untoward generation;* meaning, the chief priests, Scribes, and Pharisees, and elders of the people, chiefly, who were a perverse generation of men; and upon whom, for their impenitence and unbelief, for their rejection of the Messiah, and their evil treatment of him, wrath and ruin would come upon them, to the uttermost, very quickly; wherefore the apostle exhorts to separate from them, and not partake of their sins, lest they should also of their plagues; but come out from among them, and so, in a temporal sense, save themselves from the destruction that would quickly come on their nation, city, and temple; and so the Arabic version renders it, *escape from this rough generation.*

Ver. 41. *Then they that gladly received his word,* &c.] The Syriac version adds, *and believed;* what Peter said concerning repentance and baptism, and especially concerning remission of sins, and the gift of the Holy Ghost; and concerning the promise of Christ, and salvation by him, of the pardon of sin, and of the Holy Spirit; which doctrine they received with great joy and gladness, it being suitable to their case; and very *readily,* and *willingly,* as the Syriac and Arabic versions render it; for they were now made a willing people in the day of God's power, and now that promise, or prophecy, in Psal. cx. 3. had a remarkable accomplishment; these converts were the dew of Christ's youth, as well as instances of his powerful and efficacious grace: not all that heard this sermon of Peter's received his doctrine in this manner, only some; and so the Syriac and Arabic versions render the words, and *some of them readily received,* &c. which shews the distinguishing grace of God in this instance. The Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions leave out the word *gladly,* which should not be omitted: and as soon as they had received the word, and were comforted by it, they *were baptized;* in water, by immersion, for which there was great conveniency in Jerusalem, and in the temple, where the apostles now were: in the city of Jerusalem, in private houses, they had their baths for purifications, by immersion, as in the case of menstruas, gonorrhœas, and other defilements, by touching unclean persons, and things, which were very frequent; so that a digger of cisterns, for such uses, and others, was a business in Jerusalem. "Says Simeon "Sicana[s], who was a digger of *cisterns,* ditches, and "caves, in Jerusalem, to R. Jochanan ben Zaccai, I am "as great a man as thou art; he made answer to him, "why? (or your reason for it;) he replied to him, be-"cause I am employed in the necessary affairs of many, "(or of the public,) as you are; for says he, if a man "comes to you for judgment, or to ask a question, "you say to him, drink out of this cistern, whose "waters are pure, and cold; or, if a woman asks thee "concerning her menstruas, you say to her, טבלי, *dip* "in this cistern, whose waters purify." And in the temple there was an apartment, called בית טבילה, *the dipping-place,* or *room,* where the high-priest dipped

[s] Midrash Kohelet, fol. 70. 3.

himself on the day of atonement[h]: and besides, there were ten lavers of brass, made by Solomon; and every laver held forty baths of water, and each was four cubits broad and long, sufficient for immersion of the whole body of a man; and to these Herbanus[i] the Jew seems to have respect, when he says, that in the outer part of Solomon's temple, there were λουτῆρες, *lavers*, in every side, (or all around,) which were free, or open, for the use of all; to which, he thinks, the prophet Isaiah has respect, in Isa. i. 16. Those were for the priests, both to wash their hands and feet at, and also to wash the burnt-offerings; see Exod. xxx. 18, 19. 2 Chron. iv. 6,[k]: and who were likewise obliged, very often, to bathe, or dip their whole bodies in water; for if a priest went out of the temple for a little while to speak with a friend, טָעוּן טְבִילָה, *he was obliged to dipping*: and if he nodded, he was obliged to wash his hands and his feet; but if he slept, he was obliged *to dip* himself: yea, a man might not go into the court, or to service, even though he was clean, עַד שֶׁהוּא טוֹבֵל, *until he dip himself*[l]. Add to this, that there was the molten sea also for the priests to wash in, 2 Chron. iv. 6. which was done by immersion; on which one of the Jewish commentators[m] has these words: "the sea "was לִטְבִילָה, *for the dipping* of the priests; for in "the midst of it, they dipped themselves from their "uncleanness; but in the Jerusalem Talmud[n] there "is an objection, is it not a vessel? as if it was said, "how can they *dip* in it, for is it not a vessel? and "there is no *dipping* in vessels: R. Joshua ben Levi "replied, a pipe of water was laid to it from the foun-"tain of Etam, and the feet of the oxen, (which were "under the molten sea,) were open at the pomegranates; "so that it was as if it was from under the earth, and "the waters came to it, and entered, and ascended, by "the way of the feet of the oxen, which were open "beneath them, and bored." The reason of the objection is, because bathing, or dipping for purification, was not made in vessels, but in gatherings, or pools of water upon the ground; and which objection is removed, by observing, that a pipe was laid from the fountain of Etam, which supplied it with spring, or running water; so that the molten sea, and the lavers, were looked upon all one as pools of water, or springs of water, and as fit for immersion. This sea was ten cubits from brim to brim, and five cubits high, and held two thousand baths, 1 Kings vii. 23, 26. Yea, three thousand, as in 2 Chron. vi. 5. and every laver held forty baths, 1 Kings vii. 38. and every bath held four gallons and a half, and between seven and eight gallons of wine-measure. And it may be observed, that there were also in Jerusalem the pool of Bethesda, into which persons went down at certain times, John v. 1. and the pool of Siloam, where persons bathed, and dipped themselves, on certain occasions; see the note on John ix. 7. So that there were conveniences enough for baptism by immersion in this place: *and the same day there were added*; unto them, or to the church, as in ver. 47. the whole company of the hundred and twenty disciples; the Arabic version supplies, *among the believers*: the number of those, that were added to them, were *about three thousand souls*; or persons, men, and women; and their number is no objection to their being baptized by immersion. As for convenient places to baptize in, there were enough, as we have seen already; and there were administrators sufficient for this work: had there been no more than the twelve apostles, it was but two hundred and fifty men apiece; and there were twelve separate places in the temple, where they might be baptizing at the same time; there were the ten lavers, the molten sea, and the dipping-room, so that the work was not so very heavy nor difficult; but besides, there were seventy disciples, who, as they were preachers of the word, were administrators of this ordinance; and supposing them all employed, as they might be, at the same time, either in the temple, or at the pools in Jerusalem, or at the baths, and cisterns, in private houses; they would not have more than six or seven and thirty persons apiece to baptize; and there was time enough in the day for it: it was but the third hour, or nine o'clock in the morning, when Peter began his sermon; and allowing an hour for that, there were eight hours more in the day, according to the Jewish reckoning of twelve hours in a day; so that the business might be done without any hurry, or great fatigue; and indeed, the objection, as to time, would equally lie against sprinkling, or pouring, as dipping; at least the difference is very inconsiderable; for the same form of words must be pronounced in administering the ordinance by the one, as by the other; and a person being ready, is very near as soon dipped into water, as water can be taken, and sprinkled, or poured on the face. Besides, after all, though these persons were added to the church the same day, it does not necessarily follow from the text, that they were all baptized in one day; the words do not oblige us to such a sense: I own, I am of opinion, that they were all baptized in one day; and that on the same day they were baptized, they were joined to the church; and that day was the day of Pentecost, the day on which the law was given on Mount Sinai, and on which now the Gospel was published to men of all nations under the heavens; the day on which the first-fruits were offered to the Lord, and on which now the first-fruits of the death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ were brought in to him. Let the order be observed, they were first baptized, and then added to the church.

Ver. 42. *And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine*, &c.] And which is the same with the doctrine of Christ, of which he is the author, preacher, and subject; the substance of which is peace, pardon, righteousness, and salvation by him: this the apostles received from Christ, and constantly taught in their ministry; for which reason, it is called theirs; and this these young converts had embraced gladly; and were not only believers of it, but persevering believers; they were constant hearers of it; they continually attended on the ministry of the apostles, and held fast the form of sound words they had received

[h] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 16. 1. & 19. & Maimon. Beth. Habbechira, c. 5. sect. 11. 17.
[i] Dispot. Gregantii, p. 131.
[k] Vid. Jarchi & Kimchi in 1 Kings vii. 38. & Ralbag in 2 Chron. iv. 5.
[l] T. Hieros. Yoma, fol. 40. 2. Misna Yoma, c. 2. sect. 3.
[m] R. David Kimchi.
[n] Ib. Yoma, fol. 41. 1.

from them; and stood fast in the faith of the Gospel, notwithstanding all the reproach cast upon it, and the afflictions they endured for it: *and* also in *fellowship*: with the apostles and other saints, in spiritual conversation with them, in private, and in communion with them at the Lord's table in public: and so the Vulgate Latin reads this clause, in connexion with the next, thus, *in the communication of breaking of bread*: to which agrees the Syriac version, *and they communicated in prayer, and in breaking of the eucharist*; though it seems better to understand this of a distinct branch of fellowship, or communication, and may rather intend liberality and beneficence, in which sense it is used, Rom. xv. 26. 2 Cor. viii. 9. Heb. xiii. 16. and so expresses their constant contributions towards the support of the apostles, as ministers of the word and of the poor members of the church; a duty which, in both its branches, is incumbent on those who have it in their power to perform, and which these first Christians were remarkable for: *and in breaking of bread*; or *of the eucharist*: as the Syriac version renders it, which was an usual name with the ancients for the Lord's supper; and which seems to be intended here, and not eating common bread, or a common meal; seeing it is here mentioned with religious exercises: and though the Jews used to begin their meals with breaking of bread, yet the whole repast, or meal, is never by them called by that name; and for what reason these saints should be commended for keeping their common meals, cannot be said, unless to shew their sociableness, agreement, and brotherly love in eating together; and which is not hinted at here, but in ver. 46. where it is mentioned as something distinct from this: it seems rather therefore to design, that they were constant at the Lord's table, kept their places there, and duly attended whenever the ordinance was administered: *and in prayers*: not only in their closets, and in their families, but in the church; in the public prayers of the church, they observed all opportunities of this kind, and gladly embraced them.

Ver. 43. *And fear came upon every soul*, &c.] Upon every inhabitant of Jerusalem, at least upon a great many of them; and upon all, or the greater part of them that saw, and heard these things; that heard the apostles speak with divers tongues, and Peter preach in the awful manner he did, and saw so many thousands at once embrace the Gospel of Christ, and profess his name, when it now, by reason of his crucifixion but a few weeks ago, lay under the greatest reproach and scandal; and such a number baptized in water; and also because of the miracles done by the apostles, after mentioned. The Ethiopic version is very odd, *and all animals feared the apostles*; as if the very brute creatures stood in awe of them: *and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles*: the Vulgate Latin, and Syriac versions add, *in Jerusalem*; such as casting out devils, healing the sick, causing the lame to walk, &c. which were promised by Christ should be done by them; and which were necessary for the confirmation of the Gospel, and of the apostles' mission to preach it. The Vulgate Latin version adds another clause, much like the first part of the text, *and great fear was upon all*: and the Alexandrian copy, and some others, read, *in Jerusalem, there was great fear upon all*.

Ver. 44. *And all that believed were together*, &c.] Not in one place, for no one house could hold them all, their number was now so large; but they *agreed together*, as the Arabic version renders it: all these believers were of one mind and judgment, as to doctrines, they agreed in their sentiments and principles of religion; and they were of one heart and soul, were cordially affected to each other, and mutually were assisting to one another in temporals, as well as in spirituals: *and had all things common*: that is, their worldly goods, their possessions and estates; no man called any thing peculiarly his own; and whatever he had, his brother was welcome to, and might as freely take, and use it, as if it was his own.

Ver. 45. *And sold their possessions and goods*, &c.] Their houses and lands, their fields and vineyards, their goods, moveable or immoveable: *and parted them to all men*: that were of their society, not to others: *as every man had need*; the rich sold their estates, and divided them among the poor, or gave them such a portion thereof as their present exigencies required. This was done by Jews, and by Jews only; who, when they embraced the Gospel of Christ, were informed that the destruction of their city, and nation, was at hand; and therefore they sold their estates before-hand, and put them to this use; which was necessary to be done, both for the support of the Gospel in Judea, and for the carrying and spreading of it among the Gentiles: but is not to be drawn into a precedent, or an example in after-times; nor is ever any such thing proposed to the Christian churches, or exhorted to by any of the apostles.

Ver. 46. *And they continued daily with one accord in the temple*, &c.] Every day they went up to the temple, at the time of prayer, or whenever any religious service was to be performed; this was their constant practice, and in this they agreed: *and breaking bread from house to house*: either administering the Lord's supper in private houses, as the Jews kept their passover, sometimes administering it at one house, and sometimes at another; or because their number was so large, that one house could not hold them, they divided themselves into lesser bodies; and some met, and had the ordinance administered to them in one house, and some in another: or this may be understood of their common meals, which they ate together at one another's houses in great love and friendship; for they did *eat their meat with gladness*; with great thankfulness to the God of their mercies for their daily food, acknowledging that all came from him, and that they were undeserving of it, and with much cheerfulness and affability one among another, without murmuring and repining at their lot, or envying each other, or grudging what each other partook of: *and* also with *singleness of heart*; without deceit and hypocrisy; either in their thanksgivings to God, or in their welcome and entertainment of each other; and with great sincerity, openness, and frankness before God, and one another. The Syriac version joins this clause with the beginning of the next verse, *with singleness of heart, praising God*.

Ver. 47. *Praising God*, &c.] Not only for their temporal mercies and enjoyments of life, which they partook of in so delightful and comfortable a manner;

but for their spiritual mercies, that the Lord had been pleased to call them by his grace, and reveal Christ to them, and pardon them who had been such vile sinners, give them a name, and a place in his house, and favour them with the ordinances of it, and such agreeable and delightful company as the saints were, they had fellowship with: *having favour with all the people*: they not only behaved with such true and sincere love towards one another in their church-state, but with so much wisdom, courteousness, and affability towards them that were without, and walked so becoming the profession they made, that they gained the good will of the generality of the people: *and the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved*: partly by the conversation of these young converts, and chiefly by the ministry of the word, many souls were won and gained to Christ, were wrought upon, and converted, whose hearts the Lord inclined to give up themselves to the church, and walk with them in all the ordinances and commandments of the Lord; and these were such whom God had chosen to salvation by Jesus Christ, and whom he had redeemed by his precious blood, and who were now regenerated and sanctified by the spirit of God, and so should certainly be saved; which is not always the case of persons added to churches, many of whom have not the root of the matter in them, and so fall away; but is of those who are added by the Lord, for there is a difference between being added by the Lord, and being added by men.

CHAP. III.

Ver. 1. *NOW Peter and John went up together into the temple*, &c.] These two disciples were intimate companions, and great lovers of each other; they were often together: they are thought, by some, to have been together in the high-priest's palace at the trial of Christ; and they ran together to his sepulchre, John xviii. 15, 16. and xx. 2, 3, 4. and they now went together to the temple, not to attend the daily sacrifice, which was now abolished by the sacrifice of Christ, but to attend to the duty of prayer, which was still in force, and that they might have an opportunity of preaching Christ, where there was a number of people together: *at the hour of prayer*; being the *ninth hour*, or three o'clock in the afternoon. This was one of their hours of prayer; it was customary with the Jews to pray three times a day, Dan. vi. 10. which, according to the Psalmist in Psal. lv. 17. were evening, morning, and at noon; to which seems to answer the three times that are taken notice of by Luke in this history: that in the morning was at the third hour, as in ch. ii. 15. or nine o'clock in the morning; that at noon was at the sixth hour, as in ch. x. 9. or twelve o'clock at noon; and that in the evening at the ninth hour, as here, or three o'clock in the afternoon. Not that these were times of divine appointment. The Jews [*] themselves say, "there's no "number of prayers from the law, and there is no "repetition of this or that prayer from the law, and "there is no זמן קבוע, *fixed time* for prayer from the "law." But according to the traditions of the elders, "the morning prayer was to the end of the fourth "hour, which is the third part of the day——the "prayer of the *Minchah*, (or evening prayer,) they "fixed the time of it to answer to the evening daily "sacrifice; and because the daily sacrifice was offered "up every day from the ninth hour and a half, they "ordered the time of it to be from the ninth hour "and a half, and it is called the lesser *Minchah*; and "because in the evening of the passover, which falls "upon the evening of the sabbath, they slay the daily "sacrifice at the sixth hour and a half, they say, that "he that prays after the sixth hour and a half is excused; and after this time is come, the time to which "he is obliged is come, and this is called the great "*Minchah*——lo, you learn, that the time of the great "*Minchah* is from the sixth hour and a half, to the "ninth hour and a half; and the time of the lesser "*Minchah* is from the ninth hour and a half, until "there remains of the day an hour and a quarter; "and it is lawful to pray it until the sun sets." So that it was at the time of the lesser *Minchah* that Peter and John went up to the temple; which seems to be not on the same day of Pentecost, but on some day, or days after; it may be the sabbath following, when there was a great number of people got together.

Ver. 2. *And a certain man, lame from his mother's womb*, &c.] He was born so; his lameness came not through any disease or fall, or any external hurt, but from a defect in nature, in one of his limbs, or more; which made the after-miracle the more extraordinary: and he was so lame that he *was carried*; he could not walk of himself, or go, being led, but they were obliged to carry him: *whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple*; it had been a common usage, it may be, for years past, to bring him every day, at prayer-time, and lay him at the gate of the temple where the people went in; hence he was well known by the people, and to have been of a long time lame, even ever since he was born; so that there could be no imposture in this case: and it was at the gate of the temple he lay, *which is called beautiful*; which some think was the gate Shushan, which was the eastern gate of the mountain of the house, or the outmost wall, and was so called, because Shushan, the metropolis of Persia, was pourtrayed upon it [q], which made it look very beautiful. The reason commonly given by the Jewish commentators [r] why this was done, is this; when the Jews returned from captivity, the king of Persia commanded that they should make a figure of the palace of Shushan upon one of the gates of the temple, that they might fear the king, and not rebel against him; and accordingly they drew one upon the eastern gate: but some say [s], that the children of the

[*] Maimon. Hilch. Tephilla, c. 1. sect. 1. Ib. c. 3. sect. 1, 2, 4. Vid. T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 26. 2.

[q] Misn. Middot, c. 1. sect. 3.

[r] Maimon. & Bartenora in Misn. ib.

[s] Vid. Juchasin, fol. 63. 2.

captivity did this (upon their return) that they might remember the wonder of Purim, (their deliverance from Haman,) which was done in Shushan; moreover, it might be so called from the word Shushan, which signifies joy and gladness: but this does not bid so fair to be the gate here meant, since it was lower than all the rest; for as the eastern wall was lower than the rest of the walls, that when the high-priest burnt the red heifer on the top of Mount Olivet, he might see the gate of the temple at the time of the sprinkling of the blood; so the gate itself was four cubits lower than the others [t], and therefore could not look so grand and beautiful as the rest. Indeed, concerning this eastern gate of the mountain of the house, it is said [u], that "in the time when the sanctuary stood, when they "prayed on the mountain of the house, they went in "by the way of the eastern gate." And as this was now the hour of prayer, and the people were going to the temple to pray, whose entrance was at the east gate; here it might be thought, in all probability, was laid the lame man: though it seems rather to be the eastern gate of the court of the women, which was made of Corinthian brass, and looked brighter than gold itself; of which Josephus [w] thus speaks: "nine "of the gates were covered all over with gold and "silver, likewise the side-posts and lintels; but there "was one, without the temple, of Corinthian brass, "which in dignity greatly exceeded the silver and "golden ones." And since at this gate was the greatest frequency of persons, both men and women entering here; it is most likely, that here lay the lame man a-begging: this is thought, by some, to be *the higher gate of the house of the Lord*; said to be built by Jotham, the son of Uzziah, king of Judah, 2 Kings xv. 35. upon which text, a Jewish commentator of great note [x] has this remark, "observe it is said of Jotham, that he "built it, because he made a building on it, נכבד וגדול, "*more glorious and great* than it had been:" and this is also called *the new gate of the house of the Lord*, Jer. xxvi. 10. and which both the Targum and Kimchi on the place say is the eastern gate. *To ask alms of them that entered into the temple*; who going to religious exercises, might be thought to be more disposed to acts of liberality and charity: and besides, these were known to be Jews, of whom only alms were to be asked and taken; for so run their canons [y], "it is "forbidden to take alms of Gentiles publicly, except "a man can't live by the alms of Israelites; and if a "king, or a prince of the Gentiles, should send money "to an Israelite for alms, he must not return it, be-"cause of the peace of the kingdom, but must take it "of him, and give it to the poor of the Gentiles "secretly, that the king may not hear."

Ver. 3. *Who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple*, &c.] Just as they were entering through the gate at which he lay, he looked at them; and though they were strangers to him, he concluded they were Israelites by their going into the temple at that time: *asked an alms*; of them; prayed them to give him something for his relief and support.

Ver. 4. *And Peter fastening his eyes upon him*, &c.] Or looking very wistly and intently at him, being, no doubt, under some uncommon impulse of the spirit of God to take notice of him, and cure him of his disease: *with John*; who was also under a like impulse at the same time; and who was equally concerned in this cure, as appears by the notice the man, when healed, took of the one, as well as the other; and by Peter's declaration, ver. 11, 12. as also by the following words: *said, look on us*; which was said to raise his attention to them, to put him upon observing what manner of men they were, and how unlikely to perform the following cure, and to take notice of the manner in which it would be done. The Jews speak of a supernatural cure effected in such a manner, using such words; and which perhaps is told, with a view to lessen the glory of this [z]. "Elias appeared to one in the likeness of "R. Chiyah Rabbah; he said to him, how does my "Lord do? he replied to him, a certain tooth distresses "me; he said to him, חמי לי, *look on me*; and he "looked on him, and put his finger on it, and he was "well."

Ver. 5. *And he gave heed unto them*, &c.] Or *he looked at them*, as the Syriac version renders it, as they bid him: he was not only attentive to them in his mind, but he directed his eyes towards them, and looked wistly at them. This clause is left out in the Ethiopic version. *Expecting to receive something of them*; not a cure for his lameness, which he little thought of, but some money, as an alms.

Ver. 6. *Then Peter said, silver and gold have I none*, &c.] The Ethiopic version reads, *we have none*; and so it reads the next clause in the first person plural; that is, they had no money either of gold or silver coin; they had none about them, nor any of their own perhaps any where; none but what was brought to them, and put into their hands as a common stock for the whole church, or the poor of it: nor indeed might any money be carried in a purse into the temple; see the notes on Matt. x. 9. and Mark xi. 16. though doubtless they might carry it in their hands, or otherwise, for the offerings, or for the poor, or this man would not have lain here for alms. *But such as I have, give I thee*; meaning the gift of healing; not that he communicated that to him, but exercised the gift upon him, by curing him of his lameness; and which was much preferable to large quantities of gold and silver, had he had them to give unto him: *in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth*; signifying, that it was by the command of Christ he said what follows; and by his power he wrought the cure which commenced upon it; even by the authority and virtue of him, who was treated with so much contempt by the Jews, and had lately been crucified by them: in his name he bid him *rise up and walk*; without making use of any medicines, or applying any thing to him; but believing that power would go along with the words, and strength would be communicated to him, by him in whose name he spoke, he said these words: and herein lies the difference between the miracles wrought by

[t] Misn. Middot, c. 2. sect. 4. Maimon. Hilchot Beth Habechirah, c. 6. sect. 5.

[u] Gloss. in T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 15. 2. Vid. Maimon. Hilch. Taanith, c. 4. sect. 15.

[w] De Bello Jud. l. 5. c. 5. sect. 3.

[x] Abarbinel in loc.

[y] Moses Kotsensis Mitzvot Tora, pr. Affirm. 162.

[z] T. Hieros. Cetubot, fol. 35. 1.

Christ, and by his disciples; those that were done by him were done in his own name, and by his own power; those that were performed by his disciples, were done in the name of Christ, and by his power alone; and the Jews themselves own, that the disciples performed cures בשמיה ישו, *in the name of Jesus*[a].

Ver. 7. *And he took him by the right hand*, &c.] In imitation of Christ, whom he had often seen using the same action on such occasions: *and lift* him *up*: believing he was cured, and that it might be manifest. The word *him* is expressed in the Alexandrian copy, and in some others, and in the Oriental versions, which is a supplement in our translation: *and immediately his feet and ankle-bones received strength*: where, it seems, his lameness lay. The Vulgate Latin renders it, *his bases and soles*, which may include his legs and thighs, as well as feet; and the Syriac version, *his feet and soles*; and the Arabic version, *his soles, and the muscles adjoining to his heels*; and the Ethiopic version furthest off of all, *he was strengthened in his feet, and in his loins*; his disorder might be of the paralytic kind.

Ver. 8. *And he leaping up*, &c.] From off the bed or couch, or ground on which he lay: *stood and walked*; stood firm and strong upon his feet, and walked about; by which it was abundantly manifest to himself and others, that he had a perfect cure. The Ethiopic version is a very ridiculous one, *and he went with them catching fishes*: as if upon this, before they went into the temple, he and the apostles went a-fishing together, which has not the least foundation in the text: *and entered with them into the temple*; to join with them in divine worship, to acknowledge the goodness of God to him, and to shew respect to the instruments he made use of in his cure: *and leaping*; for joy of the mercy, and that it might appear to all that he was thoroughly cured of his lameness: and thus the prophecy in Isa. xxxv. 6. *then shall the lame* man *leap as an hart*, was literally fulfilled: *and praising God*; and not the apostles; for he knew that this was owing to the power of God, and could never have been done by man; though he might not be ungrateful to the instruments.

Ver. 9. *And all the people*, &c.] That were in the temple, *saw him walking*; who before lay on a couch, or on the ground, and was so lame, that he was obliged to be carried; *and praising God*; for this miraculous cure. The Arabic version renders it, *saw him walking to praise God*; that is, entering into the temple with the apostles, in order to offer up the sacrifice of praise to God there.

Ver. 10. *And they knew it was he that sat for alms*, &c.] The Syriac version renders it, *they knew him to be that beggar that sat daily and asked alms*. As he was daily brought thither, and had, for many years, 'tis very likely, sat there to ask alms of the people as they went into the temple; he was well known by them, and they had but just now passed him, and observed him in the same condition he had for a long time been, and knew him to be the same. It was a clear and indisputable point with them. *At the beautiful gate of the temple*: see the note on ver. 2. And *they were all filled with wonder and amazement at that which had happened unto him*: that he should have a cure so suddenly, and in such an extraordinary manner; they wondered at the power of God, which was seen in it, and that he should make use of such mean and contemptible persons as the apostles were.

Ver. 11. *And as the lame man which was healed*, &c.] This is left out in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, and in the Alexandrian copy, which only read, *and as he held Peter and John*; by their clothes or arms, either through fear, lest his lameness should return on their leaving him; or rather out of affection to them for the favour he had received, and therefore hung about them, and was loth to part with them; unless it was to make them known, and point them out as the authors of his cure, that they might be taken notice of by others, and the miracle be ascribed unto them: *all the people ran together unto them*: to the man that was healed, and to Peter and John, when they saw him standing, walking, and leaping, and clinging about the apostles; who were *in the porch that is called Solomon's*: see the note on John x. 23. *greatly wondering*: at the man that was cured; at the cure that was wrought upon him; and still more at the persons who did it, and the manner in which it was done.

Ver. 12. *And when Peter saw* it, &c.] That the people ran to them, and looked wistly upon them, and wondered at what was done: *he answered unto the people, ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this?* either at this man, who was cured of his lameness, or at the cure itself: *or why look ye so earnestly on us*; suggesting, that they ought to look to God, and observe his divine power, and to the Lord Jesus Christ, whom they had crucified, whose apostles they were, and in whose name, and by whose power they had wrought this miracle; which shews that they were not self-seeking and vain-glorious men, but discovers great sincerity and integrity, much love to Christ, and great regard to his honour, and to the glory of God: *as though by our own power and holiness we had made this man to walk?* as if it was any natural power of theirs; or for any merit of theirs, because of their strict religion and piety; or *laudable conversation*, as the Arabic version; because they were mightier in themselves and holier than others, that they had such a faculty of curing lame persons; all which they utterly reject, and place it to a right account in the next verse. Instead of *holiness*, the Syriac version reads *authority*; and to the same, or like sense, the Vulgate Latin, which seems most agreeable.

Ver. 13. *The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob*, &c.] These titles and epithets of God, which are used in the Old Testament, Exod. iii. 6, 15, 16. and iv. 5. the apostle chooses to retain, partly to distinguish him from the gods of the Gentiles, and partly to shew his regard to the God of Israel, the one, only true, and living God; and that, though he and his fellow apostles were preachers of Christ, yet they were not setters-forth of another, or a strange God, but believed in the same God their forefathers did, and to whom they ascribe the glory of this miracle: *the God of our fathers hath glorified his son Jesus*; by raising him from the dead, setting him at his own right hand,

[a] T. Hieros. Sabbat, fol. 14. 4. & Avoda Zara, fol. 40. 4.

and giving him the gifts of the spirit for men; which he having bestowed on the apostles, by virtue of this they wrought this miracle, which was a means of setting forth the glory of Christ, and of putting men upon glorifying him, or ascribing honour and glory to him. And in order to awaken their minds, to convict them of their sin, ingratitude, and folly, the apostle adds, *whom ye delivered up*: to Pilate, the Roman governor; having first seized him as a thief, bound him as a malefactor, and arraigned, and condemned him to death in the high-priest's palace as a blasphemer: *and denied him in the presence of Pilate*; or *to*, or *against the face of Pilate*: contrary to his sense of things, who more than once called him the King of the Jews, and wrote this as the superscription over him, when they denied him to be their King Messiah, and the son of God, saying, they had no king but Cæsar: *when he was determined to let him go*; or release him; that is, *when he judged it right that he should be released*, as the Syriac version renders it; for he never came to a point, to a resolution to let him go; though he thought it was but just and equitable that he should be dismissed, being, in his apprehension, an innocent man; and therefore pressed it on the people to agree to release him, to which he was himself strongly inclined.

Ver. 14. *But ye denied the holy one, and the just*, &c.] Who is *holy* both in his divine and human nature, and the fountain of holiness to his people; see Psal. xvi. 10. and who is *just* or *righteous*, both in his person, and in the discharge of his office, and has wrought a righteousness for his people, which is imputed to them. These characters may have a particular regard to the purity of Christ, as man, and to the innocence of his life, and the harmlessness of his actions, in opposition to the unjust charges of his enemies, and the base treatment he met with from them who denied him to be the Christ, the Redeemer and Saviour: *and desired a murderer to be granted unto you*; when it was put to their choice, who they would have released, Christ or Barabbas; they requested it as a favour, and desired they might be gratified in having Barabbas, a thief, and a robber, who, with others, had raised an insurrection, and committed murder in it, released, and Christ crucified. They desired an act of grace for him, and a sentence of condemnation to a most shameful and painful death on Christ.

Ver. 15. *And killed the Prince of life*, &c.] Or *author of life*, natural, spiritual, and eternal; who not only is the living God, and has life in himself; and as man, had such a power over his own life, as no man ever had; but he is the author of a spiritual resurrection from the death of sin, to a life of grace, and has procured eternal life for his people, and gives it to them. Now this Lord of life and glory they crucified. His death is laid to them because it was at their request, and through their instigation, and at their earnest solicitations, that Pilate condemned him, and delivered him to his soldiers to crucify him. *Whom God hath raised from the dead*; notwithstanding all their spite and malice; so that they had not their whole will, and all their end, not being able to retain him under the power of death, and under the shame and reproach of the cross; and this the apostle the rather mentions, as being the reason why such gifts, and such power were bestowed on them to do the miracles they did. *Whereof we are witnesses*; either of Christ, for it may be rendered, *whose witnesses we are*: they testifying of his person, office, grace, and righteousness; or of the resurrection of Christ, of which they were eye-witnesses; and of which they had the fullest proof, and were capable of bearing a sufficient testimony, and for which they were chosen and appointed.

Ver. 16. *And his name, through faith in his name*, &c.] That is, the name of Christ, or the power of Christ, through the faith of the apostles in him, while they made use of his name, and said, *in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth*, &c. ver. 6. or Christ, through the faith of the lame man in him; and when his name was used in this manner by the apostles; not that either their faith, or his, had any causal influence on the cure, but was the way and means in which they, glorifying Christ, he was pleased to effect this cure: *hath made this man strong*; who was before exceeding weak; strengthened the parts that were infirm, his feet and ankles, and consolidated them, so that he could use them, and walk with them: *whom ye see and know*; they knew him before, when he was lame, and now knew him to be the same man, and whom they saw now perfectly well; so that they could be appealed to that there was no fraud or imposture in the case: *yea, the faith which is by him*; by Christ, of which he is the object, and the author, and finisher: this is repeated out of affection to Christ, and a passionate concern for the glory of his name; or because that faith, in one clause, may regard the faith of the apostles, and in the other, the faith of the man that was cured: *hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all*: he had perfect soundness both in body and mind; though the former may chiefly be designed, it being that which was only visible to these persons; and which was done, not in a corner, but publicly, before them all, at the gate of the temple, where the multitude passed to and fro.

Ver. 17. *And now, brethren*, &c.] He calls them brethren, because they were so according to the flesh; and to testify his cordial love and affection for them. *I wot*, or *I know, that through ignorance ye did* it; delivered up Jesus into the hands of Pilate; denied him to be the Messiah before him; preferred a murderer to him, and put him to death. *As did also your rulers*; the members of the sanhedrim, some of them; see 1 Cor. ii. 8. for others of them knew him to be the Messiah, to be sent of God, by the miracles he did, and yet blasphemously ascribed them to Satan; and so sinning against light and knowledge, in such a malicious manner, sinned the sin against the Holy Ghost, to which ignorance is here opposed; and which did not excuse from sin: nor was it itself without sin; nor is it opposed to any sin, but to this now mentioned.

Ver. 18. *But those things which God before had shewed*, &c.] In the Scriptures of the Old Testament, concerning the betraying of the Messiah, and his sufferings and death, with the various causes, concomitants, and circumstances of them: *by the mouths of all his prophets*; which were since the world began; some pointing out one thing or circumstance, and some another:

that Christ should suffer. The Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions read, *that his Christ should suffer*: but then they leave out the word *his* in the preceding clause, which they put into this; and this entire clause is omitted in the Alexandrian copy: *he hath so fulfilled*: in the manner he has, so exactly, so perfectly agreeable to the predictions of them, and yet were unknown to the persons by whom they were fulfilled. So wisely and surprisingly are things ordered and overruled by the wise providence of God, who is a God of knowledge, and by whom all actions are weighed.

Ver. 19. *Repent ye therefore, &c.*] The Ethiopic version adds, *and be baptized*, as in ch. ii. 38. see the note there: *and be converted.* The apostle's sense is, repent of the sin of crucifying Christ, which is what he had been charging them with, and turn unto him, and acknowledge him as the Messiah; receive his doctrines, and submit to his ordinances; externally reform in life and conversation, and bring forth fruits meet for repentance, such as will shew it to be true and genuine: *that your sins may be blotted out*; or forgiven, see Psal. li. 9. Isa. xliii. 25. and xliv. 22. Not that repentance and reformation procure the pardon of sin, or are the causes of it, for forgiveness is entirely owing to the free grace of God, and blood of Christ; but inasmuch as that is only manifested and applied to repenting and converted sinners; and who are encouraged to repent, and turn to the Lord from the promise of pardon; it is incumbent on them, and is their interest so to do, that they may have a discovery of the remission of their sins by the blood of Christ. Though no other repentance and conversion may be here meant than an external one; and the blotting out of sin, and forgiveness of it, may intend no other than the removing a present calamity, or the averting a threatened judgment, or the deliverance of persons from national ruin, Exod. xxxii. 32. 1 Kings viii. 34—39. These Jews had crucified the Lord of glory, and for this sin were threatened with miserable destruction; the apostle therefore exhorteth them to repentance for it, and to a conversion to the Messiah, that so when ruin should come upon their nation, they might be delivered from the general calamity; when it would be terrible times to the unbelieving and impenitent Jews, but times of refreshment, ease, peace, and rest from persecution, to the believers, as is next expressed. *When the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord*; or *that the times of refreshing may come*, as the Syriac version; either seasons of spiritual refreshment, joy, and peace, through the great and precious promises of the Gospel, and by the application of the blood and righteousness of Christ, to such penitent and converted sinners; which refreshment and comfort come from the Lord, and are accompanied with his gracious presence: or else seasons of rest, and deliverance from the violent heat of persecution; which was the case of the saints at the destruction of Jerusalem; they were not only saved from that ruin, but delivered from the wrath of their most implacable enemies. The Ethiopic version renders it, *and the day of mercy shall come from the presence of the Lord*: repenting sinners find mercy; and a discovery of pardon is a time of mercy; and when God grants this, he affords his presence. The Jews call the world to come a time of refreshment; and say [y], "better is one hour של קורת רוח, *of refresh-* "*ment*, in the world to come, than the whole life of "this world."

Ver. 20. *And he shall send Jesus Christ, &c.*] Or *that he may send Jesus Christ*, as the Syriac and Arabic versions render it: not in person, for this regards neither his first, nor his second coming, both which might be terrible to the awakened Jews; the former, because he had been sent, and was come, and was gone again; and therefore might fear there was no hope for them, who had denied him, and crucified him; the latter, because they might conclude he would be sent, and come to take vengeance on them, when they should look upon him whom they had pierced with horror and trembling; but here it regards his being sent, and his coming in the ministration of the word, and by his spirit, to the comfort of their souls: *which before was preached unto you*; in the writings of the Old Testament, in the books of Moses, and of the Prophets, ver. 22, 24. or, as it is read in the Alexandrian copy, and in other copies, and in the Complutensian edition, and in the Syriac and Arabic versions, who was *predetermined* or *prepared for you*: that is, in the purposes, council, and covenant of God. The Ethiopic version reads, *whom he before anointed*; to be prophet, priest, and King; and from each of these considerations much comfort might be drawn by sensible sinners.

Ver. 21. *Whom the heaven must receive, &c.*] Hold and retain in his human nature; and which does not at all hinder or confront his mission, and coming to his people, in the mean while, in a spiritual way and manner, to their joy and comfort: or, *who must receive heaven*: the kingdom, and glory, and reign there: *until the times of the restitution of all things*: not of all created beings to their original estate, which there is no reason to believe ever will be; or of the churches of Christ to purity of doctrine, discipline, and conversation, which is to be hoped for, and will be in the spiritual reign of Christ; but of the accomplishment of all promises and prophecies concerning the bringing in the fulness of the Gentiles, and the conversion of the Jews, and so the gathering in all the elect of God; and concerning all the glorious things spoken of the church of Christ in the latter day; which sense is confirmed by what follows: *which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets, since the world began*: ever since the world was, God has had more or less holy men, set apart and sanctified by him, and on whom he bestowed the spirit of prophecy; and by the mouth of every one of these he has spoken one thing or another concerning his church and people, and the filling up of the number of them, or the gathering of them all in; and till this is done, Christ will remain in heaven and reign there: and this sense is further confirmed by the Syriac and Arabic versions, the former rendering the words, *until the filling* or *fulfilling of the times of all things*: and the latter, *until the times which will confirm the perfection of all the words which God hath spoken, &c.* and from

[y] Pirke Abot, c. 4. sect. 17.

the sense of the word used, which some lexicographers explain by τελειωσις, *perfection* or *fulfilling*.

Ver. 22. *For Moses truly said unto the fathers*, &c.] The Jewish fathers, the Israelites in the times of Moses. The Ethiopic version reads, *our fathers*. This phrase, *unto the fathers*, is left out in the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions, and in the Alexandrian copy: the passages referred to are in Deut. xviii. 15, 19. *a prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you*: which is not to be understood of a succession of prophets, as some of the Jewish writers [c] think; for the Jews never had a constant succession of prophets, and those they had, were not like to Moses: but of a single prophet, and so the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan understood it; but not to be applied to Joshua, as some [d], or to Jeremiah [e] as others, or to David [f]; but to the Messiah, and which is the Lord Jesus Christ, who answers to all the characters: he was a prophet in every sense, who brought a revelation of the divine will, taught the way, and explained the Scriptures of truth perfectly, and foretold things to come; he was raised up by the Lord God of Israel, and was anointed by his spirit, and sent by him, and that to the people of the Jews, to the lost sheep of the house of Israel; he was the minister of the circumcision: *of your brethren*; in the Hebrew text in Deut. xviii. 15. 'tis also said, *out of the midst of thee*; but as these phrases are synonymous, the apostle here only retains one of them, which suggests that this prophet, the Messiah, should be of Jewish extract; as Jesus was, of the seed of David, and a son of Abraham: *like unto me*: that is, to Moses, who is, the person speaking, between whom and Christ there is an agreement; the law was given by Moses, and the Gospel came by Christ; Moses was a mediator between God and the people of Israel, and Christ is the Mediator between God and men; Moses, under God, was an instrument of redeeming the people of Israel out of Egypt, and Christ, he is the Redeemer of his people from sin, Satan, and the law, and all their enemies: the Jews [g] have a common saying, "as was the first "Redeemer, so shall be the last Redeemer;" and they moreover observe [h], that, "as Israel was re- "deemed in the month Nisan, so they shall be re- "deemed in the month Nisan;" in the future redemption by the Messiah: let the Jews abide by this; the Messiah Jesus suffered in the month Nisan, and obtained eternal redemption for his people: one of their [i] writers has a notion, that when the Messiah comes, there will be the same disposition of the constellations, as when Moses brought the people out of Egypt, and gave them the law; and that the conjunction will be of Jupiter and Saturn, in the constellation Pisces: there was likewise between Moses and Christ, an agreement in the miracles they wrought, and in other things: *him shall ye hear in all things, whatsoever he shall say unto you*; all his doctrines are to be believed, embraced, and professed; and all his commands are to be obeyed, and all his ordinances submitted to; and this is hearing, or hearkening, to him in all things, delivered or enjoined by him.

Ver. 23. *And it shall come to pass, that every soul*, &c.] Every person, man or woman: *which will not hear that prophet*; neither believe what he says, nor do what he commands; or as it is in Deut. xviii. 19. *will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name*: for he that hears not him, hearkens not to God, in whose name he speaks, and whose word he delivers, *shall be destroyed from among the people*; in the Hebrew text it is, *I will require* it *of him*; the Hebrew word, מעמו, there used, by having different points, may be rendered *of him*, or *from his people*, which seems to be the reason of this difference: and requiring often intends punishment, or a cutting off; or as Aben Ezra explains it here, "death by the hand "of heaven;" that is, immediate destruction from God; and so Maimonides says [k], he that transgresses the words of that prophet, is guilty of death by the hand of heaven; and which was remarkably fulfilled in the Jewish nation, for their rejection of Jesus as the true Messiah, and that prophet.

Ver. 24. *Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel*, &c.] Who was, as the Jews call him, רבן של נביאים, *the master of the prophets* [l]; and they say, that Samuel the prophet is הנביא הראשון, *the first prophet* in the chain of the Kabbala [m]; and therefore is here particularly mentioned, as at the head of the prophets, and next to Moses; there being but very few prophets between him and Moses, when there were many after him; and in his days, the schools of the prophets were set up: now not only Moses spoke of Christ, but all the prophets from the time of Samuel; in the books that bear his name, stands a famous prophecy concerning Christ, 2 Sam. vii. 13, 14, 16. *And those that follow after*: in order, as David, Solomon, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, &c. *and as many as have spoken*; any thing by way of prophecy: *have likewise foretold of these days*; of the days of the Messiah, of his person, office, incarnation, obedience, sufferings, death, resurrection, ascension, the pouring down of the spirit, the times of refreshing, the Gospel dispensation, the conversion of the Jews, the calling of the Gentiles, and the gathering in all the elect of God.

Ver. 25. *Ye are the children of the prophets*, &c.] Of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who are called prophets, Psal. cv. 15. being lineally and naturally descended from them; to them belonged the prophecies of the Old Testament concerning the Messiah, and the promises of him; they were heirs of them; *and of the covenant which God made with our fathers*: so the phrase בני ברית, *children of the covenant*, is used by the Jews, as peculiar to themselves; see the note on Rom. ix. 8. and so בר אוריין, *a son of the law* [n], is also used by them in a like sense; the law, the covenant, and the promises, externally belonging to them: *saying unto Abraham*, Gen. xxii. 18. *and in thy seed*

[c] Jarchi in Deut. xviii. 15.
[d] Aben Ezra in loc.
[e] R. Abraham Seba in Tzeror Hammor, fol. 127. 4. & 143. 4. Baal Hatturim in Deut. xviii. 15.
[f] Herban. disp. cum Gregent. p. 13.
[g] Bemidbar Rabba, fol. 202. 2. Midrash Ruth, fol. 33. 2. Midrash Kohelet, fol. 63. 2.
[h] T. Bab. Roshhashana, fol. 11, 1. 2.
[i] R. Abraham ben R. Chija apud Wolfii Hebr. Bibliothec. p. 51.
[k] Yesod Hattora, c. 9. sect. 4.
[l] T Hieros. Chagiga, fol. 77. 1.
[m] Ganz Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 9. 1. Vid. Kimchi in Psal. xcix. 6.
[n] T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 62. 1.

shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed; meaning the Messiah, that sprung from him, and is called the son of Abraham; in whom, not only all Abraham's spiritual seed among the Jews, or the elect of God in that nation, and who were truly the children of Abraham, and of the promise, but even all the chosen of God among the Gentiles, in every nation, and of every kindred and family among them, are blessed in Christ, with all spiritual blessings; with peace, pardon, righteousness, redemption, and salvation: for this is not a form of blessing the Gentiles would use, when they blessed themselves, or others; saying, God bless thee, as he blessed Abraham's seed; for no one instance can be produced, when the Gentiles ever used such a form of blessing as this; but a prophecy of the calling of the Gentiles by the Messiah, and of their being blessed in him; see Gal. iii. 16. and though this sense is departed from by modern Jews, it was what the ancient synagogue gave into [z].

Ver. 26. *Unto you first, God having raised his son Jesus, &c.*] Which may be understood, either of the incarnation of Christ, and his exhibition in the flesh; which is sometimes expressed by raising him up, and is no other than the mission, or manifestation of him in human nature, as in Luke i. 69. Acts xiii. 23. Or of the resurrection of him from the dead, and the exaltation of him at the right hand of God: *sent him to bless you;* in person, according to the former sense; for he was indeed sent only to the people of Israel, and to them he preached; many of whom were blessed with converting grace under his ministry; but according to the latter sense, and which seems most agreeable, he was sent in the ministry of the word, and came by his spirit, first to the Jews, among whom the Gospel was first preached for a while, and was blessed to the conversion of many thousands among them, both in Judea, and in the nations of the world, where they were dispersed: *in turning away every one of you from his iniquities;* in this the blessing lay, and is rightly in our version ascribed to Christ, and to the power of his grace, in the ministration of the Gospel; and not to themselves, as in many other versions; as the Syriac version, *if ye convert yourselves, and turn from your evils;* making it both their own act, and the condition of their being blessed; and the Arabic version likewise, *so that every one of you departs from his wickedness:* but that work is Christ's, and this is the blessing of grace he himself bestows, and is a fruit of redemption by his blood, Tit. ii. 14.

CHAP. IV.

Ver. 1. *AND as they spake unto the people, &c.*] For though only mention is made of Peter's preaching in the preceding chapter, yet doubtless John preached as well as he; either in turn, or to a part of the people at some distance: and this shews their diligence, faithfulness, and integrity, in the ministration of the word; and it is recorded to their honour, that whilst they were about their master's business, and discharging the duty of their office, *the priests, and the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees came upon them:* by agreement, with great violence, and at unawares: the *priests* might be those who kept the watch in the temple; for "in three places the priests kept "watch, in the house of the sanctuary; in the house "of Abtines, in the house of Nitsots, and in the "house of Moked, and the Levites in one-and-twenty "places [a]." And it now being even-tide, they might be about to take their stands; *and the captain of the temple* might be he, whom they call, איש הר בית, *the man of the mountain of the house;* who was שר, a ruler, or governor, and ממונה, a president over all the wards [b]; he is sometimes called ראש משמר, *the head of the ward* [c]; and of him it is said [d], "the man of the "mountain of the house goes his round through every "ward, with burning torches before him; and every "ward that does not stand (is not on his feet), the man "of the mountain of the house says to him, peace "be to thee; and if he observes that he is asleep, he "strikes him with his staff, and he has power to burn "his garments." The Vulgate Latin and the Oriental versions read in the plural number, as in Luke xxii. 4, 52. see the notes there. The Sadducees were a sect among the Jews, that denied the resurrection of the dead; of their rise, name, and tenets, see the note on Matt. iii. 7.

Ver. 2. *Being grieved that they taught the people, &c.*] Any doctrine, and especially that which follows, and which particularly gave uneasiness to the Sadducees; they were exceedingly distressed by it; it pained them to the very heart, and they were filled with wrath and indignation: *and preached through,* or in *Jesus, the resurrection of the dead;* they not only preached the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead *in general,* but gave an instance and proof of it in the resurrection of Christ, affirming that he was risen from the dead; and they also preached up the resurrection of the dead in his name, and asserted, that he would be the author of it, and it would be effected by his power: so that their doctrine was equally disagreeable to the Pharisees and Sadducees; to the Sadducees, who denied that there was, or would be any resurrection of the dead; and to the Pharisees, who though they believed it, yet were highly offended that it should be said, that Jesus was risen from the dead; and that the general resurrection of the dead should be attributed to him.

Ver. 3. *And they laid hands on them, &c.*] The Arabic version renders it, *on both;* on Peter and John; seized them by force, and drew them out of the temple: *and put them in hold unto the next day;* not in the

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[z] Sepher Chasidim, sect. 961. apud Allix, Judgment of the Jewish Church, p. 57.
[a] Misn. Middot, c. 1. sect. 1.
[b] Bartenora & Yom Tob in ib. sect. 2.
[c] Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 6. fol. 190. 3.
[d] Misn. Middot, c. 1. sect. 2.

common public prison, as in ch. v. 18. but they put them into the hands, and under the care and custody of a set of men, to keep and guard them; that they might not go away, until they had an opportunity of bringing them before the sanhedrim, to be examined and punished by them: *for it was now even-tide*; it was at the ninth hour, or about three o'clock in the afternoon, when Peter and John went up to the temple, where they healed the lame man; after which, both of them preached to the people; so that it must now be evening; at least, as the Syriac version renders it, *the evening was near*, or was drawing on.

Ver. 4. *Howbeit, many of them which heard the word*, &c.] The doctrine of the Gospel, preached by Peter and John: *believed*; the report of it, and in Christ, as risen from the dead, which was the sum and substance of it: and this they did, notwithstanding the opposition made by the priests, the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees, and the violence they used to the apostles; for though they kept their persons in hold, they could not stop the free course of the word, which ran and was glorified: *and the number of the men was about five thousand*; or *was five thousand*, as the Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin, and Ethiopic versions read; that is the number, not of the hearers, but *of them that believed*, was so many; and so read the Arabic and Ethiopic versions: there were so many persons converted at this time; for this number does not include the three thousand that were converted under the first sermon, but regards those who now became true believers, and were added to the church: so that there were now eight thousand persons added to it; a great increase indeed! now had Christ the dew of his youth, and now were these fishermen fishers of men indeed: that our Lord's feeding five thousand men with five barley loaves and two fishes, should have any regard to the conversion of these five thousand men, is but a conceit.

Ver. 5. *And it came to pass on the morrow*, &c.] The disciples being kept in custody all night: *that their rulers, and elders, and Scribes*; that is, their ecclesiastical rulers; the chief priests, who, with the Scribes, and elders of the people, made up the great council at Jerusalem, consisting of seventy-one persons, so they are called in Matt. xxvi. 3. 57. and xxvii. 1. Mark xiv. 53. and xv. 1.

Ver. 6. *And Annas the high-priest*, &c.] So called, either because he had been an high-priest, though he was not now, but Caiaphas his son-in-law; or because he was the Sagan of the high-priest, and had all the other priests under his government; and is mentioned first, because he was father-in-law to Caiaphas; see the note on Luke iii. 2. he could not be called so, because he was נשיא, prince, or president of the council; for not he, but Gamaliel, was president at this time. *And Caiaphas*; who was properly high-priest, and continued so for three years after the death of Christ: *and John*; who is thought by Dr. Lightfoot to be the same with Jochanan, or John ben Zaccai; a famous Jewish Rabbi, who lived at this time, and until, and after the destruction of Jerusalem: this Rabbi was כהן, *a priest* [t], as this John was, of the kindred of the high-priest; he lived also at Jerusalem; for it is said of him [u], that he sat in the shadow of the temple, and expounded all the whole day; and a very remarkable story is told of him, which happened just about this time [w]; which is, that "forty years before the destruction of the temple——the doors of the temple opened of themselves, when Rabban Jochanan ben Zaccai reproved them, saying, O temple, temple, wherefore dost thou fright thyself? I know thee, that thine end shall be, to be destroyed; for so prophesied of thee Zechariah, the son of Iddo, Zech. xi. 1. *Open thy doors, O Lebanon, &c.*" The chief objection to him, as that learned writer observes, is, that he lived and died a Pharisee, whereas this John seems to have been a Sadducee; see ch. v. 17. This puts me in mind of John the high-priest, who ministered in the high-priesthood fourscore years, and at last became a Sadducee [x]: Beza's ancient copy reads *Jonathan*: *and Alexander*; whose surname was Lysimachus, and had the title of *Alabarcha*; he was a very rich man [y]: after Alexander the great had been at Jerusalem, this name became frequent among the Jews; and it is said [z] to be promised him, and was fulfilled, that every son that was born to the priests that year he entered Jerusalem, should be called Alexander; and therefore it is no wonder to hear of an Alexander among the kindred of the high-priest; frequent mention is made of ר' אלכסנדרי, *Rabbi Alexander*, in the Jewish writings [a]: *and as many as were of the kindred of the high-priest*; by whose means they were become members of the sanhedrim: *were gathered together at Jerusalem*; where the great council only sat, until the destruction of it; it seems by this, that some of the members of it lived in the country; it may be in some of the villages adjacent, where they might be easily and quickly sent for, upon any occasion, as they very likely now were; the Syriac version leaves out the words *at Jerusalem*.

Ver. 7. *And when they had set them in the midst*, &c.] Of the assembly, as the Ethiopic version adds; in the middle of the sanhedrim, which sat in a semicircular form; or as the Jews express it, as the half of a round corn-floor, or as a half-moon, and not in a perfect circle; because it was necessary that the contending parties, and the witnesses, might go in and speak before them all [b]; so that those that were set before them, were placed in the middle of them: and here Peter and John were set; so the Arabic version renders it, *when they set both*; they sent for them out of the hold, or custody, where they had been all night, and ordered them to be brought before them, to be examined about their doctrine and practice: *they asked, by what power, or by what name have ye done this?* they inquired of them, whether it was by a natural, or by a divine, or by a diabolical power, that they had

[t] Juchasin, fol. 20. 2.
[u] T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 26. 1.
[w] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 39. 2. & Hieros. Yoma, fol. 43. 3.
[x] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 29. 1.
[y] Joseph Antiqu. l. 20. c. 4. sect. 2.
[z] Juchasin, fol. 14. 1. & 159. 1. Ganz Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 18. 2.
[a] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 53. 2. Chagiga, fol. 5. 1. Megilla, fol. 17. 2. Nedarim, fol. 41. 1. Sanhedrin, fol. 93. 1. & passim.
[b] Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 4. sect. 3. & Bartenora in ib.

wrought the cure upon the lame man? whether it was by the use of medicine, or by the help of magic art, and the assistance of the devil, which they were very ready to charge Christ and his disciples with? or whether they pretended to a divine and supernatural aid? and also what name they had made use of, and by whose authority they acted?

Ver. 8. *Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, &c.*] At that very instant, having received a fresh measure of the gifts and graces of the spirit, besides what he had poured forth upon him at the day of Pentecost; so that he had great courage and presence of mind, and freedom of speech, as Christ had promised his disciples they should have, when they were brought before governors and magistrates, Matt. x. 18, 19, 30. Luke xxi. 14, 15. The case was much altered with Peter, he who but a little while ago was frightened by a servant-maid, now stands before the Jewish sanhedrim, with undaunted courage and resolution: *and said unto them, ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel;* he addresses them in a very handsome manner, and gives them their proper titles as magistrates; which ought to be done by men and Christians; honour should be given, to whom honour is due: the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, and some copies, add *hear,* which seems very necessary; he called for audience, or desired to be heard a few words, in the defence of himself and fellow-apostle, and in answer to their questions.

Ver. 9. *If we this day be examined of the good deed, &c.*] Or *seeing* we are; for it was not a matter of doubt, but a clear case, that they were brought into court, and were passing under an examination, about the cure of the lame man; which the apostle rightly calls *a good deed,* it being done in faith, and to the glory of God, and for the good of the man; and hereby tacitly suggests, that they were dealt very hardly with, to be seized and kept in custody, and be called in question, for doing an action so beneficent and kind, as this was, which was *done to the impotent man;* who could not help himself, nor get his bread any other way, than by begging: *by what means he is made whole;* restored to perfect health, and the proper use of his limbs; that is, by what power, and in what name this was done; the answer is ready, and it is as follows.

Ver. 10. *Be it known unto you all, &c.*] The members of the sanhedrim: *and to all the people of Israel;* who might hear of this affair; for the apostle was not ashamed of what he had done, nor of the person in whose name he had done it: *that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth;* by calling on that name, and by making use of it, and by the power and authority of Jesus Christ, who by way of contempt was called the *Nazarene: whom ye crucified:* for though Pilate delivered him to be crucified, and the Roman soldiers did crucify him, yet this was at the request and instigation of the chief priests, Scribes, and elders; and therefore it is ascribed to them, who were bent upon his death; and no other would satisfy them, but the shameful and painful death of the cross: *whom God raised from the dead;* of which the apostles were witnesses, having seen him and conversed with him after his resurrection; and this was the doctrine they were sent to publish, and for which they were apprehended and detained in custody; but this did not deter them from preaching it, no, not before the sanhedrim; which was an instance of great courage and faithfulness: and this is the rather mentioned, to shew, that it was not by the name of one that was dead, but of one that was alive, that this cure was performed; as well as to observe to them, that their efforts against Christ were vain and fruitless: *even by him doth this man stand here before you whole;* from whence it appears, as well as from ver. 18. that the man that was healed, was now present: and either he was laid hold on, and detained in custody with the apostles, in hope to discover a fraud if they could; or hearing that the apostles were before the sanhedrim, and examining on his account, might come of himself, in order to attest and prove the matter of fact, and to vindicate them.

Ver. 11. *This is the stone, &c.*] That is, this Jesus of Nazareth, by whose name the lame man was made whole, is that stone spoken of in Psal. cxviii. 22. by whom is meant the true Messiah, comparable to a stone, for his strength and duration, and usefulness, as a foundation and corner-stone, in the spiritual building of the church; and yet notwithstanding is the stone *which was set at nought of you builders;* the priests, elders, and Scribes; who were fond of being called builders, but made miserable work of it; despising and rejecting the stone of Israel, and instead of him as a foundation, built themselves, and others, on the traditions of the elders, and their own righteousness; but though Christ was rejected by them, both in person and in doctrine, and was ignominiously treated, and at last put to death, yet he was raised from the dead, and exalted at the right hand of God; and is the stone, *which is become the head of the corner;* or the chief corner-stone, that adorns, strengthens, knits, and keeps together, the whole building; in which Jews and Gentiles, saints in all ages and places, even all the elect of God, are united together; see the note on Matt. xxi. 42.

Ver. 12. *Neither is there salvation in any other, &c.*] Meaning not corporeal healing, but spiritual and eternal salvation; the Syriac version renders it, *neither is there* פורקנא, *redemption in any other:* Christ is the only Saviour and Redeemer, who was promised and prophesied of as such; who has saved and redeemed his people from the law, sin, and Satan; nor is salvation to be sought and hoped for from any other; not in a man's self, nor in any other creature, angels or men; not in and by his own works, and legal righteousness; not by obedience to the law of Moses, moral or ceremonial; nor by the light of nature, much less by an observance of the traditions of the elders: *for there is none other name;* thing or person, be it ever so great, or whatever shew of power and strength, of holiness and religion, it makes; as the name of kings, princes, and the great men in the world; or of ministers and preachers in the church; or even of Christians and believers, which may be only a name to live: none but the name of Jesus, his person, blood, and righteousness: *under heaven;* throughout the whole earth, in all the nations and kingdoms of it; nor even in heaven itself, among all the mighty angels there, thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers; none but the father

and the spirit, who are one with Christ: there is none but he *given among men*; and he has been freely given by his father, as an instance of his matchless love to the world; and also freely given by himself, to be a sacrifice for the sins of his people: and is freely preached among men, as the only Saviour of them; for there is no other, *whereby we must be saved*: God resolved in his purposes and decrees, in his council and covenant, upon the salvation of his chosen people; and he appointed his son to be the salvation of them, and determined he would save them by him, and by no other, and in no other way; wherefore, whoever are saved, must be saved by him; see Hos. i. 7. the Arabic version adds, *unless by him only*.

Ver. 13. *Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John*, &c.] With what courage and intrepidity they stood before them, the presence of mind they had, and the freedom of speech they used, as the word properly signifies: they observed their elocution, the justness of their diction, the propriety of their language, and the strength and nervousness of their reasoning; as well as their great resolution, constancy, and firmness of mind; not being afraid to profess the name of Christ, or to charge them with the murder of him; and that they seemed to be determined to abide by him, at all events; to assert him to be the true Messiah, though rejected by the Jewish builders; and that he was risen from the dead: and not only to ascribe unto him the miracle now wrought, but the salvation of men; and to declare, that there was none in any other but him: the Syriac version renders it, *when they heard the word of Simeon and John, which they spoke openly*: and freely, without any reserve: they answered readily to the question, that it was by the name of Jesus of Nazareth that they had done this miracle; they dealt freely with the Jewish sanhedrim, and told them in so many words, that they were the crucifiers of Christ, and the rejecters of that stone, which God had made the head of the corner, and that there was no salvation for them in any other: it appears from hence, that John spoke as well as Peter, though his words are not recorded: *and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men*; not by what they now said, but by what they heard and understood of them before: they were informed that they were *unlearned* men, or who did not understand letters; not but that they had learned their mother tongue, and could read the Scriptures; but they had not had a liberal education; they had not been brought up at the feet of any of the doctors, in any of the schools and universities of the Jews; they were not trained up in, and conversant with, the nice distinctions, subtle argumentations, and decisions of the learned doctors, in the interpretation of the law of Moses, and the traditions of the elders: and understood that they were also *ignorant* men, ἰδιῶται, *idiots*, or private men; for men might be unlearned, and yet not be such; it seems the high-priests themselves were sometimes unlearned men: hence, on the day of atonement, "they used to read before him, in the "order of the day, and say to him, Lord high-priest, "read thou with thine own mouth; perhaps thou "hast forgot, or it may be, לא למדת, *thou hast not* "*learned*[c]." The Jews have adopted the word here used into their language; and express by it, sometimes a man that is mean, abject, and contemptible: thus instead of *children of base men*, or *without a name*, the Targumist on Job xxx. 8. reads, בני הדיוטן, *the children of idiots*, or *private men*: and in the Targum on 1 Sam. xviii. 23. and xxiv. 15. it is used for one lightly esteemed, and comparable to a flea: it sometimes designs persons in a private life, though men of learning and knowledge, in distinction from those that are in office; so we read[d], that "three kings, and four "הדיוטות, *private* persons, have no part in the world "to come; the three kings are Jeroboam, Ahab, and "Menasseh; the four *idiots*, or private men, are "Balaam, Doeg, Achitophel, and Gehazi." And so a bench of idiots, or private men, is distinguished from a bench of authorized and approved judges[e]; and sometimes the word is used of such, as are distinguished from doctors, or wise men; so when it is said[f], "the command of plucking off the shoe, is "done before three judges, and though the three are "*idiots*;" the note of Maimonides upon it is, "not "wise men, but that know how to read the lan-"guage," the Hebrew language: and such were the disciples, in every sense of the word; they were mean and abject, poor fishermen, men of no name and figure, that were in no office, and exalted station of life, nor versed in Jewish learning, but common private men: so that *they marvelled*; the sanhedrim were astonished to hear them talk with so much fluency and pertinence: *and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus*; looking wistly upon them, they knew them again, and remembered that they were persons that were the disciples of Jesus, and whom they had seen in company with him; not in the high-priest's palace, when Jesus was arraigned, examined, and condemned there; though Peter, and some think John was there at that time, yet not to be observed and taken notice of by the sanhedrim; but in the temple where Jesus taught, and where the chief priests, Scribes, and elders came, and disputed with him about his authority, and cavilled at him, Matt. xxi. 15, 23.

Ver. 14. *And beholding the man which was healed*, &c.] Who either was taken into custody, and brought before the sanhedrim, along with the apostles; or rather, who came here of his own accord to be witness for them: for he was *standing with them*; in company with them, and close by them, and on their side; and so they could, and did point and appeal unto him, who was ready to justify, that it was not by the use of medicine, or of magic art, or in the name of Satan or Beelzebub, but by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, that his cure was wrought: *they could say nothing against it*; they could not gainsay the fact, for the man was before them, perfectly well, whom they personally knew, by his lying so long at the gate of the temple; they knew that he had been lame from his mother's womb, who was now above forty years of age; and they could say nothing

[c] Misn. Yoma, c. 1. sect. 3.
[d] Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 11. sect. 2.
[e] T. Bab. Bava Mezia, fol. 32. 1.
[f] Misn. Yebamot, c. 12. sect. 1.

against the manner of his cure, who was present to attest it; nor could they say any thing *against them*: the apostles, as the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read; they could not blame them for doing it, it being a good deed, nor charge them with fraud and imposture.

Ver. 15. *But when they had commanded them,* &c.] That is, when the sanhedrim had ordered the apostles; or *commanded that both*, as the Arabic version reads, both Peter and John; and, it may be, the man that was healed too: *to go aside out of the council*; or place where the council, or sanhedrim sat: which, whether it was in the chamber *Gazith*, in the temple where they used to sit[g], or in the shops, or in the city, whither they removed, is not certain. We are told[h], that "the sanhedrim removed from the chamber "*Gazith*, to the shops, and from the shops to Jerusa-"lem, and from Jerusalem to Jabneh;" that is, after the destruction of the city. And the first remove was much about this time; for it is said[i], that "forty "years before the destruction of the temple, the san-"hedrim removed, and sat in the shops." Not in the shops where things were sold for the use of the temple, but in a court adjoining to them, which took its name from them. *They conferred among themselves*: what was proper to be done, the apostles being withdrawn.

Ver. 16. *Saying, what shall we do to these men?* &c.] Whether they should punish them by scourging them, or detain them longer in custody, or commit them to prison, or dismiss them: *for that indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them*: they were convicted that a miracle was wrought; that it was a clear case, a well-known thing, of which there was no room to doubt, and that it was done by the apostles; but this was not all the difficulty, had it been a thing only within their knowledge, and which they could have concealed, it would have given them no uneasiness; but, as they observe, *it is manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem*: for the man having been so long lame, and had lain so long at the temple, where all the inhabitants frequently went, he was known and took notice of by them; and his cure being wrought so openly, and in such a miraculous way, it was the common talk of the city: so that there was no smothering it: *and we cannot deny* it; the fact is so certain and evident; nor *hide it*, as the Ethiopic version renders it, it being so notorious and public.

Ver. 17. *But that it spread no further among the people,* &c.] Meaning not in Jerusalem; for the fame of this miracle was spread among all the inhabitants of that city; but in other parts of the nation: *let us straitly threaten them*: or *in threatening threaten them*; that is, severely threaten them with imprisonment, or with the scourging of forty stripes save one, or with death itself. *That they speak henceforth to no man in this name*; which through indignation and contempt they do not mention, but mean the name of Jesus: and their sense is, that the apostles, from this time forward, should not teach, or preach the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, or any other doctrine of the Gospel, in the name of Jesus, to any man, Jew or Gentile; or perform any miracle in his name; or call upon his name, and make use of it, for the healing of any person, or doing any miraculous work. The Ethiopic version is a very odd one, and quite contrary to the sense of the sanhedrim, *that they should not speak any more but in the name of the man Jesus.*

Ver. 18. *And they called them,* &c.] From the apartment where they were; or ordered their servants to call them in to them: *and commanded them not to speak at all*; either privately or publicly, in the ministry of the word, or in working of miracles, in the city, or in the country: *nor teach in the name of Jesus*: any doctrine whatever; or *the name of Jesus*, as the Arabic version reads; that is, the doctrine of Jesus, that which respects his person, his incarnation, his offices, his sufferings, death, and resurrection from the dead.

Ver. 19. *But Peter and John answered and said unto them,* &c.] With great boldness and courage, and without any fear of man, but in the true fear of God: *whether it be right in the sight of God*: who is omniscient, and sees, and knows all things, all the actions of men, and the springs of them; who is holy, just, and true, and sits and judges among the gods, that which is right: *to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye*: it is not denied that magistrates are to be hearkened to, and obeyed; but not more than God, or in things that are contrary to his nature, will, law, honour, and glory: whatever is agreeable to the law and will of God, commanded by magistrates, should be attended to, and cheerfully obeyed; but what is not should be disregarded, whatever follows upon it: and this was so just and reasonable, that the apostles appeal to the sanhedrim, or council itself, to determine.

Ver. 20. *For we cannot but speak,* &c.] It was not physically, but morally impossible; or it was not lawful, and therefore they would not speak any other, and they could not avoid speaking, say they, *the things which we have seen and heard*; as the miracles and doctrines of Christ, his resurrection from the dead, of which they were eye and ear witnesses. This shews their great fidelity and integrity, their inviolable attachment to Christ, and their fearlessness of the displeasure and wrath of men.

Ver. 21. *So when they had further threatened them,* &c.] Either repeated the same, as before; or added some more severe ones, to terrify them, if possible; not being able to answer their arguments, or invalidate their reasoning: *they let them go*; they did not acquit them as innocent persons, but dismissed them from custody: *finding nothing how they might punish them*; not being able, though they sought most diligently for it, to fix any thing upon them, which might be a cause, or occasion, or pretence of inflicting any punishment upon them: *because of the people*; they would not have stuck at the injustice of it, or have been under any concern about offending God; but they were afraid of the people, of losing their credit

[g] Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 10. sect. 2. & Middot. c. 5. sect. 3.
[h] T. Bab. Roshhashana, fol. 31. 1.
[i] T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 8. 2.

among them, and lest they should rise up against them, and on the side of the apostles: *for all men glorified God for that which was done*: they saw the hand of God in it, and ascribed it to his mercy, goodness, and power, and gave him the glory of it; and therefore to punish the instruments of so great and good a work, would have been esteemed barbarous and wicked, and would have been highly resented by them; since, on the contrary, they judged them worthy of great honour and respect.

Ver. 22. *For the man was above forty years old*, &c.] So that the miracle was the greater, that a man born lame, and who had been so above forty years, should have a cure; and he was the more known to the people, and his testimony met with more credit: *on whom this miracle of healing was shewed*; both for the good of men, for the glory of God, and for the confirmation of the Gospel of Christ.

Ver. 23. *And being let go*, &c.] Or dismissed from custody, by the order of the sanhedrim: *they went to their own company*: or *to their own men*, as the Ethiopic version reads; or *to their own brethren*, as the Syriac; either to the other ten apostles; or to the hundred and twenty, who first met together; or to the whole multitude of them that believed, ver. 32. the eight thousand that had been added to them, the whole church. Saints love to be together, and delight in the company of each other; and especially when they have any thing to communicate, that may be for their mutual good, or for the honour of God: *and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them*; what commands and injunctions they had lain upon them, and what threatenings they had given them, and, no doubt likewise, what answers they had returned to them.

Ver. 24. *And when they heard that*, &c.] The whole of the report the apostles made; and which they heard with patience, and without making any unworthy reflections upon the sanhedrim; and being, on the one hand, not over-much terrified, and cast down, and, on the other hand, not sluggish, careless, and secure; they betake themselves, not to plots, conspiracies, and seditions; nor to arms to defend and avenge themselves, though their numbers were large; but to prayer, that they might not be deterred by threatenings, from speaking boldly the word of the Lord: *they lift up their voice to God with one accord*; being inspired by the Holy Ghost, they not only agreed in the matter of their petitions, which agreement is of great avail with God; for whatever two or more agree in to ask of God, shall be given to them; but also in the very words which were vocally expressed by them, and that in a very loud and sonorous way, to signify the vehemency and ardour of their minds and affections: *and said, Lord, thou art God*; or, as in one of Beza's copies, *Lord our God*; or, as in the Ethiopic version, *Lord, thou art our God*: addressing God, the father of Christ, as appears from ver. 27. as their own God, their covenant God and father in Christ, from whom they might hope for help, and in whom they might expect safety, and every supply of grace: *which hast made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is*; and which is a full proof of the omnipotence of God; an attribute of singular use to the saints in distressed circumstances; for what is it he cannot do, who made all things that are? and what is it he will not do for his saints, for the accomplishment of his purposes, the making good of his covenant and promises, the fulfilment of prophecies, the good of his people, and the glory of his name?

Ver. 25. *Who by the mouth of thy servant David has said*, &c.] In Psal. ii. 1, 2. from whence we learn, that that psalm, though it is without a title, and does not bear David's name, yet is one of his; and so Kimchi says, that David composed it at the beginning of his reign; though Aben Ezra thinks, that it was composed by one of the singers for him, on the day he was anointed; yet he afterwards seems to doubt of it, and on ver. 7. says, they are the words of David, or the words of the singer. And certain it is, that in the apostles' time this psalm was reckoned to be David's by the Jews in common; and therefore they speak of it as such: and it was the sense of the ancient doctors of the synagogue, that this psalm is to be understood of the Messiah. Jarchi says, our Rabbins expound the business (of this psalm) concerning the King Messiah; and Kimchi observes, that there are some that interpret this psalm of Gog and Magog[k], and the Messiah, or anointed, that is the King Messiah; though one of these writers was of opinion, that it is best to understand it of David himself; and Aben Ezra says, that it was composed either for David, or for the Messiah, and to understand it of the Messiah, the thing is more clear. The 7th and 8th verses are particularly applied to the Messiah in some of their most ancient writings[l], and also in modern ones[m], as is ver. 2. to Messiah ben Joseph[n]; and indeed the whole psalm belongs to the Messiah, as appears from the express mention of him, and the vain attempts of the kings of the earth against him; from the decree and resolution of God to make and declare him king of Zion, notwithstanding their utmost efforts; from his having the Gentiles for his inheritance, which is true of no other; and especially from that reverence, adoration, and worship, which were to be given to him, and that trust and confidence to be placed in him, which can by no means agree with David, nor with any mere creature. The Syriac version reads, *who in the Holy Ghost, by the mouth*, &c. and so read Beza's most ancient copy, and five other manuscripts of his; and the Vulgate Latin, and Ethiopic versions, read, *who in the Holy Ghost, by the mouth of our father David*, &c. and so the Alexandrian copy, but does not seem to be a genuine reading; since the Jews were not used to call David, but Abraham, their father; nor is it, with propriety, expressed, that God the father said in, or by the spirit, what follows, *why did the Heathen rage*,

[k] Vid. T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 3. 2.

[l] Zohar in Numb. fol. 82. 2. Bereshit Rabba, sect. 44. fol. 38. 4. & T. Bab. Succa, fol. 52. 1.

[m] Maimon. in Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 11. sect. 1. Abarbinel Mashmiah Jeshua, fol. 37. 4. & 38. 1.

[n] Pirke Eliezer, c. 19.

and the people imagine vain things? that is, the Gentiles, and the people of the Jews, Pilate, and his council, with the Roman soldiers, and the Jewish sanhedrim, with the common people; who raged against Christ, seized him in a furious manner, led him as a malefactor, and hurried him from bar to bar, in a tumultuous way, and with great noise and clamour urged the crucifixion of him; nor did their rage cease until they had put him to death: yet it was a vain thing in them to imagine he should be held under the power of death; or that this would put a stop to the spread of his doctrine, and the enlargement of his kingdom and interest; since he rose from the dead, as a triumphant conqueror, over all his enemies, and pouring forth his spirit, in an extraordinary way, he spread his Gospel, and his glory throughout the earth.

Ver. 26. *The kings of the earth stood up,* &c.] Herod Antipas, tetrach of Galilee, sometimes called a king, Mark vi. 14. and Pilate the Roman governor, who represented his master Cæsar; these stood, or rose up in an hostile manner, and set themselves against, and opposed themselves to the Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth: *and the rulers were gathered together;* the Jewish rulers, Annas, Caiaphas, and the rest of the members of the sanhedrim, who met together more than once; and particularly at the high-priest's palace, to consult how they should take Jesus and put him to death; and who also gathered together at the same place, when he was taken, to arraign, examine, and condemn him. And this opposition, and these conspiracies and consultations, were *against the Lord:* Jehovah, the father of Christ, who sent him, and anointed him; so that what was done against Christ, was done against the Lord, their views and designs, their interest and glory, being the same: *and against his Christ;* or anointed one, who was anointed by him, with the Holy Ghost, from his birth, and at his baptism, to be prophet, priest, and King.

Ver. 27. *For of a truth, against thy holy child Jesus,* &c.] This is the interpretation of the above passages in Psal. ii. 1, 2. and the application of them to Jesus; who is called the *child* of God, because the human nature of Christ was taken into union with the second person, who is the son of God: unless the word should rather be rendered *servant*, as it is in ver. 25. and which is a character that belongs to Christ, and is often given him as Mediator, who, as such, is God's righteous servant; and he is called *holy*, because he was so in his conception and birth, and in his life and conversation, being free both from original sin, and actual transgression; and which is an aggravation of the sin and guilt of these men, that they should rise up, and gather together against him; and yet it was a clear case, a notorious fact, a certain truth, that could not be denied: and for the further aggravation of their crime, as well as for the sake of explaining the phrase *his Christ*, 'tis added, *whom thou hast anointed:* with the oil of gladness, above his fellows. Christ was, in some sense, anointed to be prophet, priest, and King, from eternity, being so early set up as Mediator, or called unto, and invested with that office; see Prov. viii. 22. Psal. ii. 6. and he was anointed in time, both at his incarnation and baptism, having the spirit without measure given unto him, which is that anointing, that teacheth all things. *Both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together.* This Herod was Herod Antipas, the son of Herod the great, and who beheaded John the Baptist; and Pontius Pilate was the Roman governor of Judea, at the time of Christ's death; the Gentiles were those of Pilate's council, and the Roman soldiers; *and the people of Israel*, were the Jews, both the rulers, and the common people; the Syriac version renders it, *the synagogue of Israel:* and these, though they were of different nations, and of different interests, yea enemies to one another, as the Jews and Gentiles in general were; and as were Herod and Pontius Pilate in particular; yet all gathered, consented, and agreed together to mock, scourge, and crucify this innocent and holy person. The Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions add, *in this city;* and so the above copies of Beza's, and others; meaning, in the city of Jerusalem, where the apostles now were, and where the above persons met together, and from whence a prophet could only perish. The Alexandrian copy reads, *in this thy city;* which was called the city of God, and the holy city; and yet in this was this wicked convention, and all this wickedness done.

Ver. 28. *For to do whatsoever thy hand,* &c.] It was not the end of their gathering together against Christ, or it was not their intention and design, to fulfil the purposes and decrees of God, but to fulfil their own lusts, and satiate their rage and malice against him; but it was so in the event, according to the wise disposal of providence, that by their gathering together, by their consultations and conspiracies, they brought about what God in his everlasting council had decreed. By *the hand* of the Lord here is not meant, the grace and favour of God; or the power and providence of God; or his word of precept, his revealed will; but his secret will, the counsel of his will, the hidden purpose of his heart, the wise consultation of his mind, which is formed according to his infinite wisdom: so in 2 Sam. xiv. 19. it is said, *is not the hand of Joab with thee in all this?* that is, the head of Joab, the wise counsel of Joab; and so the Jewish writers interpret it, עצתו, *his counsel*[a]: and so the word is explained here immediately; for it follows, *and thy counsel determined before to be done:* God's decrees are from eternity; there is nothing comes to pass in time but what he has beforetime determined should be done, either by effecting it himself, or doing it by others, or suffering it to be done, as in the case here. Whatever was done to Christ, either by Jews or Gentiles, by Herod or Pontius Pilate, was according to the secret will of God, the covenant he made with Christ, and the council of peace that was between them both: what they wickedly did, God designed for good, and hereby brought about the redemption and salvation of his people: this neither makes God the author of sin, nor excuses the sinful actions of men, or infringes the liberty of their wills in acting.

[a] Kimchi in loc. & R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 36. 2.

Ver. 29. *And now, Lord, behold their threatenings*, &c.] Meaning not with his eye of omniscience, which he could not but do; but that he would so take notice of them, as in his providence to rebuke them for them, or restrain them, or make them fearless of them: *and grant unto thy servants*; the apostles, and all the ministers of the word, who are the servants of the most high God, and who serve him in the Gospel of his son, with great cheerfulness and faithfulness: *that with all boldness they may speak thy word*: and not their own, or another's: the Gospel, which is God's speech, or a word, a message of grace and mercy from him to sinful creatures. The request of the whole church is, that the ministers of the word might not be intimidated by the menaces of the sanhedrim; but go on to declare it with all freedom of expression, with all boldness, courage, and intrepidity of mind, and with all openness and faithfulness, and in the most public manner. And such a petition shews, that as it is the gift of God to speak his word, or preach his Gospel, so it also is, to speak it freely, boldly, and faithfully, as it should be spoken.

Ver. 30. *By stretching forth thine hand to heal*, &c.] That is, by exerting his power in healing sicknesses, diseases, and lameness, as in the above instance, by the hands of the apostles; which, as it would be contrary to the schemes of the Jewish sanhedrim, and would confirm the doctrines of the Gospel; so it would animate the preachers of the word to preach it with more readiness, cheerfulness, and firmness of mind; *and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus*; as had been done already, and by whose name particularly the lame man at the temple had received a cure, and in whose name the sanhedrim had forbid the apostles to preach, or to make use of it, in doing any other miracle.

Ver. 31. *And when they had prayed*, &c.] Either while they were praying, or as soon as they had done; for sometimes, as here, prayer is immediately heard, and an answer is returned, whilst the saints are speaking, or as soon as prayer is ended: *the place was shaken where they were assembled together*; which, whether it was a private house, or the temple, is not certain: the latter seems more probable, because their number was so great, that no private house could hold them; and since this was the place where they used to assemble; this was now shaken with a rushing mighty wind, as on the day of Pentecost, and was a symbol of the divine presence, and a token that their prayers were heard, and an emblem of the shaking of the world by the ministry of the apostles: *and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost*; with the gifts of the Holy Ghost, even with extraordinary ones, such as speaking with divers tongues, as before on the day of Pentecost; see ch. ii. 4. and this was the case not only of the apostles, but of the other ministers of the word, and it may be of the whole church: *and they spoke the word of God with all boldness*; that is, the apostles, and preachers of the Gospel, spoke it with great freedom, and without fear, not only privately, in their community, but publicly, in the temple: this was what was particularly prayed for, and in which they had a remarkable answer.

Ver. 32. *And the multitude of them that believed*, &c.] The Gospel, and in Christ, the substance of it; and a multitude they were, for they were now about eight thousand persons. And though their number was so great, they *were of one heart and of one soul*; there was an entire consent and agreement in doctrine, in matters of faith they were all of one mind and judgment, and there was a perfect harmony in their practice, they all performed the same duties, and observed the same commands and ordinances; and all pursued the same interest, and had the same ends and views; and there was a strict union of their affections to each other; their souls were knit to one another; so that there was, but as it were, one soul in this large body of Christians. Aristotle, being asked what a friend was, answered, one soul dwelling in two bodies [p]: and so the Jews say, it is fit and proper that lovers or friends should be בלב אחד כאיש אחד, *of one heart, as one man* [q]; and such friends and hearty lovers were these. *Neither said any* of them, *that ought of the things which he possessed was his own*; though he had a peculiar right unto them, yet he did not claim that right, nor insist on it, nor so much as speak of it, nor make use of his substance as if it was his own, reserving it for himself, or even disposing of it himself; but exposed it to the free use of the whole body, to enjoy it equally with himself: *but they had all things common*: which was what they were not obliged to, but it was a free and voluntary action of their own, and so is not binding on others; nor indeed is their practice to be imitated, in the direct manner in which they did it, for their case was peculiar. They were not only every day liable to persecutions, and to have their possessions seized, and their goods confiscated; but they also knew, that in process of time, Jerusalem would be destroyed, and they could not tell how soon; and therefore judged it right to sell off their possessions, and throw the money into one common stock, for their mutual support, and for the carrying on the common cause of Christ.

Ver. 33. *And with great power*, &c.] Either in a very powerful way, with great fervency of spirit, and ardour of mind, and uncommon zeal; or with great efficacy on the souls of men; or with many miracles, and powerful operations in healing the sick, casting out devils, *&c.* *gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus*; which they were chosen to be witnesses, and were eye-witnesses of; and which is a fundamental article of the Gospel, and was what the Sadducees were particularly disturbed at, and on account of which they forbade them to preach any more in Christ's name. *And great grace was upon them all*; not only upon the apostles and ministers, but upon the whole church: and which may be understood either of the large gifts of the spirit of God, which were poured out upon them, and plentifully bestowed on them; or of the gracious protection of God over them, preserving them from the rage and malice of men; or of that grace and favour which they had among the people in common; or of that charity, liberality and beneficence, which were among them, which sense is confirmed by what follows; though it may be all these senses may be taken in.

[p] Diog. Laert. in vit. Aristot. l. 5. 313.

[q] Tzeror Hammor, fol. 21. 3. & 162. 4.

Ver. 34. *Neither was there any among them that lacked*, &c.] Bread to eat, or clothes to wear, or any of the necessaries of life; which shews their great charity, and gives a reason why they were in so much favour with the people, because they took so much care of their poor; and this flowed from the grace of God bestowed upon them: *for as many as were possessors of lands and houses;* or *vineyards*, as the Ethiopic version reads, whether in Jerusalem or elsewhere; *sold them and brought the prices of the things that were sold:* whether lands, houses, or vineyards.

Ver. 35. *And laid* them *down at the apostles' feet*, &c.] Shewing great veneration and respect to the apostles, and a sort of neglect and contempt of their worldly substance; and signifying that they entirely delivered them to the apostles, and subjected them to their disposal: *and distribution was made unto every man, according as he had need;* though they had all things in common, yet there was an order observed; a man might not go to the common stock and take out of it what he would; but as all was committed to the care of the apostles, and was in their power; the distribution was made by them, to every man, to the original proprietors, as well as to others, and that not as much as a man would have, or he might crave; but as much as he needed, for the present, of which the apostles were the judges.

Ver. 36. *And Joses*, &c.] The Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, read *Joseph*, and so do Beza's most ancient copy, and two of his manuscripts, and the Alexandrian copy, and others; for *Jose*, or *Joses*, is only an abbreviation or contraction of *Joseph:* though according to others it is the same with *Josiah:* there is one of this name, who was the son of Alpheus, and brother to two of the apostles, James and Jude, Matt. xiii. 55. and another called *Joses Barsabas:* and it may be to distinguish the one from the other this is called *Joses Barnabas:* for so it follows, *who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas:* his name before his conversion was *Joses*, or *Joseph*, or *Josiah:* and afterwards, or at least after he came to be acquainted with the apostles, and to be in their company, they called him *Barnabas*, The Arabic and Ethiopic versions read, *who was of the apostles:* and so Barnabas is spoken of as if he was an apostle, 1 Cor. ix. 5, 6. *which is, being interpreted, the son of consolation:* or *of exhortation;* from the excellent gift and talent he had at exhorting; see ch. xi. 23. and xiv. 22. and from the use he was of for the comforting of distressed minds; for נבא, *Naba*, *to prophesy*, includes both exhortation and comfort; and he having the gift of prophecy or preaching the Gospel, was called ברנבא, *Barnabas*, a son of comfort, or a comforter, or an exhorter: and so Jerom [r] interprets it, *the son of a prophet.* Drusius conjectures that his right name was בר נחמא, *Bar Nachama*, and by contraction *Barnama*, and with a Greek termination *Barnamas;* which properly signifies, in the Chaldee and Syriac languages, *the son of consolation*, as it is here interpreted; and he observes, that the letters *M* and *B* are sometimes used one for another: thus one and the same man is called *Berodach* and *Merodach*, 2 Kings xx. 12. Isa. xxxix. 1. and the same river is called *Abana*, 2 Kings v. 12. and in the margent *Amana:* but others think he had his name from the same word that Noah had his, and which signifies rest and comfort, as appears from the reason of his name. *This same shall comfort us*, &c. And so the name of this man in the Chaldee or Syriac language was בר נח אבא, which may be literally rendered *the son of the fathers' rest*, or *comfort.* And this man is said to be *a Levite;* of the tribe of Levi, and of the priestly race: *and of the country of Cyprus;* or *by birth*, or *nation*, *a Cyprian;* for though he was a Jew, as is clear from his being of the tribe of Levi, and was born of Jewish parents, yet in Cyprus, and so was a native of that place. The Ethiopic version renders it, *of the city of Cyprus:* but Cyprus was not a city, but a country; wherefore the Syriac version renders it, *of the place*, or *country of Cyprus*, as we do: it was an island in the further part of the Mediterranean sea; it had its name from the plant Cyprus, and is now by the Turks called *Kibris.* According to Pliny [s], it lay to the east and west of Cilicia, and was over-against Syria, and was formerly the seat of nine kingdoms; its circumference was three hundred and seventy miles, and had been called by various names; as Acamantis, Cerastis, Aspelia, Amathusia, Macaria, Crypton, and Colinia; in it were fifteen towns or cities, which were Paphos, Palæpaphos, Curias, Citium, Corineum, Salamis, Amethus, Lapethos, Solœ, Tamaseus, Epidarum, Chytri, Arsinoe, Carpasium, and Golgi. According to the same writer [t], it was by an earthquake divided from Syria; and that part of it which lay to the east from Syria, is said to be less than a hundred miles distant from it. And according to Mela [u], its chief cities were Salamis and Paphos, mentioned in Acts xiii. 5, 6. And according to Ptolomy [w], it had on the west Pamphylia, on the south the Egyptian and Syrian seas, and on the east the Syrian sea, and on the north the straits of Cilicia: it was inhabited by people of various nations, and, among the rest, by Jews; and R. Benjamin makes mention of Jewish Rabbans in Cyprus, in his time [x].

Ver. 37. *Having land, sold it*, &c.] Whether this was in Cyprus, or in Judea, is not certain; nor how he came by it, whether he had bought it, as the priests and Levites might, and as Jeremiah, who was of the priests, bought a field at Anathoth, Jer. xxxii. 9. or, whether it was his wife's dowry; for the Levites had nothing by inheritance: they had forty-two cities, and the six cities of refuge to dwell in, and the field of the suburbs of these cities; which field or land was never to be sold, but to be a perpetual possession, Lev. xxv. 34. but now the ceremonial law was abolished, and this precept was not attended to, if the land was of this sort. Moreover, the Jewish doctors interpret the above law otherwise, and understand it only of changing, and not of selling, which they allow of; one of their canons runs thus [y], "the priests and Levites

[r] De Nominibus Hebraicis, fol. 105. I.
[s] Nat. Hist. l. 5. c. 31.
[t] Ib. l. 2. c. 88.
[u] De Orbis Situ, l. 2. p. 66.
[w] Geograph. l. 5. c. 14.
[x] Itinerar. p. 30.
[y] Misn. Eracin, c. 9. sect. 8.

"מוכרים, *sell* always, and redeem always, as it is "said, Lev. xxv. 32. *the Levites may redeem at any "time.*" Upon which canon, one of their commentators[z] says, "*they sell always*: and not as an Israelite, "who can't sell less than two years before the jubilee; "—but these *sell* even near the jubilee; *and they re-"deem always*: if they sell houses in walled towns, "they are not confirmed at the end of the year, as "the houses in the walled towns of Israelites; and if "*they sell fields*, it is not necessary that they should "remain in the hands of the buyer two years, but "they may redeem them immediately, if they will." And another of them[a] has this observation, "all "agree that the Levites may not change a city, or "suburb, or field, which are theirs, because it is said, "Lev. xxv. 34. *but the field of the suburbs of their cities "may not be sold*; and the wise men of blessed me-"mory say, the meaning of it is, it shall not be "changed, for they don't change any thing from what "it was before." And agreeably to this is what Maimonides[b] elsewhere says, "they don't make in "the cities of the Levites a city a suburb, or a suburb "a city, or a suburb a field, or a field a suburb, as it "is said, Lev. xxv. 34. *but the field of the suburbs of "their cities shall not be sold*: from report (or tradi-"tion) we learn, that that is said, *shall not be sold*, "means, shall not be changed; but the field, suburbs, "and city, every one of these three shall be as they "are for ever.——Priests and Levites who *sell* a field, "of the fields of their cities, or an house of any of the "houses of their walled towns, don't redeem accord-"ing to this order (*i. e.* as the other Israelites), but "*they sell fields*; and even near to the jubilee, and "redeem them immediately." So that if this land of Barnabas lay in Judea, as is most likely, it might be sold, and much more, if in Cyprus. But, be it what and where it will, he sold it: *and brought the money*; from Cyprus or Judea, or that part of the land of Canaan where it lay, and where he had sold it: *and laid it at the apostles' feet*; perhaps he might be the first person that did so, and set an example which was universally followed; however, he is particularly mentioned, being a man of note among the apostles, and of great usefulness in after-times, and of whom frequent mention is made in other places.

CHAP. V.

Ver. 1. *BUT a certain man named Ananias*, &c.] A name common among the Jews, the same with Hananiah, Jer. xxviii. 1. see Acts ix. 10. and xxiii. 2. it signifies not the humility of the Lord, or the affliction of the Lord, or the answer of the Lord, as say some, as if it was derived from ענה; but the grace of the Lord, or the Lord's gracious one, coming from חנן: there is no dependence on names; though this man's name signified one that was in the grace and favour of God; he was not so, but a graceless person, as appears by what follows. It is very likely he was a minister of the word, since the account of him follows upon that of Barnabas, and is opposed to it; it may be he was one of the hundred and twenty, on whom the Holy Ghost fell on the day of Pentecost; and yet, though he had great gifts, had no grace. This shews there are hypocrites among men of the greatest names and characters, and in the purest churches; this first and pure church, which, in the preceding chapter, has such large encomiums, was not free from them: *with Sapphira his wife*; whether this is the same name with *Shiphrah*, Exod. i. 15. or *Zipporah*, Exod. ii. 21. both which are by the Septuagint called *Sephora*, or whether another, and may signify *beautiful*, is not very material. Jerom[c] says, in the Syriac language this name signifies *beautiful*; though he first gives other explanations of it, as *narrantem, literatam, sive librariam*, as though it was derived from the Hebrew word ספר. The precious stone called *sapphire* seems to come from the same root as this, and to be so called because of its beautiful azure colour. The name *Sappho*, which was the name of a famous poetess, the inventress of a kind of verse called *Sapphic* verse, is said to be the diminutive of this name *Sapphira*. Drusius observes, it may be read צפירא, *Tzephira*; which comes near to *Zipporah*, and among other things signifies a *she-goat*; and it was usual to give women names taken from such creatures. So *Rachel*, a *sheep*, and *Tabitha*, or *Dorcas*, a *doe*. But whatever her name or person were, her actions were disagreeable: *sold a possession*; which was their own. So the Arabic and Syriac versions read, *their own field*, or *farm*; and the Ethiopic version, *their own vineyard*: it might be his wife's dowry or jointure, and so her consent was necessary; or they might be jointly concerned in this sale, to shew not only their concord and harmony among themselves; but that they agreed in their devotion and religious actions, and that being both filled with zeal for God, and love to the brethren, sold their estate to support the common cause.

Ver. 2. *And kept back part of the price*, &c.] At which the possession was sold; he reserved it for his own use, after he had given out that he sold it for the service of the church: *his wife also being privy* to it; to this private reserve: *and brought a certain part*; whether the greater part, or an equal part, half of it, or a lesser part; some little part of it, so the phrase seems to signify, is not certain: *and laid it at the apostles' feet*; as the rest did, thereby to make a shew of charity, and cover the deceit.

Ver. 3. *But Peter said, Ananias*, &c.] Peter, by divine revelation, or by a spirit of discerning, such as Elisha had, who knew what his servant Gehazi had done, knowing what a reserve Ananias had made, calls

[z] Bartenora in Misn. Eracin.
[a] Maimon. in ib.
[b] Hilchot Shemitta Veyobel, c. 13. sect. 4, 5, 7.
[c] De Nominibus Hebraicis, fol. 106. C.

him by his name, and says to him, *why hath Satan filled thine heart?* or emboldened thee, given thee so much spirit and courage to act in such an impudent and audacious manner; so the phrase is used in Esth. vii. 5. and Eccl. viii. 11. see the Septuagint there, and often in Talmudic writings. "Says R. Joshua, I never מלאני "לבי, *filled my heart;* or my heart never filled me to "say to a man, go and take the change of these three "things, *&c.*[d]". And says another Rabbi[e], "though "I say so, לא מלאני לבי, *I never filled my heart*, or "my heart never filled me to transgress the words of "the companions;" that is, I never durst do so. And again[f], it being observed, that Isaiah should say, *hear, O heavens!* 'tis said, "who, or what is this, who "מלאו לבו, *hath filled his heart*, or whose heart has "filled him to call to the heavens to hear." But this instance of Ananias was such, that none but Satan could have put him upon, or emboldened him to have done; who from hence appeared to have the power over him, and to have possessed him, to have great access to him, even to his heart, and great influence upon it, so as to prompt him *to lie to the Holy Ghost:* who was in the apostles, and by whom they were acted, and to whom he had given a discerning of spirits; so that it was a daring action, and downright madness, to go about to deceive them: or he pretended he had an impulse from the spirit of God to sell his estate, and give the whole price of it to the apostles, and yet kept back part of it; which was acting contrary to that spirit he pretended to be influenced by. *And to keep back* part *of the price of the land:* that is, he lied against the Holy Ghost, by keeping back part of the price the land was sold for; when he had declared he sold it with this view, to give the whole for charitable uses, and affirmed that what he brought was the whole.

Ver. 4. *Whiles it remained, was it not thine own,* &c.] Before it was sold, it was his own proper estate; he had the sole propriety in it, and could have kept it, or disposed of it as he pleased: he was not obliged to sell it, he might have kept it as his own property: for selling of possessions at this time was a voluntary thing; it was what no man was forced to; it was a pure act of liberality, and what was not enjoined by the apostles; every man was left to his liberty. *And after it was sold, was it not in thine own power?* that is, the price for which it was sold: before he had declared that he sold it, in order to give the whole of it to the church, and brought it to the apostles as the whole; it was in his own power to dispose of, as he pleased, whether to give the whole, or a part of it, or any of it. He might have kept it all if he had thought fit, or have given what portion he pleased. *Why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart?* for though Satan had an hand in it, and greatly solicited him to it, and spirited him up to do it, yet in conjunction with his own heart; and perhaps it began there, which Satan helped forward. It was not so of Satan as to excuse the wickedness of his heart. It was owing partly to the sin of covetousness, which reigned in him, and partly to a desire of vain glory, and being thought a very religious man, that he acted such a part, and was so notoriously guilty of lying and hypocrisy. *Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God;* that is, not to men only, for he had lied to the apostles, but to God also, to the Holy Ghost, who is truly and properly God, of which this passage is a full proof; and it was owing to his omniscience, which is a peculiar attribute of deity, that this wicked man, and this fraud of his, were discovered.

Ver. 5. *And Ananias hearing these words,* &c.] Of Peter's; by which he found his sin was detected, and by which he was convicted of it: and which set forth the evil nature of it, with its aggravated circumstances; and such power went along with them, and they cut so deep, as that immediately he *fell down and gave up the ghost;* which is an instance of what the Jews call death by the hand of heaven: and this was done either by an angel; or rather by an extraordinary gift bestowed on Peter, being such an one as the Apostle Paul had, and used, when he smote Elymas the sorcerer with blindness, and delivered the incestuous person, and Alexander and Hymeneus to Satan. *And great fear came upon all them that heard these things;* both upon the members of the church, and so was of service to make them careful of their words and actions, and cautious and circumspect in their lives and conversations; and upon those that were without, and might be a means of making them fearful of speaking against them, or mocking at them, or of joining themselves to them, without being thoroughly satisfied that they should, and had a right, and were meet for it.

Ver. 6. *And the young men arose,* &c.] The younger brethren of the church, who were robust, and strong, and fit for the following service: these rose up from their seats at once, not willing that such an awful spectacle should lie long before them: *and wound him up;* in linen clothes, as was the manner of the Jews: *and carried* him *out:* of the house where they were, and out of the city; for the burying-places of the Jews were without the city: *and buried* him; which was all done in a very short time, as appears by what follows.

Ver. 7. *And it was about the space of three hours after,* &c.] The death of Ananias. So much time was taken up in burying of him; and in less time it could not well be, since the burying-places of the Jews were without the city, as before observed: and if they were as distant from other cities, as they were from the cities of the Levites, they were, as Dr. Lightfoot shews from Maimonides[g], above a mile and half off: though there is a Jewish canon which runs thus[h]; "they put carcasses, graves, and tanners, fifty cubits from a city." So that to go thither, open the grave, inter the dead, and return, must take up so much time; and so much time his wife had to reflect upon what she and her husband had done, but seems not to have had any thought about it, at least not any remorse of conscience for it: *when his wife, not knowing what was done;* she knew that her husband kept back part of the price of the land, and how much it was, and what he brought to the apostles; but she did not know that the fraud

[d] T. Hieros. Maaserot, fol. 48. 4.
[e] Sabbat, fol. 14. 2.
[f] Tzeror Hammor, fol. 160. 1. Vid. Shaare ora, fol. 2. 1.

[g] Shemitta Veyobel, c. 13. sect. 2.
[h] Misn. Bava Bathra, c. 2. sect. 9.

was detected, nor what followed; as that her husband was immediately struck dead, and was carried out and buried; which 'tis pretty much she should not in this time, when the thing was awful and shocking, the news of which must fly apace all over the city: but it looks as if the company of the saints was not broke up all this while, and that no one went out to carry it abroad, but the young men that went to bury him. Sapphira therefore, being ignorant of the whole affair, *came in*: to the temple or house where the apostles were, expecting to see her husband among the apostles, and chief men, in great honour and esteem for what he had done; and that he would be on equal foot with Barnabas and others, who had sold all they had, and brought the whole price of their possessions into the common stock.

Ver. 8. *And Peter answered unto her*, &c.] Who might be inquiring for her husband; though such a way of speaking was common with the Jews, when nothing goes before to which the answer is made; of which there are frequent instances in the sacred writings: *tell me whether ye sold the land for so much*; naming the sum of money which Ananias had brought; though the historian does not mention it. The Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions read, *tell me, O woman*, &c. not calling her by her name, as he did her husband, ver. 3. *yea, she said for so much*; just that sum, and no more.

Ver. 9. *Then Peter said unto her, how is it that ye have agreed together*, &c.] For husband and wife to agree together in what is good, in things civil, honest, and lawful, and in religious matters, is very commendable; but to agree in a fraud, in a lie, is very dreadful: *to tempt the spirit of the Lord*; to try whether the apostles had the spirit of the Lord, or no; and whether the spirit of the Lord that was in them was omniscient and omnipotent, would take any notice of it, and inflict punishment for it: *behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband* are *at the door*; which Peter knew either by hearing the sound of their feet, as Ahijah the prophet heard the sound of the feet of Jeroboam's wife, as she came in at the door, 1 Kings xiv. 6. or by the same spirit as Elisha knew that Gehazi ran after Naaman, and received money and garments from him, 2 Kings v. 26. *and shall carry thee out*; of this house dead, and bury thee, as they have thy husband.

Ver. 10. *Then fell she down straightway at his feet*, &c.] In like manner, and by the same hand of God as her husband before: *and yielded up the ghost*; died directly: *and the young men came in and found her dead*; the young men who had been to inter her husband came into the house at that instant, and found her dead upon the floor, at the feet of the Apostle Peter: *and carrying her forth, buried her by her husband*; as it was usual with the Jews to do. So they say[1], that in the cave of Machpelah were buried Adam and Eve, Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, and Jacob and Leah.

Ver. 11. *And great fear came upon all the church*, &c.] Which was still more increased by this instance of Sapphira's death: *and upon as many as heard these things*; who were not of the church; see the note on ver. 5.

Ver. 12. *And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought*, &c.] That is, by their means, or by them as instruments, or through the imposition of their hands on persons, many miraculous and wonderful cures, as well as other extraordinary actions, were performed: *among the people*; the common people, who attended in great numbers on their ministry, when the chief men and rulers of the nation despised them. (*And they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch*; which is to be understood not of the whole church, nor of the hundred and twenty disciples, but of the twelve apostles, who met in this place to preach the Gospel to the people; and they were agreed in their doctrine and practice, and were united in their affections to one another. Of Solomon's porch, see the note on John x. 23. These words, with what follow to the 15th verse, are to be read in a parenthesis.

Ver. 13. *And of the rest durst no man join himself to them*, &c.] By *the rest* are meant, either those that were without the church, and those either the profane and persecuting sort, who durst not come nigh the apostles to touch them, or say one word to them, for fear of being struck dead; and so the Ethiopic version renders it, *and then there was no more any man that durst restrain them*, or go about to hinder them from preaching: or the better sort, such who attended on the word, and were either real believers or hypocrites, who durst not, one nor the other, join themselves to them, because of what happened to Ananias and Sapphira; which not only deterred hypocrites from coming into the church, but also kept off such who were really converted persons; but this sense seems to be contradicted in the following verse. Rather therefore by them are meant those within the church, and not only the private members of it, but the ministers of the word, of which number Ananias might have been; these, the rest of them, durst not come nigh the apostles, or familiarly converse with them, much less put themselves upon an equal foot with them, but with great reverence of them kept their distance from them: *but the people magnified them*; both the ministers of the word, as Barnabas and others, who shewed such a respect to the apostles, they having extraordinary gifts, and extraordinary things also being done by them, and especially the twelve apostles; these the people in general spoke well of, praised and cried up as marvellous men, because of what was done by them.

Ver. 14. *And believers were the more added to the Lord*, &c.] That is, to the church, as in chap. ii. 47. over which Christ was Lord and head; for they were added to the Lord before, by believing in him, when they gave up themselves to him, to be saved by him; and now to the apostles, and the church by the will of God; and this case of Ananias and Sapphira was so far from hindering persons from coming into the church, that there were greater additions made to it than before, even of such as were true believers in Christ. The Ethiopic version reads, *and many were added who believed in our Lord*: the Arabic version, *they that believed in the Lord increased*; the Syriac version, *and they more increased who believed in the Lord*; and so the

[1] Cippi Hebraici, p. 4. T. Bab. Sota, fol. 13. 1.

Vulgate Latin version, *but the multitude of them that believe in the Lord were the more increased*; all of them reading the phrase, *the Lord*, not in construction with the word *added*, but with *believers*: *multitudes both of men and women*; the weaker sex were not intimidated any more than the men, such power went along with the word, and such grace was bestowed upon them. This church must now be prodigiously numerous, for before these additions, eight thousand had been added to the hundred and twenty; such success the Gospel had, and such progress it made in the hands of such mean and contemptible persons, notwithstanding the opposition of the chief men of the nation to it.

Ver. 15. *Insomuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets*, &c.] These words are to be read in connexion with the former part of the twelfth verse. Such miraculous cures being wrought by the apostles, the people who had sick persons in their houses, hearing of it brought them out; either *into the streets*, as we render it, and as the Alexandrian copy reads; or *in every street* in Jerusalem, waiting for the apostles as they came, to receive a cure from them: *and laid them on beds and couches*; for the better conveniency of carrying them to the apostles, or for their lying upon them until they came by that way: *that at the least, the shadow of Peter passing by, might overshadow some of them*. The Vulgate Latin version adds, *and be delivered from their infirmities*; but this is not supported by any copy, nor is it in any other version. Peter is only mentioned because he was most known, he being the chief speaker and actor. Who these were that fancied there was such a virtue in Peter's shadow, and whether any were cured by it, is not certain. However, it is a vain thing in the Papists to conclude from hence the primacy of Peter, the worshipping of images, and that the Pope is Peter's shadow, and has his power.

Ver. 16. *There came also a multitude out of the cities round about*, &c.] The fame of the apostles' miracles spread in the cities round about Jerusalem; those that were at some distance as well as near, and large numbers of people came from thence, *unto Jerusalem*: where the apostles were: the Syriac version adds, *unto them*, that is, to the apostles; and the Arabic version, *with them*; along with those of the city of Jerusalem, who brought out their infirm persons into the streets to be cured: *bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits*; with devils, by whom they were not only possessed, but greatly harassed and afflicted: sometimes tearing and convulsing them, and sometimes throwing them on the ground, and bruising them; or into fire and water, of which there are some instances in the evangelists: *and they were healed every one*; none went without a cure, which served greatly to confirm the Gospel preached by the apostles, and to irritate and provoke their enemies, as appears by what follows.

Ver. 17. *Then the high-priest rose up*, &c.] Annas, or rather Caiaphas; see the note on chap. iv. 6. he having heard what miracles were wrought by the apostles, and what additions were made to them, rose up from his seat and went out of the sanhedrim, in great haste, and in much wrath and passion: *and all they that were with him*; in council, that were of his kindred or his party, as John and Alexander, and others, chap. iv. 6. *which is the sect of the Sadducees*; who denied the resurrection of the dead; which doctrine the apostles preached; and this made the high-priest and his party very uneasy; whence it seems that the then high-priest was a Sadducee, and also the sanhedrim at that time, and which was sometimes the case. Great care indeed was taken of an high-priest, that he should not be a Sadducee; on the eve of the day of atonement they always swore the high-priest, lest he should be a Sadducee, that he would make no innovation in what was ordered him; and particularly that he would not put the incense upon the fire without, and then carry it in a censor into the most holy place, as the Sadducees understood [k], Lev. xvi. 3. But notwithstanding all their care, sometimes they had a Sadducee for an high-priest; we read of one John, an high-priest, who ministered in that office fourscore years, and at last became a Sadducee [l]. And sometimes a sanhedrim consisted only of Sadducees: hence we read of בית דין של צדוקי, *a sanhedrim of Sadducees* [m]; and such an one was this; and therefore it is not to be wondered at what follows, *and they were filled with indignation*; or *zeal*, for Sadducism; and which was a blind zeal, and not according to knowledge: or *with envy* at the apostles for the miracles done by them, and because of the success that attended them; fearing lest, should they go on at this rate, their religion and authority would come to nothing. Sadducism now seemed greatly to prevail among men in power; and the Jews say [n], "the son of David will not come until "the whole government is turned to the opinion of "the Sadducees."

Ver. 18. *And laid their hands on the apostles*, &c.] That is, laid hold on them, and took them, and carried them away; at least their servants did so, by their orders: *and put them in the common prison*; where malefactors were put; and this both for greater security, and for greater disgrace.

Ver. 19. *But the angel of the Lord*, &c.] Or *of God*, as the Arabic and Ethiopic versions read, whether Michael, as some have thought, or Gabriel, or what particular angel, is not material to know. However, it was a good angel, an elect angel, one of those ministering spirits sent by God to minister to the heirs of promise; one of those angels that excel in strength, as appears by what he did: for he *by night opened the prison-doors*: where the apostles were put, and which had more doors than one, and these strong and close shut, and guarded by keepers; but were easily opened by the angel. It was very likely at, or towards the evening, when the apostles were taken, and therefore they were committed to prison, there to lie all night, till next morning, when the sanhedrim would meet together to consult what to do with them: *and brought them forth*: out of the prison, leading them out at the doors he had opened for them: *and said*: the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions add, *to them*: that is, to the apostles, as follows.

[k] Misna Yoma, c. 1. sect. 5. Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.
[l] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 29. 1. Juchasin, fol. 16. 2.
[m] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 52. 2.
[n] Ib. fol. 97. 1.

Ver. 20. *Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people*, &c.] They were not delivered out of prison, in order to go and secure themselves from danger; but to *go* about the work they were called to, to preach the Gospel *in the temple*, the place of worship; and a proper place to meet with persons to preach to, being a public place, whither the Jews always resorted; and there they were to *stand*, and continue with courage and intrepidity, not fearing the reproach and wrath of men, seeing they had both Christ and truth on their side; and there declare it *to the people*, the common people, the multitude, even all that came to hear: the Gospel is to be preached to all; the spirit of God makes it effectual to some, and others are rendered inexcusable: the substance of what they were to speak follows, *all the words of this life*: all the doctrines of the Gospel; none of them are to be dropped or concealed, but to be spoken out, fully, freely, and faithfully, with all boldness and constancy; though they cannot be comprehended by reason, and are rejected by learned men, and the majority of the people; though charged with novelty and licentiousness, and attended with reproach and persecution: and these may be called, *the words of life*, even of eternal life, as in John vi. 68. because they shew the nature of it, and point out the way unto it; not by the law, and obedience to that, but by Christ and his righteousness; and are the means of quickening dead sinners, of reviving drooping saints, and of nourishing them up unto eternal life: and also the words of *this* life; not of this present frail, mortal, and sinful life; but of life by Christ, which is begun to be enjoyed now, and will be perfectly enjoyed hereafter: and particularly the doctrine of the resurrection unto life may be intended; in opposition to the Sadducees, who denied it, and were the men that, being filled with indignation against them for preaching it, had seized them, and put them into prison; and being now delivered from prison, they are bid to go and preach this same doctrine again, in the most public manner: though some think there is an hypallage in the words; and so the Syriac version renders them, *all these words of life*; and the Ethiopic version, *this word of life*; meaning the Gospel, and the doctrines of it, they had in commission to preach, and for which they were reproached and persecuted.

Ver. 21. *And when they heard* that, &c.] Or *his word*, as the Arabic version supplies; that is, the word of the angel, the orders enjoined them by him, to go to the temple, and there preach the Gospel; this clause is left out in the Syriac version: *they entered into the temple early in the morning*; they were obedient to the command of the angel, believing him to be a messenger of God, who declared his will, which they readily complied with, and were indeed eager of doing it; and therefore early in the morning, as soon as ever the temple-doors were opened, and there were any people got together, they went in: *and taught*; as the Ethiopic version adds, *the people, this word of life*: the doctrine or doctrines of the Gospel which the angel had bid them teach: *but the high-priest came, and they that were with him*: as before, to the place where the sanhedrim used to meet; either the chamber Gazith, or the shops, or some other place in Jerusalem; see the note on ch. iv. 15. *and called the council together*: the sanhedrim, consisting of seventy-one, which usually met at the time of the morning daily sacrifice; perhaps on this occasion they might be called together sooner, and every one of them summoned to attend; for otherwise it was not necessary that every particular member should be present, but when there was any business of importance which required it, they were all gathered together[o]: *and all the senate of the children of Israel*; or *the elders*, as the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions read, the rest of the elders of the city, besides those of the great sanhedrim. Dr. Lightfoot thinks, that the two other sanhedrim, or courts of judicature in Jerusalem, which consisted of twenty-three persons apiece, are designed; and who, as he rightly observes from Maimonides[p], sat the one in the gate of the court, the other in the gate of the mountain of the house; so that all the courts in Jerusalem were called together at this time; and if they all met, they made up a hundred and seventeen men: *and sent to the prison to have them brought*; that is, *the apostles*, as the Syriac version reads. The sense is, that the high-priest, and those that were with him at the same time that they convened all the courts of judicature in Jerusalem together, sent their officers to the prison, to fetch the apostles; or else the sanhedrim, and senate of Israel being met, they ordered their officers to go to the common jail, and bring the apostles before them, to be examined, tried, and judged by them.

Ver. 22. *But when the officers came*, &c.] The Arabic version adds, *to it*; that is, to the prison; *and found them not in the prison*. The Vulgate Latin version reads, *the prison being opened they found them not*; when they came to the prison, they opened the doors of it, or the keepers for them; for though the angel had opened them for the apostles, yet he shut them again, as he brought them out; for these men found the doors shut, as the following verse shews, and who upon opening them and searching the prison, for the apostles, could find none of them in it; wherefore *they returned*; the Arabic version reads, *to them*; to the sanhedrim: *and told*; that is, *them*, as both the Arabic and Ethiopic versions read.

Ver. 23. *Saying, the prison truly found we shut with all safety*, &c.] Locked, barred and bolted; *and the keepers standing without before the doors*; both inner and outer in their proper places, diligently discharging their office: *but when we had opened we found no man within*; that is, none of the apostles, for there might be other prisoners in it, who were not released by this means.

Ver. 24. *Now when the high-priest*, &c.] Or *the priests*, as it is read in most copies; the Complutensian edition reads, *the high-priest*; and he is certainly designed, since he is distinguished from the chief priests after mentioned: the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, leave out this word, as does also the Alexandrian copy: *and the captain of the temple*; the same versions read in the plural number; see the notes on Luke xxii. 4, 52. and Acts iv. 1. *and the chief priests heard these things*; which the officers related, that the prison-doors were shut and sure, and the keepers upon

[o] Maimon. Hilchot Sanhedrin, c. 2. sect. 1, 2.

[p] Maimon. Hilchot Sanhedrin, c. 1. sect. 2.

their watch, and yet the apostles gone: *they doubted of them, whereunto this would grow;* they did not doubt of the truth of the things their officers told them, but they were amazed at them, and hesitated in their minds about them, and were anxiously thoughtful; *what this would, or should be,* or *how this should be done:* that the prison-doors should be shut, and yet the prisoners gone; they were in suspense and anxiety of mind, what to impute it to; whether to a divine and supernatural power, or to magic art; and were uneasy in their minds what would be the issue of so strange and surprising an event.

Ver. 25. *Then came one and told them, saying,* &c.] Who this man was, is of no consequence to know; it can hardly be thought that he was one of the number of the disciples, or a member of the church, or a professor of the Christian religion; but rather an enemy, and one that sought his own interest, and to obtain the favour and affection of the chief priests and elders, and therefore very officiously came to them, and reported as follows: *behold, the men whom ye put in prison,* last night, *are standing in the temple:* openly and publicly, and without fear; *and teaching the people:* in the name of Jesus, which the sanhedrim had forbid them to do.

Ver. 26. *Then went the captain with the officers,* &c.] That is, the captain of the temple, who had the command of it; he went thither attended with the officers and servants of the chief priests, the same that had been sent to the prison, to fetch the apostles: *and brought them without violence;* they did not lay hold upon them, and drag them away in a violent manner; but gave them good words, and allured them, and entreated them to go along with them, and perhaps promised them, that no hurt should come to them, and that they should have full liberty to speak for themselves; the Ethiopic version renders it, *they brought them, behaving themselves mildly towards them:* they used no forcible, but gentle methods; they did not seize them in a violent way, and bind them, and carry them away by force: *for they feared the people;* who had them in great esteem, because of the miracles done by them, and the benefit they received from them, both for their souls and bodies: *lest they should have been stoned;* by the populace, who had they used them in a severe and cruel manner, would have risen upon them, and stoned them to death; the Ethiopic version renders it, *because they feared the people, they did not stone them;* as if the captain of the temple, and the officers would have stoned the apostles, but that they were afraid of the people.

Ver. 27. *And when they had brought them,* &c.] From the temple, to the place where the sanhedrim sat, which, by this, seems to have been not in the room Gazith, nor in the shops, which were both in the temple, but in some part of the city of Jerusalem: *they set them before the council;* whereby was fulfilled what Christ had foretold, Matt. x. 17. *they will deliver you up to the councils;* they placed them before the whole sanhedrim; in the midst of it, as in ch. iv. 7. see the note there; and as the Ethiopic version here reads: *and the high-priest asked them;* though he was not president of the council, but Gamaliel, after mentioned; yet being in so high an office, and a principal member of the council, took upon him the examination of the apostles.

Ver. 28. *Saying, did not we straitly command you,* &c.] Or give you strict orders, with severe threatenings, *that you should not teach in this name?* the Ethiopic version reads, *in the name of Jesus;* which is what is meant, but was not expressed by the sanhedrim; see ch. iv. 17. *and behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine;* they disregarded the council, and its orders, its commands and threatenings, and preached the doctrines of the Gospel; and particularly that concerning the resurrection of Christ, and through him the resurrection of all the dead; and with such success, that great part of the inhabitants of Jerusalem received it; at least there were great numbers in all parts of the city which attended to it, and embraced it: and this they represent as a novel doctrine, devised by the apostles, and peculiarly theirs; and which Moses, and the prophets, were strangers to: *and intend to bring this man's blood upon us;* by charging us with the murder of him, and representing us as guilty of shedding innocent blood, and so stirring up the people, and the Romans against us, to take vengeance on us for it: this, as if they should say, seems to be the intention and design of your ministry, particularly in asserting, that Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified, is now risen from the dead, and was a holy, innocent, and righteous person, as his resurrection shews; and therefore, as we have been guilty in shedding his blood, the punishment of it will, one day or other, be inflicted on us; as it accordingly was, and as they themselves imprecated in Matt. xxvii. 25. It is to be observed, that they don't mention the name of Jesus, only by way of contempt, call him *this man,* as it is usual with the Jews to do, when they speak of him. So a commentator[q] on Gen. xxvii. 39. says of some, "they believed in a man "whom they set up for God; and Rome believed, in "the days of Constantine, who renewed all that religion, and put upon his banner the form האיש ההוא, "*of that man:*" and so another of their writers[r] uses the phrase several times in a few words. Judah ben Tabai fled to Alexandria, "that they might not make "him president, and in the way, with one disciple; "as it happened to Joshua ben Perachiah, with אותו "האיש, *that man:* and ye may receive it for a truth, "that *that man* was his disciple——and the truth is, "that *that man* was born in the fourth year of the "kingdom of Jannai the Second." So an heretic is said to be one that confesses *that man;* and heretics are the disciples of *that man,* who turned to evil the words of the living God[s]. Thus blasphemously and contemptuously do they speak of Christ.

Ver. 29. *Then Peter, and the* other *apostles, answered and said,* &c.] Peter began, as the mouth of the apostles, being the eldest man, and very bold and zealous; and the rest followed, or joined, with him in what he said: *we ought to obey God rather than men;* this is said in answer to the charge of disobedience to the orders and commands of the council: men, civil magistrates, and ecclesiastical rulers, are to be obeyed in things which are not repugnant to the will

q Aben Ezra, Vid. ib. in Dan. xi. 14.

r Juchasin, fol. 16. 2.

s Migdal Oz & Hagehot Maimoniot. in Maimon. Teshuba, c. 3. sect. 7.

of God; but in things that are, God is to be obeyed, and not men. God had commanded by an angel, that the apostles should go to the temple, and there preach the doctrines of the Gospel; the sanhedrim had forbid them to speak and teach in the name of Christ: who were now to be obeyed? God, and not men: from whence it appears that the apostles were to be justified in disregarding the council, and neglecting its orders; and which is no ways contrary to that obedience and submission, that is to be yielded to those that are in authority, in things civil and lawful.

Ver. 30. *The God of our fathers raised up Jesus,* &c.] Not from the dead, though this was true; but called him to the work and office of a Saviour, invested him with that office, and sent him to perform that work; so that this refers rather to the incarnation of Christ, in consequence of the ancient council and covenant of grace: and this the apostles attribute to God the father, under the character of *the God of our fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,* as in ch. iii. 13, to shew that they did not bring in and worship any strange God: nor introduce any novel doctrine; or speak of any other Saviour or Redeemer, than he whom the God of their fathers had appointed, and who was made known to them, whom they looked for and believed in, and were justified and saved by: *whom ye slew and hanged on a tree;* this is said in defence of themselves, being charged that they intended to bring this man's blood upon them; they therefore insist upon it that they had slain Jesus whom God raised up, inasmuch as they had condemned him to death in their sanhedrim, and had urged and importuned Pilate to crucify him, and had imprecated his blood upon them and on their children; and were not content to put him to any kind of death, but insisted on his being crucified, or hanged on a tree; that is, stretched out upon the cross, which was both a painful and shameful death, to which they were manifestly accessary, and therefore justly charged with it.

Ver. 31. *Him hath God exalted with his right hand,* &c.] Not at his right hand, though he is exalted to it, and is set down at it, but with, or by his right hand; that is, by his power: for being by him raised from the dead, he was exalted to the highest heavens, and placed in human nature at the right hand of God, on the same throne with him, crowned with glory and honour; and having a name above every name, and all power and authority both in heaven and in earth given him, to be *a Prince and a Saviour:* being made and declared both Lord and Christ, Lord of lords, and Prince of the kings of the earth, the Prince of life and peace, the Head of the church, and over all things for the sake of it, and the Saviour of his body the church, of all the elect of God; not with a temporal, but a spiritual and eternal salvation, of which he is become the author by his obedience, sufferings, and death; and is an able and willing, a suitable and an only Saviour: and some of the branches of his power and grace are *for to give repentance to Israel;* to the Israel whom God has chosen for himself, and Christ has redeemed by his blood, and whom the spirit calls by his grace: these being sinners, as well as others, stand in need of repentance; and whereas this is not in any man's power, but is the free gift of God's grace; for though he should give men time and space to repent, and afford them the means of it, yet if he does not give them grace to repent, they never will, such is the hardness of man's heart; Christ is appointed to give this grace to the chosen ones, which he does by sending his spirit to convince of sin, and to take away the stony heart, and give an heart of flesh: *and forgiveness of sins;* free and full forgiveness of all sins; which being obtained by his blood, is applied by his spirit to all that truly repent of them; for these two always go together; where he gives the one, he also gives the other: the manifestations and applications of pardoning grace are only made to repenting sinners; and there are none that truly, and in an evangelical way, repent of sin, but who have some views, or, at least, hopes of pardoning grace; and none ever mourn more over sin, than those that see it in the glass of forgiving love.

Ver. 32. *And we are his witnesses of these things,* &c.] Of the incarnation of Christ, of his crucifixion and death, of his resurrection from the dead, of his exaltation by the right hand of God, and of his offices as a Prince and a Saviour, and of the influences of his grace, in giving repentance and remission of sins to his people; and even to many of the Jews, who had been his crucifiers, and who were now converted under the ministry of the apostles: *and so is also the Holy Ghost;* in his descent upon the apostles, through the miraculous gifts bestowed upon them, and the wonderful works done by them, and the mighty power accompanying their ministry to the conversion of sinners: *whom God hath given to them that obey him;* that hearken to his Gospel, and believe in Christ, even to all private Christians, as well as ministers of the word; if not in his extraordinary gifts, yet in the ordinary measures of his grace.

Ver. 33. *When they heard* that, &c.] This defence of the apostles, in which they still insisted upon it, that they had been the crucifiers of Christ, and yet that he was raised from the dead, and exalted in heaven, and was a spiritual Saviour of men: *they were cut;* to the heart, as if they had been cut asunder with a saw; the Ethiopic version renders it, *they were* angry, and *gnashed with their teeth,* as if a saw was drawn to and fro; they were filled with rage and madness: *and took counsel to slay them;* not in a legal and judicial way, but in a private manner, or by force; stirring up the zealots to rise up against them, and dispatch them at once, as blasphemers and heretics.

Ver. 34. *Then stood there up one in the council,* &c.] Or *in the sanhedrim,* which the high-priest had called together; this phrase is left out in the Syriac version: yet certain it is, that the great council was now assembled, and the disciples were now before them, and this man, who was one of the members of it, stood up in it; for it seems to have been the custom, that though they usually sat, yet when any one had any thing to say, or made a speech, he rose up from his seat. *A Pharisee named Gamaliel;* he is described by his sect of religion, a Pharisee; of which, see the note on Matt. iii. 7. and by his name Gamaliel: he was the son of Rabban Simeon, the son of Hillell the great; which Simeon is, by some, thought to be the same that took Christ into his arms, Luke ii. 25. and this Gamaliel was also the master of the Apostle Paul,

Acts xxii. 3. This was a very ancient name in Israel; the prince of the children of Manasseh, that offered at the dedication of the tabernacle, was of this name, Numb. vii. 54. and perhaps this man might be of the same tribe. He is further described by his profession, *a doctor of law;* he was one of the Misnic doctors, one of the fathers of tradition, that received the oral law from those before him, and handed it down to others; and was the five-and-thirtieth of this sort, as the Jews say [t], from the giving of the law at Mount Sinai; or, as others [u], the thirty-first: *had in reputation among all the people;* and therefore his advice was the more likely to take place, without giving offence, or exposing to danger, seeing he was highly esteemed, not only in the sanhedrim, but among the common people; and that not only because he was a Pharisee, and a very strict one, the glory of that sect, insomuch that it is said [w], that "when he died, the glory of the "law ceased, and purity and pharisaism died;" but because of his years, dignity, and place also; he is called commonly Gamaliel, הזקן, *the elder,* because he lived to a great age [x]. He died eighteen years before the destruction of Jerusalem [y], and was had in veneration to the last. It is said of him [z], that "he or- "dered, before his death, that they should carry him "to his grave in linen; for before this time they used "to carry out the dead in silk; and this was more "grievous to his relations than his death itself;" because they thought he was not interred honourably enough. And it is also reported, that Onkelos, the proselyte, at his death, burnt as much for him in goods and spices, as came to seventy Tyrian pounds [a]. He was also commonly called by the name of Rabban, which was a more honourable title than that of Rabbi or Rab; and his father Simeon was the first that had it [b]; and he was now president of the sanhedrim: and hence he used that authority which is expressed in the next words, *and commanded to put the apostles forth a little space;* he ordered the apostles to be put out of the sanhedrim for a little while, that they might not hear what he had to say, and take encouragement from it; and that he might more freely speak his mind without giving them any countenance. The Alexandrian copy reads, *the men,* instead of *the apostles;* and so the Vulgate Latin version.

Ver. 35. *And said unto them, ye men of Israel,* &c.] This he said after the apostles were put out, when the council was by themselves; and he addressed them as *men of Israel;* not as distinct from the priests and Levites in the council, but because they were all of the stock of Israel; for this council did not consist of Israelites only, as distinct from priests and Levites, as appears from ver. 21. 27. A sanhedrim commonly consisted of each of these; though if only of Israelites it was a lawful one. Maimonides says [c], "they did "not use to appoint any in the sanhedrim, but priests, "Levites, and Israelites, that were genealogized and "fit to be married into the priesthood——and that it "was a command, that in the great sanhedrim there "should be priests and Levites; as it is said, *thou "shalt go to the priests and Levites;* but if they are "not found, if they are all Israelites, lo, this is lawful," or a proper sanhedrim. His speech to them follows; *take heed to yourselves;* consider well, don't act a rash and precipitant part; don't give way to passion and wrath, and hastily lay hands on these men, and destroy them; lest ye bring yourselves into disgrace and danger, and bring upon yourselves the ill-will and resentment of men, and the wrath of God: take time to consider of the matter, and deliberately consult *what ye intend to do as touching these men;* what punishment to inflict upon them, whether imprisonment, scourging, or death; do nothing rashly.

Ver. 36. *For before these days rose up Theudas,* &c.] There is one of this name Josephus [d] speaks of, who set up for a prophet, and drew a large number of people after him; pretending, that if they would follow him to the river Jordan, and take their goods along with them, he would but give the word, and the waters would divide and leave them passage to go over dry-foot; but Cuspius Fadus, who then had the administration of Judea, sent out some troops of horse, before they were aware, and killed many of them, and took divers others, and brought them in triumph to Jerusalem, with the head of Theudas. This account agrees with this instance of Gamaliel, only differs in chronology; since, according to Gamaliel's account, this case of Theudas was some time ago, and must have been before now, or he could not have mentioned it; whereas the story Josephus relates, as being in the times of Cuspius Fadus, was several years after this. Some think Josephus is mistaken in his chronology, and then all is right. Others, that another Theudas is intended; who, as Origen says [e], was before the birth of Christ, since he was before Judas of Galilee, who rose up in the days of the taxing, at which time Christ was born: and the phrase, *before these days,* seems to design a good while ago. This name was in use among the Jews, and is either the same with תודה, *Thuda,* or *Thoda,* so the Syriac version reads; one of the disciples of Christ was so called by the Jews [f], whose name was Thaddeus: or with תודוס, *Thudus:* one of this name, said [g] to be a man of Rome, is frequently mentioned in the Talmud; and another also that was a physician [h]; but both different from this *Theodas.* The Vulgate Latin and Arabic versions read, Theodas; and some take it to be a contraction of Theodotus, Theodorus, or Theodosius. Just as Theucharis is put for Theocharis, and Theudosia for Theodosia: but it seems rather to be an Hebrew name; and so Jerom [i] took it to be, who renders it *praise:* but who the man was is not certain; however, he rose up, as Gamaliel

[t] Ganz Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 25. 2.
[u] Juchasin, fol. 20. 1.
[w] Misn. Sota, c. 9. sect. 15.
[x] Juchasin, fol. 53. 1.
[y] Ganz ut supra.
[z] Ib.
[a] T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 11. 1.
[b] Ganz. ib. col. 1.
[c] Hilchot Sanhedrin, c. 2. sect. 1. 2.

[d] Antiqu. l. 20. c. 4. sect. 1. Vid. Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. 2. c. 11.
[e] Contr. Cels. l. 1. p. 44.
[f] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 43. 1.
[g] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 19. 1. & Pesachim, fol. 53. 1, 2. & Betsa, fol. 23. 1. & T. Hieros. Pesachim. fol. 34. 1. & Yom Tob. fol. 61. 3. & Juchasin, fol. 105. 2.
[h] T. Bab. Nazir, fol. 52. 1. & Sanhedrin, fol. 33. 1. & 93. 1. & Becorot, fol. 28. 2.
[i] De Nominibus Hebraicis, fol. 106. D.

says, and made an insurrection, *boasting himself to be some body*, or *some great one*, as the Alexandrian copy, and three of Beza's copies read, and two of Stephens's, and the Complutensian edition; and as read also the Syriac and Arabic versions; just as Simon Magus did afterwards, ch. viii. 9. and so Josephus's Theudas gave out, that he was a prophet, and promised great things to the people, as to divide the waters of Jordan for them, by a word speaking, and lead them through it as on dry land: *to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves:* who believing what he said, put themselves under his command, and set him at the head of them: *who was slain:* so Josephus's Theudas had his head cut off by the troops of Cuspius Fadus, the Roman governor: *and as many as obeyed him were scattered and brought to nought;* some killed, and others taken; and so the faction was quelled, and came to nothing. This instance Gamaliel produces, to shew that impostors and seditious persons, such as the apostles were thought to be, seldom succeeded, but generally failed in their attempts, and were blasted; and with the same view he mentions the following one.

Ver. 37. *After this man rose up, Judas of Galilee*, &c.] Of whom Josephus thus says[k]: "there was a man of "Galilee, by name Judas, who led his countrymen "into rebellion, declaring it an evil, should they suffer "tribute to be paid to the Romans, and introduce "mortal rulers after God." And not unlike this is what another Jewish writer says[l] of Judas the Galilean, and his party: "these were the cause of the Jews "rebelling against the Romans, for they said, it was "not fit that any should rule over men but God alone; "and that no one should be called Lord, but the "blessed God." And this insurrection was *in the days of the taxing;* which was made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria; and the reason of it was, because he and his party would not pay that tax, for the reasons suggested in the above citations: and this is what Josephus refers to, when he says[m], "Cyrenius came "to Syria, sent from Cæsar as judge of the nation, "and appraiser of their estates; upon which Judas, "the Gaulonite, (the same with Judas of Galilee,) re-"belled, and Saddochus with him; saying, that this "appraisment brought nothing else but servitude upon "them; and therefore exhorted the nation to vindicate "their liberty." And his exhortations and arguments prevailed with the people: wherefore it follows here, *and drew away much people after him;* perhaps a much larger number than Theudas did, since they are not expressly mentioned how many they were: *he also perished;* being killed in the insurrection, or taken and put to death by the Romans. So Origen says[n], that he was punished, and his doctrine was destroyed, and remained only among a few contemptible persons: *and all, even as many as obeyed him, were dispersed;* were forced to fly, some one way, and some another, and could make nothing of it: and as this instance was after the other before mentioned; and was so early as under the government of Cyrenius, and at the time of the taxing under him; it shews that Theudas could not be the Theudas of Josephus, unless the words should be rendered as some choose to do, *besides this man rose up Judas*, &c. And others observe, that *after him*, is the same as *before him;* and which, however, at first hearing, may seem very absurd, yet is justified by instances, as being a very proper way of speaking, seeing, when an account proceeds from the last as nearest, the first must be last, and the last first. Some, in order to reconcile this passage, think, that there is a transposition in the words of Luke, and that they should be read thus, *for before those days rose up Judas of Galilee*, &c. and then, *after this man rose up Theudas*, &c. so making Judas of Galilee more ancient than Theudas, as he must be, if he is the same Theudas Josephus speaks of: but still it is a difficulty how he could be the same, when that fact of his, the above historian speaks of, was seven, or eight, or ten, and, as some say, twelve years after this speech of Gamaliel's. To remove this, 'tis proposed, that what is said concerning Theudas is to be put into a parenthesis, and to be considered not as the words of Gamaliel saying them in the sanhedrim, but as the words of Luke the historian, who wrote after this fact was done; and because of the agreement of it with that of Judas, mentioned by Gamaliel, he inserts it here, and joins it with it[o]. And yet, after all, it looks as if it was another Theudas that is here spoken of, who was before Judas; and that he that Josephus speaks of, might be, as Dr. Lightfoot conjectures, one of his posterity, who was of the same name, and trod in his steps, and was guilty of sedition as his ancestor was, and as the sons of Judas were, mentioned by the same historian in the same place.

Ver. 38. *And now I say unto you*, &c.] This is the sum of my advice upon the observation of these and other instances: *refrain from these men, and let them alone;* keep your hands off of them, don't attempt to take away their lives, but dismiss them quietly, nor go about to hinder them, in what they are concerned: *for if this counsel, or this work be of men;* if the doctrine these men preach is an human device; or this business they are engaged in is only an human affair, projected by men, and carried on upon selfish principles, and worldly views, seeking only themselves, and their secular interests, and not the glory of God: *it will come to nought;* as did the designs of Theudas and Judas.

Ver. 39. *But if it be of God*, &c.] If it is according to the counsel of his will; if it is a scheme of his forming, and a work to which he has called these men, and they proceed in it on good principles, and with a view to the honour and glory of God: *ye cannot overthrow it:* it will proceed and get ground, and stand, maugre all the opposition of hell and earth; therefore do nothing to them, or hinder them from going on. Some copies read, *ye cannot overthrow them;* and add, *neither you, nor kings, nor tyrants: wherefore refrain from these men;* so Beza's Cambridge copy. *Lest haply ye be found even to fight against God;* which to do is downright madness, and which no man in his senses can expect to succeed in. There are some sayings of the Jewish doctors which seem to agree with these

[k] De Bello Jud. l. 2. c. 8. sect. 1.
[l] Juchasin, fol. 139. 1.
[m] Antiqu. l. 18. c. 1. sect. 1. Vid. l. 20. c. 4. sect. 2.
[n] L. 1. contr. Cels. p. 44.
[o] Vid. Vales. Not. in Eusebi. Eccl. Hist. l. 2. c. 11. & Capelli Spicileg. in loc.

reasonings of Gamaliel[p]. "Says R. Jochanan the shoe-" maker, every congregation, which is for the name of "heaven (or God) at length shall be established, but "that which is not for the glory of God shall not be "established in the end." Which one of the commentators[q] interprets in words still nearer to Gamaliel's language, thus: "it shall be that that counsel which "is for God shall stand and prosper, but that which is "not for God shall cease." And in another place it is said[r], "all contention (or dispute) which is for God, "at length shall be established, but that which is not "for God shall not in the end be established: what is "contention that is for God? the contention of Hillell "and Shammai, (two famous doctors among the Jews,) "but that which is not for God is the contention "of Korah, and his whole company." Some have thought from this advice of Gamaliel, that he was a Christian, or greatly inclined to Christianity; but when it is considered what respect was shewn him at his death by the Jews, before observed on ver. 34. it will appear that he died a Pharisee; and especially it cannot be thought he had any favourable sentiments of the Christians, since a little before his death he ordered a prayer to be made against them. Maimonides says[s], that "in the days of Rabban Gamaliel, the Epicureans "(so the Amsterdam edition reads, but former editions "read מינים, *heretics*, by whom are meant Chris-"tians) increased in Israel; and they distressed the "Israelites, and seduced them to turn aside from God; "and when he saw that this was greater than all the "necessities of the children of men, he stood up, and "his council or sanhedrim, and composed another "prayer, in which there was a request to God to de-"stroy the Epicureans," or heretics, meaning the Christians: and though this prayer is sometimes ascribed to Samuel the little, yet it was composed by him at the hint and instigation of Gamaliel; for so it is said[t], R. Gamaliel said to the wise men, "is there no man "that knows how to compose a prayer for the Sad-"ducees? (R. Asher reads *heretics*.) Samuel the little "stood up and composed one." And it is also said[u], that "Samuel the little composed, ברכת מינין, *the* "*prayer for the heretics*, before, or in the presence of "Gamaliel the elder." He made it when he was present, assisting, dictating, directing, and approving. The prayer was this[w], "let there be no hope for apos-"tates, and may all heretics perish in a moment, and "all the enemies of thy people be quickly cut off: root "out the kingdom of pride, and break, destroy, and "subdue them in haste in our days." In some forms 'tis added, "blessed art thou, O Lord, that breakest "the wicked in pieces, and humblest the proud." Upon the whole, Gamaliel does not seem to have been a Christian, or to have favoured the Christian religion; but he was, as he is said, ver. 34. to be, a Pharisee: and this council, or sanhedrim, were, for the greater part of them, Sadducees, as seems from ver. 17. who, as the Jews say, were wicked and base men, men of very ill manners, whereas the Pharisees were רחמנים, *merciful men*[x]; and such an one was Gamaliel: he was a religious man in his way; a man of humanity, a mild and moderate man, that had compassion and pity for his fellow-creatures; and could not give in to any schemes of cruelty and persecution, which the Sadducees were forward to; and upon these principles he acted, and upon these he gave this advice.

Ver. 40. *And to him they agreed,* &c.] They were convinced and persuaded by his reasonings, approved of his advice, and agreed to follow it: *and when they had called the apostles;* into the council again, having sent their servants for them, or ordered them to be brought in: *and beaten* them; or scourged and whipped them with forty stripes save one, whereby was fulfilled what Christ had foretold, Matt. x. 17. *they commanded they should not speak in the name of Jesus;* as they had strictly commanded them before, ch. iv. 18. Perhaps both in this, as well as in bearing the apostles, they did not closely attend to Gamaliel's counsel, who advised them to keep their hands off of them, and not hinder them, but let them alone in what they were about: but this might be thought by them not to their reputation, nor sufficiently asserting their authority, to dismiss them, without saying or doing any thing to them: *and let them go;* from the council to their own company: they released them, and loosed them from their bonds; they set them at liberty, and let them go where they would; and so far they followed Gamaliel's advice.

Ver. 41. *And they departed from the presence of the council,* &c.] Having been threatened and beaten by them: *rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name;* Beza's ancient copy, and others, the Vulgate Latin, and Arabic versions read, *for the name of Jesus;* in which name they were forbid to speak, and for speaking in it they were beaten; the Alexandrian copy, and the Syriac version read, *for the name;* that is, for God, for the glory of God, and in the cause of God; השם, *the name,* is often used in Jewish writings for God: the shame they suffered for him was by being scourged with forty stripes save one; which was reckoned an infamous and ignominious punishment, and which was inflicted on persons guilty of very scandalous crimes[y]: but this gave the innocent minds of the apostles no uneasiness; they accounted it an honour conferred on them to be called to suffering for the sake of God and Christ, and in so good a cause; they did what Christ exhorted them to, Matt. v. 11, 12. which shews they had much of the presence of God, and large measures of grace communicated to them, by which they were supported; and thus cheerfully bore all indignity and reproach, for the name of Christ, which was exceeding dear and precious to them.

Ver. 42. *And daily in the temple, and in every house,* &c.] Every day, with great constancy and assiduity, both publicly and privately; in the temple, the place of public worship, where the Jews resorted on that account; and in each of their private houses, as often as they had opportunity: *they ceased not to teach and*

[p] Pirke Abot, c. 4. sect 11.
[q] Jarchi in ib.
[r] Pirke Abot, c. 5. sect. 17.
[s] Hilchot Tephilla, c. 2. sect. 1.
[t] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 28. 2.
[u] Juchasin, fol. 21. 1. Ganz Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 25. 2.
[w] Apud Buxtorf. Lex. Talmud. col. 2442. & Alting Shilo, l. 4. c. 26. p. 325.
[x] Juchasin, fol. 139. 1.
[y] Misn. Maccot, c. 3. sect. 1—10.

preach Jesus Christ; that he is the son of God, truly and properly God, the only Saviour of sinners: they preached up the dignity of his person, the grace of his incarnation, the obedience of his life, the benefits of his sufferings and death; they preached his resurrection from the dead, and the resurrection of the dead through him; they declared his ascension to heaven, his session at the right hand of God, and intercession for his people; they preached peace and pardon by his blood, atonement of sin by his sacrifice, justification by his righteousness, and complete redemption and salvation by him. And this they did without ceasing, not regarding the orders and threats of the sanhedrim; they waxed bolder and bolder in the ministry of the word, and were more constant and assiduous in it; their reproaches and persecutions increased their zeal for Christ, and his cause.

CHAP. VI.

Ver. 1. *AND in those days, when the number of the disciples were multiplied*, &c.] From an hundred and twenty to three thousand more, from thence to five thousand more, and after that a multitude of men and women were added, and still they were increasing; see ch. i. 15. and ii. 41. and iv. 4. and v. 14. This increase of the disciples agrees with what Maimonides says [z], before observed, that "in the days of Gamaliel, "רבו מינים, *the heretics were multiplied in Israel.*" The word *disciples* was a common name to all Christians, to all that believed in Christ, and was the name they went by, before they were called Christians, ch. xi. 26. *there arose a murmuring of the Grecians*, or *Hellenists, against the Hebrews*; by the Hebrews are meant the Jews that dwelt in Judea, and were the inhabitants of that country, and chiefly of Jerusalem, who spoke the Hebrew, or rather the Syriac language; and by the Grecians, or Hellenists, are meant, not the Greeks that were proselyted to the Jewish religion, though there might be some few among them; but Jews who were born, and had dwelt, in some parts of Greece, and spoke the Greek language, and used the Septuagint version of the Bible; between these two a murmuring arose, a complaint was made by one against the other: so that, as it appears from the instance of Ananias and Sapphira, that this first and pure Gospel church was not free from hypocrites; it is also manifest, that though they were at first so united and harmonious in their affections and judgments, yet they were not always clear of feuds, animosities, and contentions; Satan bestirred himself, and got footing among them, as he commonly does where the Gospel is preached, and there is an increase of it: the reason of this uneasiness was, *because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration*; that is, they had not that distributed which was necessary for them, nor so much as the Hebrew widows; they complained of partiality, as if because the Hebrew widows were the natives of the country, and might be nearly related to many of the community, that therefore they were more regarded and better supplied every day, than their widows were, whose husbands had dwelt in foreign lands, and were not so well known, and had fewer acquaintance and relations; for it seems the ministration or distribution was made every day: and such a practice obtained among the Jews in common, who used to collect every day for the poor, and give it daily to them. Maimonides [a] speaks of it in this manner; "they appoint collectors, who receive *every day*, from every "court, a piece of bread, or any sort of food, or "fruit, or money, from whomsoever that offers freely "for the time; and they divide that which is collected, *in the evening*, among the poor, and they "give to every poor person of it *his daily sustenance*: "and this is called תמחוי, *Tamchui*, or *the alms-dish*." And from hence the apostles might take up this custom, and follow it. The Ethiopic version renders it, *because they saw their widows minister*, or *employed daily*: as if the complaint was, that their widows were too much made use of, and obliged to more frequent and to harder service in taking care of the poor, the sick, and helpless, than the other widows were, who had not their share of labour with them, but lived more at ease. Though others rather think the murmur was, because the Grecian widows were not taken into the number, and employed in taking care of the poor, as the Hebrew widows were; but the sense first given, of not having so good a share in the distribution, seems to be the best.

Ver. 2. *Then the twelve*, &c.] The twelve apostles, as the Syriac version reads; for their number was now complete, Matthias being chosen in the room of Judas: these being informed of the murmur there was between the two sorts of believers, the Hebrew and the Hellenistic Jews, *called the multitude of the disciples unto them*; either the hundred and twenty, the original members of the church, which first formed it, and on whom the Holy Ghost descended on the day of Pentecost; or rather the whole body of the church: for what the apostles had to say concerned them all; and they all had an equal right to chose their officers, that should minister unto them; and when they were convened together, they addressed them after this manner: *and said, it is not reason*: or *it is not pleasing*, neither to God, nor to us; so the Arabic version reads, *this does not please us*; nor could it be pleasing to the church itself: *that we should leave the word of God*; the study of the word, meditation upon it, and preaching it: not that they did relinquish either of these; but they were sometimes obliged to omit them, or not so frequently attend them; the care of the poor taking up more of their time, than the work of the ministry, or preaching of the Gospel would admit of; and therefore thought it not so right and proper, or so acceptable a thing to God and man,

[z] Hilchot Tephilla, c. 2. sect. 1.

[a] Hilchot Mattanot Annayim, c. 9. sect. 2.

that they should in the least neglect a work of so great importance to the souls of men, and cause it to give way to that which only regarded their bodies: *and serve tables;* the tables of the poor, collect for them, inspect into their several cases, and circumstances, and distribute accordingly to them; which required a good deal of time, care, thought, and circumspection, especially in such a church, where the numbers were so large. From hence we learn what is the business of deacons, who were afterwards appointed to take this part of the apostles' work off of their hands, and attend to it; which is to serve tables: the table of the Lord, by providing the bread and wine for it; receiving both from the minister, when blessed, and distributing them to the members; and collecting from them for the poor, and the defraying the charge; and observing what members are missing at the ordinance, whom they are to admonish; and if their admonitions are not regarded, to report it to the church: and they are likewise to serve the minister's table, by taking care that he has a sufficient competency for his support; and it belongs to them to stir up the members of the church to their duty in communicating to him; and what they receive of them, they are to apply to his use: and also, they are to serve the poor's table; to whom they are to distribute of the church's stock, with all impartiality, simplicity, cheerfulness, and sympathy.

Ver. 3. *Wherefore brethren look ye out among you,* &c.] Or *choose out among you,* as the Syriac version adds, and as the Arabic and Ethiopic versions render it; which shews that this sort of officers, deacons, must be members of the church, and of the same church to which they are ordained deacons; and that they must be chosen to that office by the whole community, or by the common suffrages and votes of the people. So the [b] Jews "did not appoint פרנס, (which "may be rendered) *an overseer of the poor,* in a con-"gregation, without consulting the congregation;" which officer seems pretty much to answer to a deacon. *Seven men, of honest report;* why the number *seven* is fixed upon, perhaps no other solid reason is to be given, but that that number was judged sufficient for the care of the poor in that church, and at that time; nor is it obligatory on other churches to have just so many, neither more nor fewer; for such officers are to be chosen as the church requires: perhaps some regard might be had to שבעה טובי העיר, *the seven good men of the* [c] *city* among the Jews, who had great authority in their synagogues, and who had power to sell them, when old and useless; and who seem, according to Maimonides [d], to be the elders of the people. It is necessary that this sort of officers in the church should be men *of honest report;* that have a good testimony both from within the church and without, of their honesty and fidelity; since they are intrusted with the church's stock, and have the care of many devolved upon them: so the collectors of alms among the Jews were to be men ידועים ונאמנים, *known and faithful* [e]; men of known probity and integrity: and, besides this good and honest report they were to have from others, they were also to be men *full of the Holy Ghost, and of wisdom;* they were to be men, not only that had the spirit of God in them, but who were eminent for their rich experiences of grace; and who had superior gifts of the spirit, whereby they were capable both of defending the truth against opposers, and of speaking a word of exhortation to duty, or of comfort under distress, or of reproof to members, as circumstances required; and it may be at this time when the church consisted of some of all nations, as seems from ch. ii. it might be necessary that they should have the extraordinary gifts of the spirit, especially that of speaking with divers tongues, that they might be able to converse with persons of different languages: and *wisdom* is highly requisite in them, that they may be good economists of the church's stock, and dispose of it in the most prudent manner: and conduct themselves agreeably to the different tempers and spirits of men they have to do with, and especially in composing differences among members. *Whom we may appoint over this business;* assign or make over that part of their office to them, which hitherto they had exercised, and install them into it, and invest them with it.

Ver. 4. *But we will give ourselves continually to prayer,* &c.] Both in private for themselves, and the church; and in the houses and families of the saints, with the sick and distressed; and in public, in the temple, or in whatsoever place they met for public worship: *and to the ministry of the word;* the preaching of the Gospel, to which prayer is absolutely prerequisite, and with which it is always to be joined. These two, prayer and preaching, are the principal employment of a Gospel minister, and are what he ought to be concerned in, not only now and then, but what he should give himself up unto wholly, that his profiting might appear; and what he should be continually exercised and employed in: and if parting with that branch of the ministerial function, the care of the secular affairs of the church, and of the poor of it, was necessary in the apostles, that they might be more at leisure to attend to the more important and useful duties of prayer and preaching; it therefore seems necessary that those who are called to labour in the word and doctrine, if possible, should be exempt from all worldly business and employment; that of the ministry being sufficient to engross all a man's time and thoughts.

Ver. 5. *And the saying pleased the whole multitude,* &c.] The speech the apostles made took with them; all things they proposed were universally approved of; the whole body of the church came into it at once unanimously; they all judged it highly reasonable, that the apostles should be eased of the burden in taking care of the poor, and that it should be transferred to some other persons, and they fixed on the following: *and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith, and of the Holy Ghost;* he was a man eminent for his faith in Christ, and his faithfulness to him, and in every thing he was concerned, and for his courage and boldness in the cause of Christ, and for other gifts and graces of the spirit, with which he was filled; he was,

[b] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 55. 1.
[c] T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 26. 2. & 27. 1.
[d] In Misn. Megilla, c. 3. sect. 2.
[e] Maimon. Hilchot Mattanot Anayim, c. 9. sect. 1.

it is very likely, the most eminent person of all the seven, and is therefore named first; he is afterwards taken notice of, and was the first that suffered martyrdom for Christ, with which he was crowned, answerable to his name, which signifies a crown: *and Philip*; who was also an evangelist, and had four daughters that prophesied; and perhaps is the same that went down to Samaria, and preached Christ there with great success, and after that baptized the Ethiopian eunuch; *and Prochorus*; of this and the rest, no other mention is made in the sacred writings. He is said by some to be a nephew of Stephen's, and first bishop of Nicomedia; but these are things not certain; and as for the life of the Apostle John, said to be written by him, it is a spurious and fabulous piece. *And Nicanor*; of this man we have no other certain account; for that he suffered martyrdom with *Stephen* is not to be depended on. It is a Grecian name; there is one of this name who was a general in Demetrius's army, who was sent by him against the Jews, 1 Maccab. vii. 26. and there was a gate of the temple, which was called the gate of Nicanor: *and Timon*; he is said to be afterwards bishop of Beræa; though others make him bishop of Bostra; but with what truth cannot be asserted: *and Parmenas*; of him no other account is given, than in the Roman martyrology, which is not to be depended upon, that he suffered martyrdom under Trajan: *and Nicolas, a proselyte of Antioch*; who was first a Greek or Gentile, and then became a Jew, a proselyte of righteousness, and then a Christian, and now made a deacon. Some think, that from this man sprung the sect of the Nicolaitanes, spoken of in the Revelations; though others think, that that wicked set of men only covered themselves with his name, or that they abused some words of his, and perverted the right meaning of them; though was it certain he did turn out a wicked man, it is not to be wondered at, that since there was a devil among the twelve apostles, there should be a hypocrite and a vicious man among the first seven deacons. It is observable, that the names of all these deacons are Greek names; from whence, it seems, that they were of the Grecian or Hellenistic Jews; so that the church thought fit to chose men out of that part of them which made the complaint, in order to make them easy; which is an instance of prudence and condescension, and shews of what excellent spirits they were of.

Ver. 6. *Whom they set before the apostles*, &c.] They did not barely nominate and propose them to them, but they brought them into their presence, and placed them before them, as the persons whom they had chosen, in order to be ordained by them. *And when they had prayed*: for these seven men set before them, that they might appear to be richly qualified for this office, and might honourably and faithfully discharge it, to the peace of themselves, the advantage of the church, and the glory of God: *they laid* their *hands on them*; that is, they ordained them, they installed them into their office, and invested them with it, using the rite or ceremony of laying on of hands, which was used by the apostles for the conferring of gifts, and in benedictions, and at the ordination of officers; and seems to be borrowed from the Jews, who used it at the creation of doctors among them, and at the promotion of them to that dignity; and which they call סמיכה, or ordination by imposition of hands; though that rite was not looked upon to be essentially necessary: for so they say [f], "ordination or promotion to doctorship is not necessarily done, ביד, *by the hand*, as Moses did to Joshua, "but even בדיבור, *by word* only; it was enough to "say, I ordain thee, or be thou ordained or promoted."

Ver. 7. *And the word of God increased*, &c.] This stratagem of Satan did not succeed to divide the church, but issued in the better decorum and discipline of it, and in the spread and success of the Gospel; God thus making all things to work together for good; *and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly*; where Christ was crucified, the apostles were scourged, and treated with the utmost contempt, the sanhedrim and rulers of the Jews dwelt, who used all their power and craft to crush the Gospel, and hinder the progress of it, but in vain, there the word increased; which it may be said to do, when saints are edified by it, and sinners are converted under it; and in this last sense it is chiefly to be understood here: the instances of conversion were very numerous; how large must this church now be! *and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith*; that is, to the Gospel, which contains things to be believed, articles of faith; proposes Christ the great object of faith; and is the means of producing faith, and which is of no profit, unless it is mixed with faith: and to obey this is cordially to embrace the doctrines of the Gospel, and cheerfully to submit to the ordinances of it. And that the priests, and a large number of them, should do this, is very marvellous; since they were the most inveterate enemies of the Gospel, and persecutors of the saints; but what is it that efficacious grace cannot do? the Syriac version instead of *priests* reads *Jews*, but unsupported by any copy.

Ver. 8. *And Stephen, full of faith and power*, &c.] The historian proceeds to give a narrative of Stephen particularly, the first of the seven deacons; of his faith and miracles, of his elocution and wisdom, of his courage and intrepidity, of his constancy, and of his suffering martyrdom. He is said to be *full of faith*, as before, in ver. 5. the Alexandrian copy, and four of Beza's copies read, *full of grace*; and so do the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions; the Ethiopic version reads, *full of the grace of God*: he had an uncommon share of it; it was exceeding abundant in him; he had a sufficiency of it for the service and sufferings he was called to: and he was full of *power* to preach the Gospel, and teach it the people, which he did with authority; to defend it, and oppose the adversaries of it; to bear reproach and indignities for it, and even death itself; and to do miraculous works for the confirmation of it, as follows: *did great wonders and miracles among the people*: openly before them, such as speaking with divers tongues, healing diseases, casting out devils, *&c.*

Ver. 9. *Then there arose certain of the synagogue*, &c.] Being filled with indignation at the doctrine of Stephen, and with envy at his miracles, they rose up in great wrath, and warmly opposed him: and they be-

[f] Juchasin, fol. 66. 1.

longed to that synagogue *which is called* the synagogue *of the libertines;* or free men: it is a Roman name, and signifies the sons of free men; and these were either the sons of such Jews, who of servants, or slaves, had been made משוחררים, *free men;* or rather such Jews whose parents were born free, or had obtained their freedom at Rome, or in some free city under the Roman government, as Paul at Tarsus; since it is not so easy to account for it, that there should be a peculiar synagogue for the former, whereas there might be for the latter, seeing they could not speak the language of the native Jews. The Arabic version reads, *of the Corinthians*, as if they were the Jews from Corinth: and some have thought the word *Libertines* to be the name of a nation or people, as well as the names that follow; and some think it designs the Lybians or Lybistines in Africa; but neither of these is likely: *and Cyrenians:* natives of the city or country of Cyrene, from whence were many Jews; see Acts ii. 10. and xi. 20. such as Simon the Cyrenian, the father of Alexander, and Rufus, who carried the cross of Christ after him, Mark xv. 21. these, with those that follow, either belonged to the same synagogue with the Libertines, or rather they severally had distinct synagogues: and this will not seem strange, when it is said[g], that there were in Jerusalem four hundred and eighty synagogues; though it is elsewhere said[h] four hundred and sixty: *and Alexandrians;* for that there were a peculiar synagogue of these at Jerusalem is certain; for there is express mention made of it in Jewish writings[i]. "It happened "to R. Eleazar bar Tzadok, that he bought בית הכנסת "של אלכסנדריים, *the synagogue of the Alexandrians*, "which was at Jerusalem, and he did with it whatever "he pleased." And that they should have a synagogue at Jerusalem need not be wondered at, when there was such an intercourse and correspondence between Jerusalem and Alexandria: 'tis said[k], "the house of Garmu "were expert in making of the shew-bread, and they "would not teach it; the wise men sent and fetched "workmen from Alexandria in Egypt, and they knew "how to bake as well as they.——The house or fa- "mily of Abtines were expert in the business of the "incense, and they would not teach it; the wise men "sent and fetched workmen from Alexandria in Egypt, "and they knew how to mix the spices as well as "they." Again it is said[l], "there was a brass cym- "bal in the sanctuary, and it was cracked, and the "wise men sent and brought workmen from Alexan- "dria in Egypt, and they mended it——and there was "a mortar in which they beat spices, and it was "cracked, and the wise men sent and fetched workmen "from Alexandria, and they mended it." Hence many of them doubtless settled here, and had a synagogue of their own: *and of them of Cilicia;* the metropolis of which country was Tarsus, Acts xxi. 39. and xxii. 3. I make no doubt of it, that Saul of Tarsus was among them, or belonged to this synagogue, and was one of the fierce disputants with Stephen; at least violently opposed him, since he afterwards held the clothes of those that stoned him; we read[m] of בית הכנסת של טרסיים, which I should be tempted to render, the *synagogue of the Tarsians*, the same with the Cilicians here; but that it is elsewhere said[n], that "it happened to the "synagogue of the Tursians, which was at Jerusalem, "that they sold it to R. Eliezer, and he did all his bu- "siness in it." Where the gloss explains the word *Tursians* by *brass-founders;* and it seems to design the same synagogue with that of the Alexandrians, who may be so called, because many of them wrought in brass, as appears from a citation above. There was a synagogue of these Tarsians at Lud, or Lydda[o]; it is added, *and of Asia;* that is, the less; which joined to Cilicia, and in which were great numbers of Jews; see Acts xxi. 27. this clause is left out in the Alexandrian copy: at Jerusalem, there were synagogues for the Jews of different nations; as here in London, are places of worship for protestants of several countries; as French, Dutch, Germans, Danes, Swedes, &c. Now several persons out of these synagogues, met together in a body, *disputing with Stephen;* about the doctrine he preached, and the miracles he wrought, and by what authority he did these things.

Ver. 10. *And they were not able to resist the wisdom,* &c.] In Beza's most ancient copy, and in another manuscript 'tis added, *which was in him;* that divine wisdom, which the spirit of wisdom gave him; they were not a match for him with respect to the knowledge of divine things; they could not answer the wise arguments he made use of, fetched out of the Scriptures of truth, in which he was well versed, and had a large knowledge of: *and the spirit by which he spake:* that is, the Holy Spirit, as the above exemplars of Beza, and the Ethiopic version read; the meaning is, they could not resist the Holy Spirit, by which Stephen spake, so as to overcome him, or put Stephen to silence, or confute him; otherwise they did resist him, or oppose themselves to him, but in vain, and without success; for they always resisted the Holy Ghost in Christ and in his apostles, as their fathers before them resisted him in the prophets, as Stephen observes to them, ch. vii. 51. hereby was fulfilled what our Lord promised to his disciples, Matt. x. 19, 20. Luke xxi. 15.

Ver. 11. *Then they suborned men,* &c.] Hired false witnesses, which seems to have been commonly done by the Jews; so they did in the case of Christ: *which said, we have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses, and against God;* that is, against the law of Moses, and so against God, who gave the law to Moses, as appears from ver. 13. the blasphemous words seem to be, with respect to the ceremonial law, and the abrogation of it, which Stephen might insist upon, and they charged with blasphemy; see ver. 14.

Ver. 12. *And they stirred up the people,* &c.] The common people, who were easily wrought upon, and soon incensed and provoked, when at any time it was suggested to them that the rituals and ceremonies of the law of Moses were treated with any neglect or contempt; see ch. xxi. 27, 28. *And the elders and the Scribes;* who belonged to the sanhedrim, to whom they reported these things, as persons, under whose

g T. Hieros, Megilla. fol. 73. 4. Echa Rabbati, fol. 52. 1.
h T. Hieros, Cetubot. fol. 35. 3.
i Juchasin, fol. 26. 2. e Talmud. Hieros. Megilla, fol. 73. 4.
k T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 38. 1. & Hieros. Yoma, fol. 41. 1.
l T. Bab. Erachin, fol. 10. 2.
m T. Hieros. Shekalim, fol. 47. 1.
n T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 26. 1.
o Vajikra Rabba, sect. 35. fol. 175. 3.

cognizance they properly came: *and came upon him;* at an unawares, and in an hostile way: *and caught him;* seized him with violence: *and brought* him *to the council;* the great sanhedrim, then sitting at Jerusalem, to whom it belonged to judge of blasphemy.

Ver. 13. *And set up false witnesses,* &c.] Having hired them, they brought them and set them before the sanhedrim, to bear witness against Stephen: *which said, this man;* meaning Stephen, who was now before the council, at whom they pointed, and whose name, through contempt, they would not mention: *ceaseth not to speak blasphemous words against this holy place;* either the city of Jerusalem, which is sometimes called the holy city, and which was foretold by the angel to Daniel, and by Christ, that it should be destroyed, and which Stephen might speak of; or rather the temple, so the Ethiopic version; in a part of which, or in a place contiguous to it, the sanhedrim might now be sitting: *and the law;* the ceremonial law: the sense is, that Stephen was continually telling the people, that in a little time their temple would be destroyed, and an end be put to temple-worship, and to all the rituals and ceremonies of the law of Moses; the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions leave out the word *blasphemous;* and so do the Alexandrian copy, and Beza's most ancient one; but as Beza observes, it is certain, or at least it is most likely, that it was not omitted by the false witnesses; though speaking against the temple and the law was sufficient to make good a charge of blasphemy.

Ver. 14. *For we have heard him say,* &c.] The Ethiopic version adds, *besides;* but rather these words are a reason, giving evidence to, and supporting the general charge: *that this Jesus of Nazareth;* Stephen spoke of, and whom they so called by way of contempt: *shall destroy this place;* meaning the temple, as the Ethiopic version renders it; and is the same charge, the false witnesses at Christ's examination brought against him: *and shall change the customs which Moses delivered us;* that is, the rites, ceremonies, institutions, and appointments of the Mosaic dispensation; and yet this is no other, than what the Jews themselves say will be done, in the times of the Messiah; for they assert [p], that "לעתיד לבוא, *in time to* "*come* (*i. e.* in the days of the Messiah) all sacrifices "shall cease, but the sacrifice of thanksgiving."

Ver. 15. *And all that sat in the council,* &c.] The whole sanhedrim, *looking steadfastly on him;* to observe whether his countenance altered, his tongue stammered, or he trembled in any part of his body, neither of which appeared; but on the contrary, they *saw his face, as if it had been the face of an angel.* The Ethiopic version adds, *of God;* there was such a calmness and serenity in it, which shewed his innocence and unconsciousness of guilt; and such a beauty and glory upon it, that he looked as lovely and amiable as the angels of God, who when they appeared to men, it was in very glorious and splendid forms: his face might shine as Moses's did, when he came down from the mount; or in some degree as Christ's did at his transfiguration; and this might, as it ought to have been, taken as an acquittance of him by God, from the charge of blasphemy, either against God or Moses: the Jews [q] say of Phinehas, that when the Holy Ghost was upon him, his face burned or shone like lamps, and Stephen was now full of the Holy Ghost, ver. 5, 8.

CHAP. VII.

Ver. 1. *THEN said the high-priest,* &c.] The Ethiopic version adds, *to him;* that is, to Stephen; for to him he addressed himself: or he *asked him,* as the Syriac version renders it; he put the following question to him: *are these things so?* is it true what they say, that thou hast spoken blasphemous words against the temple, and the law, and hast said that Jesus of Nazareth will destroy the one, and change the other? what hast thou to say for thyself, and in thine own defence? this high-priest was either Annas, or rather Caiaphas; see the note on ch. iv. 6.

Ver. 2. *And he said,* &c.] Stephen replied, in answer to the high-priest's question, and addressed himself to the whole sanhedrim, saying: *men, brethren, and fathers, hearken;* to the following oration and defence; he calls them *men, brethren,* by an usual Hebraism, that is, *brethren;* and that, because they were of the same nation; for it was common with the Jews to call those of their own country and religion, brethren; and he calls them *fathers,* because of their age and dignity, being the great council of the nation, and chosen out of the senior and wiser part of the people: *the God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham;* he calls God *the God of glory,* because he is glorious in himself, in all his persons, perfections, and works, and is to be glorified by his people; and his glory is to be sought by all his creatures, and to be the end of all their actions; and the rather he makes use of this epithet of him, to remove the calumny against him, that he had spoke blasphemous things against God; and because God appeared in a glorious manner to Abraham, either in a vision, or by an angel, or in some glorious form, or another; and it is observable, that when the Jews speak of Abraham's deliverance out of the fiery furnace, for so they interpret Ur of the Chaldees, they give to God much such a title; they say [r] "*the King of glory* stretched "out his right hand, and delivered him out of the "fiery furnace, according to Gen. xv. 7." Stephen uses a like epithet; and he calls Abraham *our father,* he being a Jew, and according to the common usage of the nation: and this appearance of God to Abraham was *when he was in Mesopotamia;* a country that lay between the two rivers Tigris and Euphrates, from whence it had its name; and is the same with Aram Naharaim, the Scriptures speak of; see the note on

[p] Vajikra Rabba, sect. 9. fol. 153. 1. & sect. 27. fol. 168. 4.
[q] Caeph. Misna in Maimon. Hilch. Teshuba, c. 9. & Vajikra Rabba, sect. 1. fol. 146. 1. & sect. 21. fol. 163. 1.
[r] Pirke Eliezer, c. 26.

ch. ii. 9. Of this appearance of God to Abraham, mentioned by Stephen, the Scriptures are silent; but the Jewish writers seem to hint at it, when they say[s], "thus said the holy blessed God to Abraham, as thou "hast enlightened for me Mesopotamia and its compa-"nions, come and give light before me in the land "of Israel." And again, mentioning those words in Isa. xli. 8, 9. *the seed of Abraham my friend, whom I have taken from the ends of the earth*: add by way of explanation, from Mesopotamia and its companions[t]: and this was *before he dwelt in Charan*; or Haran; see Gen. xi. 31. where the Septuagint call it *Charan*, as here; and by Herodian[u] it is called Κάῤῥαι, where Antoninus was killed; and by Pliny[w], *Carra*; and by Ptolomy[x], *Carræ*; it was famous for the slaughter of M. Crassus, by the Parthians[y]. R. Benjamin gives this account of it in his time[z]; "in two days I came "to ancient Haran, and in it were about twenty Jews, "and there was as it were a synagogue of Ezra; but "in the place where was the house of Abraham our "father, there was no building upon it; but the "Ishmaelites (or Mahometans) honour that place, "and come thither to pray." Stephanus[a] says it was a city of Mesopotamia, so called from *Carra*, a river in Syria.

Ver. 3. *And said unto him*, &c.] Not the words in Gen. xii. 1. for they were said in Haran, these in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt there, and besides, these are different from them; no mention is here made of getting out from his father's house, as there; because his father's house went along with him, or rather he with them from Mesopotamia to Haran: *get thee out of thy country*: from Ur of the Chaldees, where he was born: *and from thy kindred*: his relations that lived in the same place, who did not go along with him: *and come into the land which I shall shew thee*: not telling him the place whither he was to go; wherefore when he had his first call, and first set out, he knew not whither he went; see Heb. xi. 8. This was an emblem of the calling of the saints out of the world, from their former course of life, and from among their old companions and friends, to follow Christ whithersoever he is pleased to lead them; and who at last will bring them safe to the land afar off, the better and heavenly country.

Ver. 4. *Then came he out of the land of the Chaldeans*, &c.] The same with Mesopotamia; so Pliny says[b], that "because of Babylon the head of the "Chaldean nation——the other part of Mesopota-"mia and Assyria is called Babylonia." And he places Babylon in Mesopotamia; it was out of Ur, in the land of the Chaldeans particularly, that Abraham came, upon his first call: *and dwelt in Charan*: according to the Jewish writers[c], he dwelt here five years: *and from thence, when his father was dead*: who died in Haran, as is said in Gen. xi. 32. and that it was after the death of Terah his father, that Abraham went from thence, is manifest from Gen. xi. 31, 32. and xii. 4, 5. and yet a Jew[d] has the impudence to charge Stephen with a mistake, and to affirm, that Abraham went from Haran, whilst his father was yet living; proceeding upon a false hypothesis, that Terah begat Abraham when he was seventy years of age: but Philo the Jew is expressly with Stephen in this circumstance; he says[e], "I "think no man versed in the laws can be ignorant, "that Abraham, when he first went out of the land "of Chaldea, dwelt in Charan; τελευτήσαντος τε αὐτῷ τοῦ "πατρὸς αὐτόθι, *but his father dying there*, he removed "from thence:" and so says Stephen: *he removed him into this land, wherein ye now dwell*; the land of Canaan; see Gen. xii. 5. or *he removed himself*, as the Ethiopic version renders it; or rather *God removed him*, as the Syriac version reads, and so one copy in the Bodleian library; for it was by the order and assistance, and under the direction and protection of God, that he came into that land: after the words *wherein ye now dwell*, Beza's ancient copy adds, *and our fathers that were before us*.

Ver. 5. *And he gave him none inheritance in it*, &c.] To be personally enjoyed by him; and which was a great trial to Abraham's faith, to be brought out of his country, and into another land, and which was promised to him and his; and yet, as not the whole, so not a single part of it was given him to possess: *no, not so much as to set his foot on*: so that when Sarah his wife died, he was obliged to buy a piece of ground for a burying-place to bury her in: and which could not be said to be given him by the Lord, for he bought it with his money: *yet he promised that he would give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him, when* as yet *he had no child*: which was another exercise of Abraham's faith, that he should have a whole country promised him and his seed, and yet had no seed given him; see Gen. xii. 7. and xiii. 15. and xv. 2, 3, 7.

Ver. 6. *And God spake on this wise*, &c.] The Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions read, *and God spake to him*, and so does one of Beza's copies; and the Ethiopic version reads it both ways, God *said thus to Abraham*, as in Gen. xv. 13. *That his seed should sojourn in a strange land*; or *be a stranger in a land not theirs*; first in the land of Canaan, and then in Egypt, which were possessed by other persons, the natives of them: *and that they should bring them into bondage*: that is, the inhabitants of the lands, and particularly Egypt, should bring the seed of Abraham into bondage, as they did; and very hard bondage it was, at least some part of it: *and entreat* them *evil four hundred years*: which must be reckoned not from the time of their going down into Egypt, which to their coming up out of it were but two hundred and ten years, but from the birth of Isaac: which was as soon as Abraham had the promised seed, and may be reckoned after this

[s] Bereshit Rabba, sect. 39. fol. 35. 1.
[t] Ib. sect. 44. fol. 38. 3.
[u] L. 4. sect. 24.
[w] L. 5. c. 24.
[x] L. 5. c. 18.
[y] ——Miserando funere Crassus
Assyrias Latio maculavit sanguine Carrhas.
Lucan. Pharsal. l. 1. v. 105.

[z] Itinerar. p. 60.
[a] De Urbibus.
[b] L. 6. c. 26.
[c] Seder Olam Rabba, c. 1. p. 2. Ganz Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 5. 2.
[d] R. Isaac Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 61. p. 448.
[e] De Migratione Abrahami, p. 415.

manner: from the birth of Isaac to the birth of Jacob, sixty years, Gen. xxv. 26. and from thence to the coming of Jacob into Egypt, one hundred and thirty years, Gen. xlvii. 9. and from thence to the coming of the children of Israel out of Egypt, two hundred and ten years; which in all make up four hundred years; for the sojourning and evil entreating of Abraham's seed are not to be confined to the land of Egypt, but belong to other lands, where they were within this time, though that land is more especially intended; and so the Septuagint version renders the text in Exod. xii. 40. *Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, which they* (and some copies add, *and their fathers*) *sojourned in the land of Egypt, and in the land of Canaan, were four hundred and thirty years*: and this text is differently read in the Talmuds, in one of them thus[f]; *and the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt,* ובכל הארצות, *and in all the lands, were four hundred and thirty years*; and in the other of them thus[g], *and the sojourning of the children of Israel who dwelt in Egypt,* ובשאר ארצות, *and in the rest of the lands, were four hundred years*; upon which latter the gloss has these words; "from the time "that the decree of the captivity was made between "them to the birth of Isaac, were thirty years; and "from the birth of Isaac, until the Israelites went "out of Egypt, were four hundred years; take out "of them the sixty of Isaac, and the one hundred "and thirty that Jacob had lived when he went down "into Egypt, and there remain two hundred and ten; "and so is the decree, that *thy seed shall be a stranger* "*in a land not theirs*, Gen. xv. 13. and it is not said in "Egypt, but in a land not theirs; and when Isaac was "born, Abraham was a sojourner in the land of the "Philistines; and from thence, till they went out "of Egypt, it will be found that Isaac and his seed "who were the seed of Abraham, were strangers: "and the thirty years before that are not numbered "in the decree;" see the note on Gal. iii. 17.

Ver. 7. *And the nation to whom they shall be in bondage*, &c.] At the end of the four hundred years, and which was the Egyptian nation: *I will judge, said God*; that is, condemn and punish them, as he did, by inflicting the ten plagues upon them: *and after that they shall come forth*; out of the land of Egypt, and their hard bondage there; and which was brought about by the judgments executed upon the Egyptians: *and serve me in this place*; in the land of Canaan; though these words are not to be found in Gen. xv. 13. what comes nearest them is in Exod. iii. 12. *Ye shall serve God upon this mountain*; meaning Mount Horeb, where Moses then was, and from whence the law was afterwards given.

Ver. 8. *And he gave him the covenant of circumcision*, &c.] Or the covenant, of which circumcision was a sign or token, Gen. xvii. 11. Stephen speaks here in the language of the Jews, who are wont to speak of circumcision after this manner; hence in the Jewish liturgy, there is a collect, לברית מילה, *for the covenant of circumcision*[h]; and so it is said[i], "when Joseph died, "they made void the *covenant of circumcision*:" *and so Abraham begat Isaac, and circumcised him the eighth day*; according to the express command in Gen. xvii. 12. see the note on Philip. iii. 5. *and Jacob begat the twelve patriarchs*; the heads of the twelve tribes of Israel.

Ver. 9. *And the patriarchs, moved with envy*, &c.] See Gen. xxxvii. 11. the sons of Jacob and brethren of Joseph were filled with envy, and enraged at him, because of the evil report of them he brought to his father; and because he had a greater share in his father's love than they had; and because of his dreams, which signified that he should have the dominion over them, and they should be obliged to yield obedience to him: wherefore they *sold Joseph into Egypt*; they sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver, who were going down to Egypt, and who carried him thither with them: these twenty pieces of silver, the Jews say, the ten brethren of Joseph divided among themselves; every one took two shekels, and bought shoes for his feet; to which they apply the passage in Amos ii. 6. *they sold the righteous for silver, and the poor for a pair of shoes*[k]: and they suggest, that the redemption of the first-born among the Israelites was on account of the selling of Joseph; they say[l], "because they sold the first-born of Rachel for twenty "pieces of silver, let every one redeem his son, "his first-born, with twenty pieces of silver; says "R. Phinehas, in the name of R. Levi, because "they sold the first-born of Rachel for twenty "pieces of silver, and there fell to each of them a piece "of coined money (the value of half a shekel), therefore "let every one pay his shekel coined." They also affirm[m], that the selling of Joseph was not expiated by the tribes, until they were dead, according to Isa. xxii. 14. and that on the account of it, there was a famine in the land of Israel seven years. There seems to be some likeness between the treatment of Joseph and Jesus Christ, which Stephen may have some respect unto; as Joseph was sold by his brethren for twenty pieces of silver, so Christ was sold by one of his disciples, that ate bread with him, for thirty pieces of silver; and as it was through envy the brethren of Joseph used him in this manner, so it was through envy that the Jews delivered Jesus Christ to Pontius Pilate, to be condemned to death: of this selling of Joseph into Egypt, Justin the historian speaks[n]; his words are, "Joseph was the youngest of his brethren, "whose excellent wit his brethren fearing, secretly "took him and sold him to strange merchants, by "whom he was carried into Egypt." And then follow other things concerning him, some true and some false: Stephen here adds, *but God was with him*: see Gen. xxxix. 2. he was with him, and prospered him in Potiphar's house; he was with him, and kept him from the temptations of his mistress; he was with him in prison, and supported and comforted him, and at length delivered him from it, and promoted him as follows; and caused all the evil that befell him to work for good to him and his father's family.

[f] T. Hieros. Megilla, fol. 71. 4.
[g] T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 9. 1. Vid. Aben Ezra, in Exod. xii. 40.
[h] Seder Tephillot, fol. 197. 1. Ed. Basil. Vid. Kimchi in Mal. iii. 1.
[i] Shemot Rabba, sect. 1. fol. 90. 1.
[k] Pirke Eliezer, c. 38.
[l] T. Hieros. Shekalim, fol. 46. 4.
[m] Pirke Eliezer, ib.
[n] L. 36. c. 2.

Ver. 10. *And delivered him out of all his afflictions,* &c.] From the evil designs of his mistress, and from all the miseries of a prison: *and gave him favour and wisdom in the sight of Pharaoh king of Egypt;* so Justin in the place above cited says, that Joseph was very dear to the king; but not through his knowledge of magic arts, as he suggests, but on account of the wisdom which God gave him; for when he is said to have favour and wisdom in the sight of Pharaoh, the meaning is, that he was highly esteemed of by him, because of the wisdom he saw in him; and both the favour he had with him, and the wisdom he had in himself, were from the Lord; and in a very humble and modest manner does he speak of himself, in Gen. xli. 16. which Onkelos the Targumist paraphrases thus: "*not from* "*my wisdom*, but from the Lord, shall the peace of "Pharaoh be answered;" the name of this Pharaoh was Misphragmuthosis; by the Jews he is called Rian ben Walid[o]: *and he made him governor over Egypt;* a deputy-governor under him; for Pharaoh kept the throne, and in it was greater than Joseph, and had the other ensigns of royalty, and Joseph rode in the second chariot to him: *and all his house:* see Gen. xli. 40, 41, 43. as he had the affairs of the kingdom commited to him, so likewise the domestic affairs of Pharaoh, he was steward of his household.

Ver. 11. *Now there came a dearth over all the land of Egypt, and Canaan,* &c.] This dearth, or famine, is said to be in all lands, Gen. xli. 54. though only Egypt and Canaan are mentioned here, because the history is concerned with no other. The Jewish writers[p] speak of three lands particularly, which were affected with it, Phenicia, Arabia, and Palestine; and this famine in the land of Israel, they say[q], which lasted seven years, was on account of the selling of Joseph into Egypt, as before observed. The Heathen writers make mention of this famine, particularly Justin[r], who speaking of Joseph says, that he foresaw many years before the barrenness of the fields; and all Egypt would have perished with famine, had not the king, through his advice, ordered by an edict, that corn should be laid up for many years: this was the fifth of the ten famines, the Jews say have been, or shall be in the world[s]: *and great affliction;* meaning the famine, which was very severe, and lasted a long time, even seven years: want of eating is called עינוי, *affliction*, by the Jews[t]; by which they mean fasting, which is a voluntary want of eating, or abstinence from it; and if that is an affliction, then much more want of food, or abstinence through necessity; compare 1 Tim. v. 10. *And our fathers found not sustenance:* Jacob and his family could not get sufficient provision for them in the land of Canaan, where they then were, but were obliged to go to Egypt for it.

Ver. 12. *But when Jacob heard that there was corn in Egypt,* &c.] Not then growing, or gathering in there, or that was of that year's produce; for the famine was strong in the land of Egypt, as well as in Canaan; but was what had been laid up, and preserved in the seven years of plenty, by the order and care of Joseph; which by some means or another, Jacob had heard of; see Gen. xlii. 1, 2. the Jews suggest[u], that it was by divine revelation: *he sent out our fathers first;* the first time, or the first year of the famine; or he sent them first, he laid his commands on them, or they had not gone; these were the ten sons of Jacob, and brethren of Joseph, who were sent the first time, for Benjamin staid with his father: see Gen. xlii. 3, 13.

Ver. 13. *And at the second time Joseph was made known to his brethren,* &c.] That is, when the brethren of Joseph went a second time down to Egypt for corn, Joseph made himself known unto them, Gen. xlv. 1. *And Joseph's kindred was made known unto Pharaoh;* for though it was known before that he was an Hebrew, see Gen. xxxix. 17. and xli. 12. yet it was not known of what family he was, who was his father, or his brethren, but now it was known, Gen. xlv. 16.

Ver. 14. *Then sent Joseph,* &c.] Gifts and presents to his father, and waggons, to fetch down him and his family into Egypt, Gen. xlv. 21, 23. *and called his father Jacob to him, and all his kindred, threescore and fifteen souls;* which seems to disagree with the account of Moses, who says, that *all the souls of the house of Jacob, which came into Egypt, were threescore and ten,* Gen. xlvi. 27. But there is no contradiction; Moses and Stephen are speaking of different things; Moses speaks of the seed of Jacob, which came out of his loins, who came into Egypt, and so excludes his sons' wives; Stephen speaks of Jacob and all his kindred, among whom his sons' wives must be reckoned, whom Joseph called to him: according to Moses's account, the persons that came with Jacob into Egypt, who came out of his loins, and so exclusive of his sons' wives, were threescore and six; to which if we add Jacob himself, and Joseph who was before in Egypt, and who might be truly said to come into it, and his two sons that were born there, who came thither in his loins, as others in the account may be said to do, who were not yet born, when Jacob went down, the total number is threescore and ten, Gen xlvi. 26, 27. out of which take the six following persons, Jacob, who was called by Joseph into Egypt, besides the threescore and fifteen souls, and Joseph and his two sons then in Egypt, who could not be said to be called by him, and Hezron and Hamul, the sons of Pharez not yet born, and this will reduce Moses's number to sixty-four; to which sixty-four, if you add the eleven wives of Jacob's sons, who were certainly part of the kindred called and invited into Egypt, Gen. xlv. 10, 19. and xlvi. 5. it will make up completely threescore and fifteen persons: or the persons called by Joseph may be reckoned thus; his eleven brethren and sister Dinah, fifty-two brother's children, to which add his brethren's eleven wives, and the amount is threescore and fifteen: so that the Jew[w] has no reason to charge Stephen with an error, as he does; nor was there any need to alter and corrupt the Septuagint version of Gen. xlvi. 27. to make it agree with Stephen's account;

[o] Juchasin, fol. 135. 2.
[p] Bereshit Rabba, sect. 90. fol. 78. 1.
[q] Pirke Eliezer, c. 38.
[r] Ex Trogo, l. 36. c. 2.
[s] Targum in Ruth i. 1.
[t] Moses Kotsensis Mitzvot Tora pr. Affirm. 32.
[u] Bereshit Rabba, sect. 91. fol. 78. 1, 2.
[w] R. Isaac Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 63. p. 450.

or to add five names in it, in ver. 20. as Machir, Galaad, Sutalaam, Taam, and Edom, to make up the number seventy-five: and it may be observed, that the number is not altered in the version of Deut. x. 22. which agrees with the Hebrew for seventy persons.

Ver. 15. *So Jacob went down into Egypt*, &c.] At the invitation of his son Joseph: *and died, he, and our fathers;* both Jacob and his twelve sons died in Egypt, though we have no account of the death of any of them, but Jacob and Joseph, particularly; only in general, that Joseph died, and all his brethren, and all that generation, Gen. xlix. 33. and l. 26. and Exod. i. 6. the Syriac version adds *there*, that is, in Egypt.

Ver. 16. *And were carried over into Sichem*, &c.] The Syriac version reads in the singular number, *and he was translated into Sichem, and laid*, &c. as if this was said of Jacob only, whereas he is not spoken of at all, only the fathers, the twelve patriarchs; for Jacob, though he was carried out of Egypt, he was not buried in Sichem, but in the cave of Machpelah, Gen. l. 13. But Joseph and the rest of the patriarchs, who died in Egypt, when the children of Israel came out from thence, they brought their bones along with them, and buried them in Sichem: of the burial of Joseph there, there is no doubt, since it is expressly affirmed in Josh. xxiv. 32. and that the rest of the patriarchs were buried there, and not in Hebron, as Josephus asserts[x], may be concluded from hence; because in the cave of Machpelah at Hebron, there are never mentioned more in Jewish writers[y], than these four couple; Adam and Eve, Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, Jacob and Leah; from whence, they say, Hebron was called Kirjath Arba, the city of four; as also, because it is the general consent of the Jews; and if they had not agreed in it, or said nothing about it, the thing is natural to suppose, that the children of Israel brought the bones of all the patriarchs out of Egypt, along with Joseph's[z]; and since they buried the bones of Joseph in Sichem, it is most reasonable to believe, that the rest were buried there likewise; though it must be owned, that there is an entire silence about them, even when the sepulchre of Joseph is taken notice of: so R. Benjamin speaking of the Samaritans says[a], "among them is the sepulchre of "Joseph the righteous, the son of Jacob our father, "on whom be peace, as it is said, Josh. xxiv. 32." And says another of their writers[b], "from Sichem "about a sabbath-day's journey, in a village, called "Belata, there Joseph the just was buried;" but of the rest, no mention is made: *and laid in the sepulchre that Abraham bought for a sum of money of the sons of Emmor*, the father *of Sichem;* the last clause, the father *of Sichem*, is left out in the Syriac version; and the Alexandrian copy reads it, *in Sichem;* as if it was the name of a place, and not of a man: the Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read, *the son of Sichem;* whereas it is certain, that Sichem was the son of Emmor, or Hamor, Gen. xxxiii. 19. and xxxiv. 6. unless it can be thought there were two Sichems, one that was the father of Emmor, and another that was his son: but the great difficulty is, how the sepulchre in which the fathers were laid at Sichem, can be said to be bought by Abraham of the sons of Emmor, when what Abraham bought was the field and cave of Machpelah; and that not of the sons of Emmor, but of the sons of Heth, and of Ephron, the son of Zohar the Hittite, Gen. xxiii. 16, 17. Whereas the parcel of ground in Sichem, bought of the sons of Emmor, the father of Sichem, was bought by Jacob, Gen. xxxiii. 19. Josh. xxiv. 32. Various things are suggested, to reconcile this; some think the word Abraham is an interpolation, and that it should be read, *which he (Jacob) bought;* but to support this, no copy can be produced: others observe, that it may be read, *which he bought for Abraham;* that is, which Jacob bought for Abraham and his seed, as a pledge of the inheritance of the whole land, promised unto him; others think that by Abraham is meant a son of Abraham, that is, Jacob; as children are sometimes called by their father's name; as the Messiah is called David, and the like; but what best seems to remove the difficulty is, that the words refer to both places and purchases; to the field of Machpelah bought by Abraham, and to the parcel of field at Sichem bought by Jacob, of the sons of Emmor; for the words with the repetition of the phrase, *in the sepulchre*, may be read thus; *and were laid in the sepulchre, that Abraham bought for a sum of money*, and in the sepulchre (bought by Jacob) *of the sons of Emmor*, the father of Sichem; or the words may be rendered thus, *they were carried over into Sichem, and laid in the sepulchre which Abraham bought for a sum of money, besides* that *of the sons of Emmor*, the father *of Sichem;* namely, which Jacob bought, and in which Joseph was laid, Gen. xxxiii. 19. Josh. xxiv. 32. And this agrees with Stephen's account and design, in the preceding verse; he observes, that Jacob died in Egypt, and all the twelve patriarchs; and here he tells us how they were disposed of, and where they were buried, both Jacob and his sons; they were removed from Egypt, and brought into the land of Canaan; Jacob, he was laid in the cave of Machpelah, in the sepulchre Abraham bought of the children of Heth; and Joseph and his brethren, they were laid in the sepulchre at Sichem, which Jacob bought of the sons of Emmor: upon the whole, the charge of several errors brought by the[c] Jew against Stephen appears to be groundless; the sum this sepulchre was bought for was an hundred pieces of money, Gen. xxxiii. 19.

Ver. 17. *But when the time of the promise drew nigh*, &c.] That is, the time of the four hundred years; when God promised to deliver the seed of Abraham out of their affliction and servitude, and bring them into the land of Canaan to inherit it: *which God had sworn to Abraham;* in Gen. xv. 13, 14. for though

[x] Antiqu. l. 2. c. 8. sect. 2.
[y] T. Bab. Sota, fol. 13. 1. Cippi Heb. p. 4. R. Benjamin. Itinerar. p. 48, 49.
[z] T. Bab. Sota, fol. 13. Bava Kama, fol. 92. 1. Maccot fol. 11. 1. & Gloss. in ib. Bereshit, fol. 89. 1. Sepher Jasher apud Gaulmin. not. in Vita Mosis, l. 2. c. 2. p. 297.
[a] Itinerar. p. 39.
[b] Cippi Heb. p. 34.
[c] R. Isaac Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 63. p. 450, 451.

there is no express mention made of an oath, yet there is a most solemn affirmation, which is equivalent to one: the Alexandrian copy and some others, and the Vulgate Latin version read, *which God promised unto Abraham: the people grew and multiplied in Egypt;* see Exod. i. 7. insomuch, that though their number were but threescore and ten when they went down to Egypt, and though various methods were taken to destroy them, and lessen their numbers, yet in little more than two hundred years, their number was increased to six hundred thousand, and three thousand and five hundred and fifty men, besides old men, women, and children, and besides two and twenty thousand Levites, Numb. i. 46. and iii. 39. And it seems, that they multiplied the more towards the time when the promise of deliverance drew nigh to be accomplished, and even when they were the most afflicted, Exod. i. 12, 20.

Ver. 18. *Till another king arose,* &c.] *In,* or *over Egypt,* as the Alexandrian copy, and others, and the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions read; in Exod. i. 8. it is a *new king;* the Jewish writers are divided about him, whether he was a different king from the former; or only so called, because he made new edicts [d]: "Rab and Samuel, one says a new one "absolutely: and the other says, because his decrees "were renewed; he that says a new one absolutely, "(thinks so) because it is written a new one; and he "who says, because his decrees are renewed (or he "makes new decrees, he thinks so) from hence, be"cause it is not written, and he died, and there "reigned; and (it makes) for him that says, because "his decrees are renewed, what is written, *who knew "not Joseph;* what is the meaning of that, *who knew "not Joseph?* that he was like one who knew not "Joseph at all." The Septuagint version of Exod. i. 8. renders it *another king,* as does Stephen here; another king from the Pharaoh of Joseph: the name of this was Ramesses Miamun; and one of the treasure-cities built for him seems to be called after his name, Raamses, Exod. i. 11. The Jews call him Talma [e], and by Theophilus of Antioch [f] he is called Tethmosis; and by Artapanus [g], Palmanotha: *which knew not Joseph;* nor what great things he had done, to the advantage of the Egyption nation; he was acquainted with the history of him, and of his worthy deeds, and therefore had no regard to his people, as the other Pharaoh had. Josephus [h] says, the kingdom was translated to another family; which might be the reason why he was not known, nor his friends taken notice of: Aben Ezra says, he was not of the seed-royal; wherefore it is written, *and there arose;* he usurped the kingdom, and had not a just right and title to it; so that being a stranger, it is no wonder that he should not know Joseph; Jarchi's note is, "he made himself "as if he did not know him;" he dissembled, he pretended ignorance of him, because he would shew no respect unto his people. Beza's ancient copy, and another in the Bodleian library, read, *which remembered not Joseph.*

Ver. 19. *The same dealt subtilly with our kindred,* &c.] See Exod. i. 10. he took crafty, and yet cruel methods, to diminish the children of Israel, and to humble them; weakening their strength by labour, that they might not be able to beget children; ordering the Hebrew midwives to kill all the males that were born; and charging all his people to drown such male children that should escape the hands of the midwives; *and evil entreated our fathers:* keeping them to hard labour, in mortar and brick, and all rural service; in which he made them to serve with rigour, and thereby made their lives bitter to them; employing them in building cities, pyramids, walls, and towers; making ditches, throwing up trenches, cutting water-courses, and turning rivers, with other things; to which he added, setting task-masters over them, to afflict them with burdens: *so that they cast out their young children,* or *by making their children cast-outs;* or as the Arabic version renders it, *by making that their children should be cast out:* that is, by ordering his people to expose them to ruin, and to cast them in the rivers; and so the Syriac version, *and he commanded that their children be cast out;* for this refers to Pharaoh, and his orders to his officers and people, to cast out the male children of the Israelites; and not to the parents of the children, which our version and the Vulgate Latin incline to: for though Moses's mother, after she had hid him three months, put him into an ark of bulrushes, and laid him among the flags by the river's side, yet that was in order to save his life: whereas the end of the casting out of these young children was as follows, *to the end they might not live:* for this has not respect unto the parents of the children, that they might not increase or multiply their offspring, but to the young children, that they being cast into the waters, might perish, and not live and become men; the Ethiopic version is rather a paraphrase, *and he commanded that they should kill every male that was born.*

Ver. 20. *In which time Moses was born,* &c.] The word Moses, is differently written in the New Testament; sometimes Moses, as here, sometimes Mo-yses, as in ver. 35, 37. sometimes Mo-yseus, as in ch. xv. 1. and sometimes Moseus, as in Rom. v. 14. He had his name from the Hebrew word, משה, which signifies *to draw,* Psal. xviii. 16. according to the reason of it given by Pharaoh's daughter, *she called his name Moses: and she said, because I drew him out of the water,* Exod. ii. 10. Though Josephus [i], Philo [k], and others [l], make it to be an Egyptian name; the former of which observes, that the Egyptians call water *Mo* and *yses,* such who are saved from water; wherefore compounding the name of both, they gave it to him: though according to Aben Ezra [m], his name in the Egyptian language was Monios; his words are these, "the "name of Moses is interpreted out of the Egyptian "language into the Hebrew language, for his name "in the Egyptian language was Monios; and so it is "written in a book of agriculture, translated out of

[d] T. Bab. Erubin, fol. 53. 1. & Sota, fol. 11. 1.
[e] Juchasin, fol. 135. 2.
[f] Ad Autolycum, l. 3. p. 130.
[g] Apud Euseb. de prep. Evangel. l. 9. c. 27.
[h] Antiqu. l. 2. c. 9. sect. 1.
[i] Antiqu. l. 2. c. 9. sect. 6.
[k] De Vita Mosis, l. 1. p. 605.
[l] Clement. Alexandrin. Stromat, l. 1. p. 343.
[m] Comment. in Exod. ii. 10.

"the Egyptian language into the Arabic, and also in "the books of some Greek writers." Moses had many names, as a Jewish chronologer observes [n]; "Pharaoh's "daughter called his name Moses; his father called "him Chabar, or Heber; his mother called him Jeku-"thiel; and his sister called him Jether (perhaps "Jared, since this was one of his names); and his bre-"thren called him Abizanoah; and Kohath called him "Abi Socos; and the Israelites called him Shemaiah "ben Nathanael, and sometimes Tobiah, sometimes "Shemaiah, and sometimes Sopher; but the Egyp-"tians called him Monios." For *Mo*, in the Egyptian language, signifies *water*, and *Ni* is *out*; and so both together signify, *out of the water*, which agrees with the Hebrew etymology of his name. Now he was born at the time that orders were given by Pharaoh to cast all the male children of the Israelites into the rivers, to drown them; Moses was born, whose parents were Amram and Jochebed, of the tribe of Levi; he was born, according to the Jews [o], on the seventh day of Adar, or February: *and was exceeding fair*; or *fair to God*; divinely fair and beautiful; and so Pharaoh's daughter, according to Josephus, said to her father, that she had brought up a child that was *μορφῇ θεῖον* [p], *in form divine*: and so the Jews say [q], that his form was as an angel of God; or he was *fair in the sight of God*, as the Ethiopic version; the Syriac version renders it, *he was dear to God*; and the Vulgate Latin version, *grateful to God*; was well-pleasing to him, in whom he delighted, having designed to do great things by him: or *fair by God*; he had a peculiar beauty put upon him by God; partly to engage his parents the more to seek the preservation of him; and partly to engage the affection of Pharaoh's daughter to him, when she should see him. Justin the historian [r] makes mention of his extraordinary beauty, for which he was praised; but very wrongly makes him to be the son of Joseph; and the account Josephus gives of it, is very remarkable [s]; "as to beauty, says he, no man could "be so out of love with it, as to see the goodly form of "Moses, and not be amazed; it happened to many "who met him, as he was carried along the way, that "they would turn back at the sight of the child, and "neglect their business, to indulge themselves with "the sight of him; for such was the loveliness of the "child, that it detained those that saw him." The Arabic version renders it, he *was consecrated by a vow to God*; but of this we have no account: the Jews say [t], that "the spirit of God came upon Miriam, and she "prophesied; saying, behold a son shall be born to "my father and to my mother at this time, who shall "save Israel out of the hand of the Egyptians—and it "is further said, that at the time of his birth, the "whole house was filled with a great light, as the "light of the sun and moon;" upon which they had raised expectations of him: though this phrase, *fair to God*, may be only an Hebraism, just as Nineveh is said to be a city *great to God*, *i. e.* exceeding great, Jon. iii. 3. it being usual with the Jews to join the word God to an adjective, to express the superlative degree; and so it is rightly rendered here, *exceeding fair: and nourished up in his father's house three months*; so long he was hid by his mother there, which was a great instance of her faith; see Exod. ii. 2. Heb. xi. 23. The reason why he was kept no longer there was, because as the Jews say [u], the three months after Jochebed was delivered of a son, the thing was known in the house of Pharaoh, wherefore she could hide him no longer.

Ver. 21. *And when he was cast out, &c.*] *Into the river*, or *by the river*, as some copies read; the Syriac version adds, *by his own people*; by his father and mother and sister; who might be all concerned in it, and were privy to it; and which was done after this manner; his mother perceiving she could keep him no longer, made an ark of bulrushes, daubed with slime and pitch, into which she put him; and then laid it in the flags, by the river's side, and set his sister Miriam at a proper distance, to observe what would be done to him, Exod. ii. 3, 4. *Pharaoh's daughter took him up*; her name, according to Josephus [w], was *Thermuthis*; she is commonly, by the Jews [x], called *Bithiah*; and by Artapanus in Eusebius [y], she is called *Merrhis*. This princess coming down to the river to wash, as she and her maidens were walking by the river-side, spied the ark in which the child was laid, among the flags, and ordered one of her maids to go and fetch it; and which being done by her orders, is attributed to her; and opening the ark, she was struck at once with the loveliness of the babe, and being filled with compassion to it, which wept, she took him, *and nourished him for her own son*: not that she took him to the king's palace, and brought him up there, but the case was this; Miriam the sister of Moses, observing what was done, and perceiving the inclination of Pharaoh's daughter to take care of the child, offered to call an Hebrew nurse, to nurse the child for her; to which she agreed, and accordingly went and fetched her own and the child's mother, who took it upon wages, and nursed it for her; and when it was grown, brought it to her, who adopted it for her son, Exod. ii. 5—10. According to Josephus [z], and some other Jewish writers [a], so it was, that when the child was taken out of the ark, the breast was offered it by several Egyptian women, one after another, and it refused to suck of either of them; and Miriam being present, as if she was only a bye-stander and common spectator, moved that an Hebrew woman might be sent for; which the princess approving of, she went and called her mother, whose breast the child very readily sucked; and at the request of the princess she took it, and nourished it for her: according to Philo the Jew [b],

[n] Shalshalet Hakabala, fol. 5. 2. Vid. Targum in 1 Chron. iv. 18. Vajikra Rabba, sect. 1. fol. 146. 3.
[o] T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 38. 1. Shemot Rabba, sect. 1. fol. 91. 2. Targum Jon. in Deut. xxxiii. 5.
[p] Antiqu. l. 2. c. 9. sect. 7.
[q] Pirke Eliezer, c. 48.
[r] L. 36. c. 2.
[s] Antiqu. l. 2. c. 9. sect. 6. Vid. Shemot Rabba, sect. 1. fol. 91. 3.
[t] Heb. Chronicon Mosis, fol. 3. 1. Jarchi in Exod. ii. 2. Shemot Rabba, sect. 1. fol. 91. 1.
[u] Ib. col. 2.

[w] Antiqu. l. 2. c. 9. sect. 5, 7. & 10, 12.
[x] Targum in 1 Chron. iv. 18. Shemot Rabba, sect. 1. fol. 91. 3. Vajikra Rabba, sect. 1. fol. 146. 3. & Pirke Eliezer, c. 48. T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 13. 1. & Derech Eretz Zuta, c. 1. fol. 19. 1. & Chronicon Mosis, fol. 4. 1.
[y] De prepar. Evangel. l. 9. c. 27.
[z] Antiqu. l. 2. c. 9. sect. 5.
[a] Shemot Rabba, sect. 1. fol. 91. 3. Heb. Chronicon Mosis, fol. 4. 1. Jarchi in Exod. ii. 7.
[b] De Vita Mosis, l. 1. p. 604, 605.

this princess was the king's only daughter, who had been a long time married, but had had no children, of which she was very desirous; and especially of a son, that might succeed in the kingdom, that so the crown might not pass into another family; and then relating how she came with her maidens to the river, and found the child; and how that the sister of it, by her orders, fetched an Hebrew nurse to her, which was the mother of the child, who agreed to nurse it for her; he suggests, that from that time she gave out she was with-child, and feigned a big belly, that so the child might be thought to be γνησιος αλλ' μη υποβολιμαιος, *genuine, and not counterfeit*: but according to Josephus [c], she adopted him for her son, having no legitimate offspring, and brought him to her father, and told him how she had taken him out of the river, and had nourished him; (Josephus uses the same word as here;) and that she counted of him to make him her son, and the successor of his kingdom; upon which Pharaoh took the child into his arms, and embraced him, and put his crown upon him; which Moses rolling off, cast to the ground, and trampled upon it with his feet: other Jewish writers say [d], that he took the crown from off the king's head, and put it on his own; upon which, the magicians that were present, and particularly Balaam, addressed the king, and put him in mind of a dream and prophecy concerning the kingdom being taken from him, and moved that the child might be put to death; upon which his daughter snatched it up, and saved it, the king not being forward to have it destroyed: and they also tell this story as a means of saving it, that Jethro who was sitting by, or Gabriel in the form of one of the king's princes, suggested that the action of the child was not to be regarded, since it had no knowledge of what it did; and as a proof of it, proposed that there might be brought in a dish, a coal of fire, and a piece of gold, or a precious stone; and that if he put out his hand and laid hold on the piece of gold, or precious stone, then it would appear that he had knowledge, and deserved death; but if he took the coal, it would be a plain case that he was ignorant, and should be free: the thing took with the king and his nobles, and trial was made, and as the child put out his hand to lay hold on the piece of gold or precious stone, the angel Gabriel pushed it away, and he took the coal, and put it to his lips, and to the end of his tongue; which was the cause of his being slow of speech, and of a slow tongue: by comparing Philo's account with this text, one would be tempted to think that Pharaoh's daughter did really give out, that Moses was her own son; and the author of the epistle to the Hebrews seems to confirm this, ch. xi. 24. who says, that *Moses denied to be called*, or *that he was* the *son of Pharaoh's daughter*; as the words may be rendered.

Ver. 22. *And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians*, &c.] Which was reckoned very considerable: see 1 Kings iv. 30. Philo the Jew says [e], that he learned arithmetic, geometry, and every branch of music, the hieroglyphics, the Assyrian language, and the Chaldean knowledge of the heavens, and the mathematics; yet was not a magician, or skilled in unlawful arts, as Justin suggests [f]: *and was mighty in words*; he had a command of language, and a large flow of words, and could speak properly and pertinently upon any subject; for though he was slow of speech, and of tongue, and might have somewhat of a stammering in speaking, yet he might have a just diction, a masculine style, and a powerful eloquence, and the matter he delivered might be very great and striking: *and in deeds*; or *in his deeds*, as the Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions read: he was a man of great abilities, and fit for business both in the cabinet and in the field. Josephus [g] relates an expedition of his against the Ethiopians, whilst he was in Pharaoh's court, in which he obtained victory over them, when the Egyptians had been greatly oppressed by them; in which his prudence and fortitude were highly commended.

Ver. 23. *And when he was full forty years old*, &c.] This Stephen had from tradition, and not from Scripture, which is silent about the age of Moses at this time, and only says, *it came to pass in those days when Moses was grown*, Exod. ii. 11. but that he was at this time at such an age, is the general sense of the Jews. Upon the above-mentioned passage they have this note [h], "twenty years old was Moses at that time; "and there are that say, that he was *forty years old*." And [i] elsewhere still more particularly; "Moses was "*forty* years in the palace of Pharaoh, forty years in "Midian, (the Amsterdam edition reads, במדבר, *in the* "*wilderness*, wrongly,) and he served Israel forty "years." Indeed, the fabulous history of his life makes him to be but fifteen years of age at this time [k]; but Stephen's account is undoubtedly right, and which is confirmed by the above testimonies. *It came into his heart*; by the spirit of God, under a more than ordinary impulse of which he now was: *to visit his brethren, the children of Israel*; whom he knew to be his brethren, partly from the common report in Pharaoh's court concerning him, and partly from the mark of circumcision in his flesh, and chiefly from divine revelation: for some years he had lived a courtly and military life, and had took no notice of the Israelites in their oppressions; but now the Lord laid it upon his heart to visit them, and observe how things were with them: and though he could not use any public and open authority, yet Philo the Jew says [l], that he exhorted the officers to use mildness and moderation with them, and comforted and encouraged the Israelites to bear their burdens with patience and constancy, and not sink under them; suggesting, that things would take another turn, and would change for the better in time.

Ver. 24. *And seeing one of them suffer wrong*, &c.] Beza's Cambridge copy, and one of Stephens's, and one in the Bodleian library add, *of his own kindred*: and so in Exod. ii. 11. he is said to be *one of his brethren*; which Aben Ezra explains, ממשפחתו, *of his family*, one of the tribe of Levi; and so another Jewish

[c] Antiqu. l. 2. c. 9. sect. 7.
[d] Shemot Rabba, sect. 1. fol. 91. 3. Chronicon Mosis, fol. 4. 2. Shalshalet Hakabala, fol. 5. 2.
[e] De Vita Mosis, l. 1. p. 606. Clement. Alex. Strom. l. 1. p. 343.
[f] L. 36. c. 2.
[g] Antiqu. l. 2. c. 10. sect. 1, 2, 3.
[h] Shemot Rabba, sect. 1. fol. 91. 3.
[i] Bereshit Rabba, sect. 100, fol. 88. 4.
[k] Chronicon Mosis, fol. 5. 2.
[l] De Vita Mosis, l. 1. p. 608, 609.

writer[m] is very particular, and says, "Moses went out "to the camp of the Israelites, and saw an Egyptian "smite one of the sons of Kohath, who was of his "brethren of the tribe of Levi, as it is said, Exod. ii. "11." This man, according to some of the Jewish writers[n], was the husband of Shelomith, the daughter of Dibri, Lev. xxiv. 11. but, according to others, it was Dathan[o]: the cause and manner of his suffering wrong was this, as they report[p]; one of the task-masters having set his eyes upon his wife, who was a beautiful woman, came early one morning, and got him out of his house to work, and then went into his wife, and lay with her; which when the man understood, he made some disturbance about it, for which he caused him to serve in very hard bondage, and beat him severely; who flying to Moses for protection, *he defended him, and avenged him that was oppressed;* he took his part, and screened him from the insults and blows of the officer, and avenged his cause: *and smote the Egyptian;* and killed him: it is commonly said by the Jews[q], that he killed him by the sword of his mouth, by making use of the word Jehovah; though others[r] say, he smote him with his fist, which is more likely; or rather with his sword; the Ethiopic version adds, *and buried him in the sand.* Beza's ancient copy, and one of Stephens's, add, *and he hid him in the sand,* as it is in Exod. ii. 12. and which the Jews understand not literally of any sand-pit, into which he might cast him, and cover him; or of the sand of the sea, near which he was, and which does not appear; but mystically of the people of Israel, comparable to the sand of the sea, among whom he hid him. So in one of their Midrashes[s] it is observed on these words, "and *he* "*hid him in the sand;* though there were none there but "the Israelites——who are like to sand: he said unto "them, ye are like the sand; take this man here and "put him there, and his voice is not heard; so this "thing will be hid among you, and not heard. And "so you find that the thing was not heard but by the "means of the Hebrews, as it is said, *and he went out* "*on the second day,* and *two men of the Hebrews,* &c." And another of their[t] writers, says, that when Moses saw the Egyptian smiting the Hebrew, "he began to "curse him, and took the sword of his lips, and killed "him, and hid him in the camp of the Israelites, as it "is said, Exod. ii. 12. not in the sand, but among the "Israelites: hence it is said, *the number of the children* "*of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea,* Hos. i. 10." To which may be added what one of their chronologers[u] affirms, that "Moses slew the Egyptian with "the ineffable name of God, and hid him among the "children of Israel, who are like to sand." This Egyptian is said, by Jarchi, to be one of the task-masters who was appointed over the officers of Israel, who, from the cock-crowing, kept them to their work, which is very probable.

Ver. 25. *For he supposed his brethren would have understood him,* &c.] From his being an Hebrew in such high life; from his wonderful birth, and miraculous preservation in his infancy, and education in Pharaoh's court; and from the promise of God that he would visit them and save them: *how that God by his hand would deliver them:* wherefore he was the more emboldened to kill the Egyptian, believing that his brethren would make no advantage of it against him; but look upon it as a beginning and pledge of their deliverance by him: *but they understood not;* or *him not,* as the Ethiopic version reads: they did not understand that he was to be their deliverer, or that this action of his was a token of it.

Ver. 26. *And the next day he shewed himself to them, as they strove,* &c.] To two men of the Hebrews, who were quarrelling and contending with one another: these are said by the Jews[w] to be Dathan and Abiram; who were disputing and litigating the point, and were very warm, and at high words. The occasion of their contention is[x] said to be this, "the Hebrew man (that "had been abused) went to his house to divorce his "wife, who was defiled, but she fled and told the affair "to Abiram her brother: and on the morrow, Moses "returned a second time to the Hebrew camp, and "found Dathan and Abiram contending about the "divorce." Though some think this is proleptically said, because they afterwards contended and divided in the business of Korah[y]. Moses came up to them, and let them know who he was; and this was the day after he had killed the Egyptian. So Stephen explains the *second day* in Exod. ii. 13. and to this agrees what a Jewish writer[z] says, that in the morning, Moses returned a second time to the camp of the Hebrews: *and would have set them at one again;* persuaded them to peace and concord, composed their difference, reconciled them, and made them good friends: *saying, sirs, ye are brethren;* as Abraham said to Lot, when there was a strife between their herdsmen, Gen. xiii. 8. and if these two were Dathan and Abiram, they were brethren in the strictest sense, Numb. xvi. 1. *why do ye wrong one to another?* by abusing each other, calling ill names, or striking one another; or by lifting up the hand to strike, as Jonathan the Targumist says Dathan did against Abiram.

Ver. 27. *But he that did his neighbour wrong,* &c.] Who seems to be the same person whom Moses had defended the day before; and, according to the Jews, must be Dathan[a]: the same *thrust him away;* from them, when he went to part them, and persuade them to be good friends: *saying, who made thee a ruler and a judge over us?* which was very ungrateful, if he was the man he had delivered the day before; and very impertinent, since he did not take upon him to rule and judge, but only to exhort and persuade to peace and brotherly love: the language suits with the spirit

[m] Pirke Eliezer, c. 48.
[n] Jarchi in Exod. ii. 12.
[o] Shemot Rabba, sect. 1. fol. 91. 4. Shalshalet Hakabala, fol. 5. 2.
[p] Shemot Rabba, & Shalshalet, ib. & Chronicon Mosis, fol. 5. 2. & Jarchi in Exod. ii. 12.
[q] Pirke Eliezer, c. 48. Shalshalet, ib. Clement. Alex. Strom. l. 1. p. 344.
[r] Shemot Rabba, ib.
[s] Shemot Rabba, sect. 1. fol. 91. 4.
[t] Pirke Eliezer, c. 48.
[u] R. Gedaliah, Shalshalet Hakabala, fol. 5. 2.
[w] Shalshalet, ib.
[x] Targum Jon. Jarchi, & Baal Hatturim in Exod. ii. 12. Shemot Rabba, Shalshalet & Pirke Eliezer, ut supra.
[y] Shemot Rabba, ib. & Yade Mose & Mattanot Cehunah in ib.
[z] Shalsheleth, ib.
[a] Targum Jon. in Exod. ii. 14. Debarim Rabba, sect. 2. fol. 237. 1.

of Dathan or Abiram; see Numb. xvi. 3, 12, 13. This is thought to be said to him by way of contempt of him, as being a very young man: the words are thus commented on in one of the ancient commentaries of the Jews[b]; "R. Judah says, Moses was twenty "years of age at that time: wherefore it was said to "him, thou art not yet fit to be a prince and a judge "over us, seeing one of forty years of age is a man of "understanding. And R. Nehemiah says, he was "forty years of age; (see the note on ver. 23.) and it "was said to him, truly thou art a man, but thou art "not fit to be a prince and a judge over us: and the "Rabbans say, he said to him, art thou not the son of "Jochebed, though they call thee the son of Bithiah? "and dost thou seek to be a prince and a judge over "us? it is known concerning thee what thou didst to "the Egyptian."

Ver. 28. *Wilt thou kill me as thou didst the Egyptian yesterday?*] That is, is it thy will? dost thou design to kill me? or, as in Exod. ii. 14. *intendest* thou to kill me? In the Hebrew text it is, *wilt thou kill me, dost thou say?* that is, as Aben Ezra rightly interprets it, dost thou say so *in thine heart?* which is a much better observation than that of Jarchi's; "from hence we "learn, says he, that he slew him by the ineffable "name: though this is the sense of some of their ancient doctors[c]; "*to kill me dost thou say?* it is not "said, *dost thou seek?* but *dost thou say?* from whence "you may learn, that the ineffable name was made "mention of over the Egyptian, and he slew him." The word *yesterday* is added by Stephen, but with great truth and propriety, and is in the Septuagint version of Exod. ii. 14. The *as* here does not intend the manner of killing, whether by the fist or sword, or by pronouncing the word Jehovah, as Jarchi thinks, but killing itself, by whatsoever way; and the words were very spitefully said, on purpose to publish the thing, and to expose Moses to danger of life, as it did.

Ver. 29. *Then fled Moses at this saying*, &c.] For hereby the thing was known to Pharaoh, being presently carried to court, who sought to kill him for it, Exod. ii. 15. The Jews have a very fabulous story, that Moses was taken up upon it, and put in prison, and delivered into the hands of an executioner to be put to death; but that God wrought a miracle for him; he made his neck as hard as a pillar of marble, and the sword turned upon the neck of the executioner, and he died; and God sent Michael, the prince, in the likeness of the executioner, who took Moses by the hand, and led him out of Egypt, and left him at the borders of it, the distance of three days' journey[c]: but the truth of the matter is, as Stephen relates, he fled directly, as soon as he heard the above words, for he knew his life was in the utmost danger: *and was a stranger in the land of Madian;* which, as Josephus says[d], lay near the Red sea, and took its name from one of the sons of Abraham by Keturah. Philo the Jew[e] says, it was on the borders of Arabia; and, according to Jerom[f], it was near Arnon and Areopolis, the ruins of which only were shewn in his days; here he sojourned many years with Jethro the priest of that place: *where he begat two sons;* whose names were Gershom and Eliezer, having married Zipporah, the daughter of Jethro, Exod. xviii. 2, 3, 4.

Ver. 30. *And when forty years were expired*, &c.] *Forty other years* the Arabic version reads; for so long the Jews[g] say Moses kept Jethro's flock, and so many years he lived in Midian; and so the Syriac version, *when then he had filled up forty years:* which agrees exactly with the account of the Jewish writers observed on ver. 23. who say, that he was forty years in Pharaoh's court, and forty years in Midian; so that he was now, as they[h] elsewhere justly observe, fourscore years of age: *there appeared to him in the wilderness of Mount Sinai;* the same with Horeb, Exod. iii. 1. where it is said, *Moses came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb;* where he saw the sight of the burning bush, and out of which the angel appeared to him: and Stephen is to be justified in calling it Mount Sinai; the account which Jerom[i] gives of it is this; "Horeb "is the Mount of God in the land of Midian, by Mount "Sinai, above Arabia, in the desert, to which is joined "the mountain and desert of the Saracenes, called "Pharan: but to me it seems, that the same mountain "was called by two names, sometimes Sinai, and "sometimes Horeb;" and in which he was right. Some think the same mountain had two tops, and one went by one name, and the other by another; or one side of the mountain was called Horeb, from its being dry and desolate; and the other Sinai, from the bushes and brambles which grew upon it. So סינין, *Sinin*, in the Misna[k], signifies the thin barks of bramble-bushes; and the bush hereafter mentioned, in the Hebrew language, is called סנה, *Seneh;* from whence, with the Jews, it is said to have its name. "Says[l] R. Eliezer, "from the day the heavens and the earth were created, "the name of this mountain was called Horeb; but "after the holy blessed God appeared to Moses out "of the midst of the bush, from the name of the bush "*(Seneh)*, Horeb was called Sinai." Some say the stones of this mountain, when broken, had the resemblance of bramble-bushes[m] in them. Add to this, that Josephus[n] calls this mountain by the same name as Stephen does, when he is reciting the same history. Moses, he says, "led the flock to the Sinaean mountain, "as it is called: this is the highest mountain in that "country, and best for pasture, abounding in good "herbage; and because it was commonly believed "the Divine Being dwelt there, it was not before fed "upon, the shepherds not daring to go up to it." Here Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law; for to such a life did he condescend, who for forty years had been brought up in the court of Pharaoh, king of Egypt. Here appeared to him *an angel of the*

[a] Shemot Rabba, ib.
[b] In ib.
[c] Shalshaleth Hakabala, fol. 4. 2. & Chronicon Mosis, fol. 6. 1.
[d] Antiqu. l. 2. c. 11. sect. 1.
[e] De Vita Mosis, l. 1. p. 609.
[f] De locis Hebr. fol. 93. B.
[g] Pirke Eliezer, c. 40.
[h] Sepher Cosri, fol. 38. 1. & Moses Kotsensis præfat. ad Mizvot Tora.
[i] De locis Hebraicis, fol. 92. E.
[k] Misn. Celim, c. 10. sect. 6.
[l] Pirke Eliezer, c. 41. Aben Ezra in Exod. iii. 2.
[m] R. Moses Narbonensis apud Drusii Preterita in loc. Vid. Hiller. Onomasticum, p. 523.
[n] Antiqu. l. 2. c. 12. sect. 1.

Lord, and who was no other than the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as appears from ver. 32. and was the second person in the Trinity, the son of God, the angel of the divine presence, and of the covenant, an increated angel. And this is the sense of many of the Jewish writers, who interpret it of the angel the Redeemer, the God of Bethel [o]; though Jonathan the paraphrast seems to understand it of a created angel, whose name he calls Zagnugael [p], and some say it was Michael, and some Gabriel [q]. *In a flame of fire in a bush;* and which yet was not consumed by it. This bush was a bramble-bush, or thorn; so Aben Ezra [r] says it was a kind of thorn, and observes, that in the Ishmaelitish or Turkish language, the word signifies a kind of dry thorn; and so Philo the Jew says [s], it was a thorny plant, and very weak; and therefore it was the more wonderful, that it should be on fire, and not consumed. Josephus [t] affirms, that neither its verdure, nor its flowers were hurt, nor any of its fruitful branches consumed, though the flame was exceeding fierce. The Jerusalem Targum of Exod. iii. 2. is, "and he saw "and beheld the bush burned with fire, and the bush "מרטיב, *became green;* or, as Buxtorf renders it, "*emitted a moisture*, and was not burnt." This sight, the Arabic writers [u] say, Moses saw at noon-day. Artapanus [w], an ancient writer, makes mention of this burning, but takes no notice of the bush; yea, denies that there was any thing woody in the place, and represents it only as a stream of fire issuing out of the earth: his words are, "as he (Moses) was praying, "suddenly fire broke out of the earth, and burned, "when there was nothing woody, nor any matter fit "for burning in the place." But Philo better describes it; speaking of the bush, he says [x], "no one "bringing fire to it, suddenly it burned, and was all "in a flame from the root to the top, as if it was from "a flowing fountain, and remained whole and unhurt, "as if it was no fuel for the fire, but was nourished "by it." The Jews allegorize this vision different ways: sometimes they say [y], "the fire designs the "Israelites, who are compared to fire, as it is said, "Obad. i. 18. *the house of Jacob shall be a fire;* and "the bush denotes the nations of the world, which are "compared to thorns and thistles; so shall the Israelites be among the people, their fire shall not consume "the people, who are like to thorns and briers; nor "shall the nations of the world extinguish their flame, "which is the words of the law: but in the world to "come, the fire of the Israelites shall consume all "people, who are compared to thorns and thistles, "according to Isa. xxxiii. 12." But it is much better observed in the same place; "the bush pricks, afflicts, "and gives pain, why does he (the Lord) dwell in "affliction and anguish? because he saw the Israelites "in great affliction, he also dwelt with them in "affliction, as it is said, Isa. lxiii. 9. *in all their affliction* "*he was afflicted.*" And very appositely is it remarked by Philo [z]; "the burning bush (says he) is a symbol of "the oppressed, the flaming fire, of the oppressors; "and whereas that which was burning was not burnt, "it shews, that they that are oppressed shall not perish "by those who attempt it; and that their attempt "shall be in vain, and they shall escape safe." And so Aben Ezra has this note on Exod. iii. 2. "the enemy "is compared to fire, and Israel to the bush, wherefore it was not burnt:" this may be very well considered as an emblem of the state of the Jewish people in fiery trials, and very severe afflictions; who were like a bush for the number of its twigs and branches, they being many, and for its weakness and liableness to be consumed by fire, and yet wonderfully preserved by the power and presence of God among them.

Ver. 31. *When Moses saw it, he wondered at the sight*, &c.] To see a bush on fire was no extraordinary thing; but to see a bush on fire, and yet not consumed by it, which was the case here, was wonderful indeed: and that an angel of the Lord, or the Lord himself, should appear in it, made it still more amazing; though, as yet, this was not observed by Moses, only the former; and which struck him with wonder, and excited his curiosity: *and as he drew near to behold it;* to take a more exact view of it, and satisfy himself with the truth of it, and, if it was possible, to find out the reason why it was not burnt: *the voice of the Lord came unto him;* to his ears, out of the bush, and expressed the following words.

Ver. 32. Saying, *I am the God of thy fathers*, &c.] Who made a covenant with them, promised the land of Canaan to them, and to their posterity, and to bring the children of Israel out of their servitude and bondage, and into the possession of the promised land: *the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob;* words which our Lord makes use of to prove the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, since God is not the God of the dead, but of the living, Matt. xxii. 32. see the note there. *Then Moses trembled:* this Stephen had by tradition; in which way also the author of the epistle to the Hebrews had the account of his trembling and quaking at the same mount, when the law was given, Heb. xii. 21. *and durst not behold:* either *the sight* of the burning bush, and curiously consider and inquire into that, as the Syriac version reads; or *him*, as the Ethiopic version: that is, God, and which is expressed in Exod. iii. 6.

Ver. 33. *Then said the Lord to him*, &c.] To Moses, who through curiosity had made too near an approach: *put off thy shoes from thy feet;* in token of humility, obedience, and reverence: *for the place where thou standest is holy ground;* not really, but relatively, on account of the divine presence in it, and only so long as that continued.

Ver. 34. *I have seen, I have seen the affliction of my people*, &c.] The repetition of the phrase denotes the certainty of it, the exquisite and exact knowledge the Lord took of the affliction of his people, and how much

[o] R. Menachem in Ainsworth in Exod. iii. 2.
[p] Targum Jon. in ib.
[q] Shemot Rabba, sect. 2. fol. 92. 4.
[r] Comment. in Exod. iii. 2.
[s] De Vita Mosis, l. 1. p. 612, 613.
[t] In loc. supra citat.
[u] Patricides, p. 26. Elmacinus, p. 47. apud Hottinger. Smegma Oriental. l. 1. c. 8. p. 415.
[w] Apud Euseb. Evangel. præpar. l. 9. c. 27. p. 434.
[x] Ut supra.
[y] Pirke Eliezer, c. 40. Vid. Shemot Rabba, sect. 2. fol. 92. 4.
[z] Ut supra.

his heart was affected with it: *which is in Egypt:* from whence Moses had fled and had left them, he being now in the land of Midian, which was the place of his sojourning: *and I have heard their groaning;* under their various oppressions and burdens, and by reason of the cruel usage of their task-masters: *and am come down to deliver them:* not by local motion, or change of place, God being omnipresent, who fills all places at all times; but by the effects of his grace and power. *And now come, I will send thee into Egypt;* to Pharaoh, the king of it, Exod. iii. 10. to require of him to let the children of Israel go, and to deliver them out of their bondage.

Ver. 35. *This Moses, whom they refused,* &c.] That is, the Israelites; the Ethiopic version reads, *his kinsmen denied;* those of his own nation, and even of his family: *saying, who made thee a ruler and a judge?* as Dathan, or whoever said the words in ver. 27. *the same did God send to be a ruler and a deliverer;* or *a redeemer;* so the Jews often call Moses, saying [a], "as was the "first redeemer, so shall be the last Redeemer." He was an eminent type of the Messiah; and the redemption of the people of Israel out of the Egyptian bondage, by him, was emblematical of redemption from the bondage of sin, Satan, and the law by Jesus Christ; and as Moses had his mission and commission from God, so had Jesus Christ, as Mediator; and as Moses was despised by his brethren, and yet made the ruler and deliverer of them, so, though Jesus was set at nought by the Jews, yet he was made both Lord and Christ, and exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour. Moses was sent *by the hands of the angel, which appeared to him in the bush;* and who was the second person in the Godhead; the father sent him by the son, not as an instrument, but as having the power and authority over him, to govern, direct, and assist him. The Alexandrian copy, and the Vulgate Latin version read, *with the hand of the angel;* he sent Moses along with him to be used by him as an instrument in his hand, to deliver the people of Israel; nor does this at all contradict what the Jews say [b] at the time of the passover: "and the Lord hath brought us out of "Egypt, לא על ידי מלאך, *not by the hands of an angel,* "nor by the hands of a seraph, nor by the hands of a "messenger, but the holy blessed God, by his own "glory, by himself;" for he did not deliver them by a created angel, but by an increated one.

Ver. 36. *He brought them out,* &c.] Of Egypt, and delivered them from all their oppressions in it: *after that he had shewn wonders and signs in the land of Egypt;* by turning his rod into a serpent, and by his rod swallowing up the rods of the Egyptians, and by the ten plagues, which were inflicted on Pharaoh, and his people, for not letting the children of Israel go: *and in the Red sea;* by dividing the waters of it, so that the people of Israel went through it as on dry ground, which Pharaoh and his army attempting to do, were drowned. This sea is called the Red sea, not from the natural colour of the water, which is the same with that of other seas; nor from the appearance of it through the rays of the sun upon it, or the shade of the red mountains near it; but from Erythras, to whom it formerly belonged, and whose name signifies red; and is no other than Esau, whose name was Edom, which signifies the same; it lay near his country: it is called in the Hebrew tongue the sea of Suph, from the weeds that grew in it; and so it is in the Syriac version here: *and in the wilderness forty years;* where wonders were wrought for the people in providing food for them, and in preserving them from their enemies, when at last they were brought out of it into Canaan's land, by Joshua. This exactly agrees with what has been before observed on ver. 23. from the Jewish writings, that Moses was forty years in Pharaoh's court, forty years in Midian, and forty years in the wilderness.

Ver. 37. *This is that Moses which said unto the children of Israel,* &c.] What is recorded in Deut. xviii. 15. *a prophet,* &c. see the note on ch. iii. 22.

Ver. 38. *This is he that was in the church in the wilderness,* &c.] Which must be understood of the children of Israel, who were the then church of God, whom he had chosen and separated from the rest of the world, to be a peculiar people to himself, to whom were given the word and ordinances, the service of God, and the promises; and God always had, and will have a church, though that is sometimes in the wilderness; which has been the case under the Gospel dispensation, as well as before; see Rev. xii. 6, 14. and it was a peculiar honour to Moses, that he was in this church, though it was in the wilderness; even a greater honour than to be in Pharaoh's court. This has a particular respect to the time when all Israel were encamped at the foot of Mount Sinai, when Moses was not only in the midst of them, and at the head of them; but was *with the angel which spake to him in the Mount Sina:* this is the same angel as before, in ver. 30. and refers either to his speaking to him then, saying, I am the God of thy fathers, *&c.* which was at Mount Sinai; or rather to the time when the law was given on that mount; and it may be to both; it is true of each, though it may more especially regard the latter; for it was the angel of the divine presence, the second person in the Trinity, the word of God, that bid Moses come up into the mount; and who spake all the ten words to him; and who is described in so grand and august a manner in Deut. xxxiii. 2. *and with our fathers;* the Jewish ancestors, who came out of Egypt under Moses, with whom he was as their deliverer and ruler, their guide and governor: *who received the lively oracles to give unto us;* he received from the angel which spake to him the law, to deliver to the children of Israel; which is called *the oracles,* because it came from God, and contained his mind and will, and was a sure and infallible declaration of it: and *lively* ones, because delivered *viva voce,* with an articulate voice, and in audible sounds, and because it is quick and powerful, sharper than a two-edged sword. The Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions render it, *the words of life;* not that the law gives life, or points out the way of life and salvation to sinful men; it is to them all the reverse; it is the killing letter, and the ministration of condemnation and death: it is indeed

[a] Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 11. fol. 202. 2. Midrash Ruth, fol. 33. 2. & Midrash Kohelet, fol. 63. 2.

[b] Haggada Shel Pesach. p. 13. Ed. Rittangel.

a rule of life, or of walk and conversation to men, and it promises life in case of perfect obedience, Lev. xviii. 5. Deut. xxx. 19, 20. and xxxii. 47. but this is impracticable by fallen men, and therefore there is no life nor righteousness by the law. Though these lively oracles may be considered in a larger extent, as including all the promises of God respecting the Messiah, delivered to Moses, and all the rites and ordinances of the ceremonial law, which pointed out Christ, as the way of life, righteousness, and salvation, from whence they may very well take this name.

Ver. 39. *To whom our fathers would not obey*, &c.] But often murmured against him, and were disobedient to him, and to the oracles he delivered to them, and so to God, whose oracles they were: *but thrust him from them*; as one of the two Hebrews did, when he interposed to make up the difference between them; and which was an emblem and presage of what that people would afterwards do; see ver. 27. *and in their hearts turned back again into Egypt*, they wished themselves there again, they lusted after the fish, the cucumbers, the melons, leeks, onions, and garlic there; and went so far as to move for a captain, and even to appoint one to lead them back thither again.

Ver. 40. *Saying unto Aaron, make us gods to go before us*, &c.] This is a proof of their disobedience to the law of Moses, and of their rejection of him, and of the inclination of their hearts to the idolatry of the Egyptians; which shews the gross stupidity, as well as ingratitude of this people, to think that gods could be made; and that those that are made could go before them, be guides unto them, and protectors of them; when they have eyes, but see not, and hands, but handle not, and feet, but walk not: *for as for this Moses*; whom they speak of with great contempt, and in a very irreverent way: *which brought us out of the land of Egypt*; which they mention not with gratitude, but as reflecting upon him for doing it: *we wot not what is become of him*; they thought he was dead, according to the Targum of Jonathan on Exod. xxxii. 1. they concluded he was consumed with fire on the mount which flamed with fire. [b] The following story is told by the Jews; " when Moses went up on high, " he said to the Israelites, at the end of forty days, at " the beginning of the sixth hour I will come; at the " end of forty days came Satan, and disturbed the " world; he said to them, where is Moses your master? " they answered him, he is gone up on high: he said " to them, the sixth hour is come; they took no " notice of him; he is dead (says he); they had no " regard to him; he shewed them the likeness of his " bier; then they said to Aaron, *as for this man* " *Moses*, &c."

Ver. 41. *And they made a calf in those days*, &c.] Whilst Moses was in the mount; this was done in imitation of the Egyptian idol Apis or Serapis, which was an ox or a bullock; and it was made of the golden earings of the people, which were melted down, and cast into the form of a calf, and graved by Aaron with a graving tool, Exod. xxxii. 2, 3, 4. And so the Syriac version here reads in the singular number, *and he made them a calf*; this was a most shameful and scandalous piece of idolatry. The Jews themselves are so sensible of the horribleness of it, and of the guilt of it, and of the reproach that lies on them for it, that it is common for them to say [c], " there is not a generation, or an age, in which there is not an ounce " of the sin of the calf." Or, as elsewhere [d] expressed, " no punishment befalls thee, O Israel, in " which there is not an ounce of the sin of the calf." *And offered sacrifice unto the idol*; an altar was built, and proclamation made, that the next day would be the feast of the Lord; and accordingly early in the morning the people rose, and offered both burnt-offerings and peace-offerings, Exod. xxxii. 5, 6. *and rejoiceth in the works of their own hands*; for so the calf was; and which rejoicing they shewed by eating, and drinking, and singing, and dancing.

Ver. 42. *Then God turned*, &c.] Away from them, withdrew his presence, and his favours from them: *and gave them up to worship the host of heaven*; not angels, but the sun, moon, and stars; for since they liked not to retain the knowledge and worship of the true God, who made the heavens, and the earth, God in righteous judgment, in a judicial way, gave them up to a reprobate mind, to commit all the idolatry of the Gentiles, as a punishment of their former sin in making and worshipping the calf: *as it is written in the book of the prophets*; of the twelve lesser prophets, which were all in one book; and which, as the Jews say [e], were put together, that a book of them might not be lost through the smallness of it; among which Amos stands, a passage in whose prophecy is here referred to; namely, in chap. v. 25. *O ye house of Israel, have ye offered to me slain beasts and sacrifices by the space of forty years in the wilderness*; no; they offered to devils, and not to God, Deut. xxxii. 17. and though there were some few sacrifices offered up; yet since they were not frequently offered, nor freely, and with all the heart, and with faith, and without hypocrisy, they were looked upon by God as if they were not offered at all.

Ver. 43. *Yea, ye took up the tabernacle of Moloch*, &c.] Sometimes called Molech, and sometimes Milcom; it was the god of the Ammonites, and the same with Baal: the one signifies king, and the other lord; and was, no doubt, the same with the Apis or Serapis of the Egyptians, and the calf of the Israelites. Frequent mention is made of giving seed to Molech, and causing the children to pass through fire to him. The account the Jews give of this image, and of the barbarous worship of it, is this [f]: " though all idolatrous places were in Jerusalem, Molech was without Jerusalem; and it was made an hollow image, " placed within seven chancels or chapels; and whoever offered fine flour, they opened to him the first; " if turtle doves or two young pigeons, they opened " the second; if a lamb, they opened the third; if " a ram, they opened the fourth; if a calf, they " opened the fifth; if an ox, they opened the sixth;

[b] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 89. 1. Vid. Jarchi & Baal Hatturim in Exod. xxxii. 1.
[c] T. Hieros. Taaniot, fol. 68. 3.
[d] Vid. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 102. 1.
[e] Kimchi præfat. ad Huseam.
[f] R. David Kimchi in 2 Kings xxiii. 10.

"but whoever offered his son, they opened the "seventh: his face was a calf's, and his hands were "stretched out, as a man opens his hands to receive "any thing from his friend; and they make him hot "with fire, and the priests take the infant and put it "into the hands of Molech, and the infant expires: "and wherefore is it called Tophet and Hinnom? "Tophet, because they make a noise with drums, "that its father may not hear the voice of the child, "and have compassion on it, and return to it; and "Hinnom, because the child roars, and the voice of its "roaring ascends." Others give a milder account of this matter, and say, that the service was after this manner[g]; that "the father delivered his son to the "priests, who made two large fires, and caused the son "to pass on his feet between the two fires," so that it was only a sort of a lustration or purification by fire; but the former account, which makes the child to be sacrificed, and put to death, seems best to agree with the scriptural one. Now this idol was included in chancels or chapels, as in the account given, or in shrines, in tabernacles, or portable temples, which might be taken up and carried; and such an one is here mentioned: by which is meant, not the tabernacle of the Lord made by Bezeleel; as if the sense was, that the idolatrous Israelites, though not openly, yet secretly, and in their hearts worshipped Moloch, as if he was included in the tabernacle; so that to take it up means no other, than in the heart to worship, and to consider him as if he had been shut up and carried in that tabernacle; nor is it to be thought that they publicly took up, and carried a tabernacle, in which was the image of Moloch, during their forty years' travels in the wilderness; for whatever they might do the few days they worshipped the golden calf, which is possible, it cannot be received, that Moses, who was so severe against idolatry, would ever have connived at such a practice: this therefore must have reference to after-times, when they sacrificed their children to him, and took up and carried his image in little shrines and tabernacles. *And the star of your god Remphan.* The Alexandrian copy reads *Raiphan;* some copies read *Raphan*; and so the Arabic version; others *Rephan;* the Syriac version reads *Rephon;* and the Ethiopic version *Rephom.* Giants, with the Hebrews, were called *Rephaim;* and so Moloch, who is here meant, is called *Rephan*, and with an epenthesis *Remphan*, because of his gigantic form; which some have concluded from the massy crown on his head, which, with the precious stones, weighed a talent of gold, which David took from thence, 2 Sam. xii. 30. for not the then reigning king of the Ammonites, but Molech, or Milchom, their idol, is meant: this is generally thought to be the same with Chiun in Amos; but it does not stand in a place to answer to that; besides, that should not be left untranslated, it not being a proper name of an idol, but signifies a type or form; and the whole may be rendered thus, *but ye have borne the tabernacle of your king, and the type,* or *form of your images, the star of your god;* which version agrees with Stephens's, who, from the Septuagint, adds the name of this their king, and their god Rephan, or Remphan. Drusius conjectures, that this is a fault of the Scribes writing Rephan for Cephan, or that the Septuagint interpreters mistook the letter כ for ר, and instead of Cevan read Revan; and Chiun is indeed, by Kimchi and Aben Ezra[h], said to be the same with Chevan, which, in the Ishmaelitish and Persian languages, signifies Saturn; and so does Rephan in the Egyptian language: and it is further to be observed, that the Egyptians had a king called Remphis, the same with Apis; and this may be the reason why the Septuagint interpreters, who interpreted for Ptolomy, king of Egypt, put Rephan, which Stephen calls Remphan, instead of Chiun, which they were better acquainted with, since they both signify the same deity, and the same star; and which also was the star of the Israelites, called by them שבתאי, because supposed to have the government of the sabbath-day, and therefore fitly called the *star of your god.* Upon the whole, Moloch, Chiun, Rephan, or Remphan, and Remphis, all are the same with the Serapis of the Egyptians, and the calf of the Israelites; and which idolatry was introduced on account of Joseph, who interpreted the dream of Pharaoh's kine, and provided for the Egyptians in the years of plenty against the years of famine, and was worshipped under the ox with a bushel on his head; *figures which ye made to worship them;* in Amos it is said, *which you made for yourselves;* meaning both the image and the tabernacle in which it was, which they made for their own use, to worship their deity in and by: *and I will carry you beyond Babylon;* in Amos it is beyond Damascus, and so some copies read here, which was in Babylon; and explains the sense of the prophet more fully, that they should not only be carried for their idolatry beyond Damascus, and into the furthermost parts of Babylon, but beyond it, even into the cities of the Medes, Halah, and Habor, by the river Gozan; and here is no contradiction: how far beyond Damascus, the prophet does not say; and if they were carried beyond Babylon, they must be carried beyond Damascus, and so the words of the prophet were fulfilled; and Stephen living after the fulfilment of the prophecy, by which it appeared that they were carried into Media, could say how far they were carried; wherefore the Jew[i] has no reason to cavil at Stephen, as if he misrepresented the words of the prophet, and related things otherwise than they were; and so Kimchi interprets it, far beyond Damascus; and particularly mentions Halah and Habor, cities in Media, where the ten tribes were carried.

Ver. 44. *Our fathers had the tabernacle of witness in the wilderness,* &c.] The Ethiopic version adds, *of Sinai;* there it was that the tabernacle was first ordered to be built, and there it was built, and set up: which was a sort of a portable temple, in which Jehovah took up his residence, and which was carried from place to place: of it, and its several parts and furniture, there is a large account in the book of Exodus, ch. xxv. and following. It is sometimes called Ohel Moed, or *the*

[g] Jarchi & Ben Melech in Lev. xviii. 23. Kimchi in Sepher Shorash. rad. מלך.

[h] In Amos v. 25.

[i] R. Isaac Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 64. p. 451.

tabernacle of the congregation, because there the people of Israel gathered together, and God met with them; and sometimes *the tabernacle of the testimony*, or *witness*, as here; see Exod. xxxviii. 21. Numb. i. 50, 53. because the law, called the tables of the testimony, and the testimony, it being a testification or declaration of the will of God, was put into an ark; which for that reason is called the ark of the testimony; and which ark was placed in the tabernacle; and hence that took the same name too. The Jewish writers say[k], it is so called, "because it was a testimony that the Shekinah "dwelt in Israel;" or as another[l] expresses it, "it was "a testimony to Israel that God had pardoned them "concerning the affair of the calf, for, lo, his Shekinah "dwelt among them." This tabernacle, in which was the testimony of the will of God, what he would have done, and how he would be worshipped, and which was a token of his presence, was among the Jewish fathers whilst they were in the wilderness; and is mentioned as an aggravation of their sin, that they should now, or afterwards, take up and carry the tabernacle of Moloch. The Alexandrian copy reads, *your fathers*: the sense is the same. *As he had appointed*; that is, as God appointed, ordered, and commanded: *speaking unto Moses*, Exod. xxv. 40. *that he should make it according to the fashion he had seen*; when in the Mount with God; see Heb. viii. 5. for it was not a bare account of the tabernacle, and its vessels, which he hearing, might form an idea of in his mind; but there was a visible form represented to his eye, a pattern, exemplar, or archetype of the whole, according to which every thing was to be made; which teaches us, that every thing in matters of worship ought to be according to the rule which God has given, from which we should never swerve in the least.

Ver. 45. *Which also our fathers that came after*, &c.] Who came after those that died in the wilderness, and never saw nor entered into the land of Canaan; the children of that generation whose carcasses fell in the wilderness, who sprung from them, came up in their room, and succeeded them: *brought in with Jesus into the possession of the Gentiles*; that is, they having received the tabernacle from their fathers, brought it into the land of Canaan, which was possessed by the Gentiles, when they entered into it with Joshua their leader, and captain, at the head of them; who is here called Jesus, as he is in Heb. iv. 8. for Joshua and Jesus are the same name, and signify a saviour; for such an one Joshua was to the people of Israel; and was an eminent type of Jesus Christ, the captain of our salvation, in his bringing many sons to glory: *whom God drove out before the face of our fathers*; the Gentiles, who before possessed the land of Canaan, were drove out by God before the Israelites, to make way for their settlement there; for to whom can the success of those victories over the Canaanites be ascribed, which the Israelites under Joshua obtained, but to God? The language on the *Tingitane*, or Hercules's pillars, said to be set up by some of these Canaanites, agrees with this, on which they inscribed these words; "we are "they who fled from the face of Joshua the robber, "the son of Nave," or Nun: *unto the days of David*; this clause must not be read in connexion with the words immediately preceding, as if the sense was, that the inhabitants of Canaan were drove out of their land unto the times of David, and then returned and resettled, as in the Ethiopic version; but with the beginning of the verse, and the meaning is, that the tabernacle which the Israelites received from their fathers, and brought into the land of Canaan with them, was there unto the times of David.

Ver. 46. *Who found favour before God*, &c.] That is, David, who had an interest in the free favour and love of God, was chosen of God, a man after his own heart, and raised up to do his will; and who had the grace of God implanted in him, and was acceptable, and well pleasing to God through Christ; the same is said of Noah, Gen. vi. 8. *and desired to find a tabernacle for the God of Jacob*; from whom the Israelites descended: David having a deep sense of the love of God to him, and the grace of God wrought in his heart, was exceeding desirous of finding a place for the building of an house, or fixed habitation for God; for there was a tabernacle already, which had been from the time of Moses, and which the children of Israel brought with them into Canaan, and was moved from place to place; sometimes it was at Gilgal, sometimes at Shiloh, and then it was at Nob, and Gibeah, and at length it was brought by David into his own city; but he wanted to build a settled and stable house for the Lord, of which there was a hint given that the Lord would choose a place to put his name in, Deut. xvi. 2. but it seems, where that was to be was not known; and therefore David very anxiously sought after it; the reference is had to Psal. cxxxii. 3, 4, 5. where David determines not to go to his house, nor up to his bed, nor give sleep to his eyes, nor slumber to his eye-lids, till he had found out a place for the habitation of the God of Jacob.

Ver. 47. *But Solomon built him an house.*] Though David was so set upon it, and made such large provisions for it, he was not to be the man that should build it, he having been greatly concerned in wars, and in the effusion of blood; but Solomon his son, who enjoyed much peace, was the person designed for this work, and who did accomplish it; of which there is a large account in the first book of Kings, chap. 6. and 7.

Ver. 48. *Howbeit the most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands*, &c.] Such an one as Solomon's was; he did indeed dwell in his temple, but he was not confined to it, nor included in it, or circumscribed by it; and so much Solomon himself suggests, when he expresses his wonder at his dwelling on earth, seeing the heaven of heavens could not contain him, and still less the house which he had built, 1 Kings viii. 27, עליון, *the most High*, is one of the names of God, Gen xiv. 18, 19, 22: the Apostle Paul says the same of God as Stephen does here; see Acts xvii. 24. *as saith the prophet*: the prophet Isaiah, chap. lxvi. 1, 2.

Ver. 49. *Heaven is my throne*, &c.] There is the seat of the divine Majesty; there his glory is most conspicuous; there he keeps his court, that is his palace; and there are his attendants, the angels; and

[k] Baal Hatturim in Exod. xxxiii. 21.

[l] Jarchi in ib.

from thence are the administrations of his regal power and government, over the whole world: *and earth is my footstool;* which is under his feet, is subject to him, and at his dispose, and which he makes use of at his pleasure: these things are not to be literally understood, but are images and figures, representing the majesty, sovereignty, and immensity of God; who is the maker of all things, the governor of the universe, and is above all places, and not to be contained in any: *what house will ye build me? saith the Lord;* or where can any be built for him, since he already takes up the heaven and the earth? what house can be built by men, or with hands, that can hold him, or is fit for him to dwell in? *or what is the place of my rest?* not in any house made with hands, but in the church among his saints, who are the temples of the living God; and this is his rest for ever, and here will he dwell, because he has chosen and desired them, and built them up for an habitation for himself, Psal. cxxxii. 13, 14.

Ver. 50. *Hath not my hand made all these things?*] The heaven, and the earth, and all that is in them; the Arabic version renders it, *all these creatures;* and therefore what can be made for God? or what house built for him? in Isaiah the words are read without an interrogation, and affirm that his hand had made all these things, and therefore nothing could be made for him suitable to him, by the hands of men.

Ver. 51. *Ye stiff-necked,* &c.] Or *hard-necked,* the same with קשה עורף, which is a character frequently given of this people, Exod. xxxii. 9. and xxxiii. 3, 5. and xxxiv. 9. and elsewhere, and is expressive of their obstinacy, stubbornness and refractoriness; who would not submit their necks to the yoke of God's law, and be obedient to his commands: *and uncircumcised in heart and ears;* for though they had the mark of circumcision in their flesh, of which they boasted; yet they had not the true circumcision of the heart; their hearts were not circumcised to fear and love the Lord, nor their ears to hear the word of the Lord and the Gospel of Christ; so that notwithstanding their confidence in carnal privileges, they were uncircumcised persons: *ye do always resist the Holy Ghost;* the resistance made by these persons was not to the spirit of God in them, of which they were destitute, but to the spirit of God in his ministers, in his apostles, and particularly in Stephen; nor to any internal operation of his grace, but to the external ministry of the word, and to all that objective light, knowledge, evidence, and conviction that it gave of Jesus's being the Messiah: and such who resist Christ's ministers, resist him, and such who resist him, may be said to resist his Holy Spirit; and the word here used signifies a rushing against, and falling upon, in a rude and hostile way, and fitly expresses their ill treatment of Christ and his ministers, by falling upon them and putting them to death: which is the resistance here designed, as appears by the following verse: so that this passage is no proof of the resistance of the Holy Spirit, and the operations of his grace in conversion, when he is in men, and acts with a purpose and will to convert them; since it does not appear that he was in these persons, and was acting in them, with a design to convert them; and if he was, it will be difficult to prove that they so resisted, and continued to resist, as that they were not hereafter converted; since it is certain that one of them, Saul, was really and truly converted, and how many more we know not. Though it will be allowed, that the Holy Ghost in the operations of his grace upon the heart in conversion may be resisted, that is, opposed; but not so as to be overcome or be hindered in, or be obliged to cease from, the work of conversion, insomuch that that may come to nothing: *as your fathers* did, *so* do *ye;* or as *your fathers* were, *so* are *ye;* as they were stiff-necked, self-willed, obstinate, and inflexible, so are ye; as they were uncircumcised in heart and ears, so are ye; and as they resisted the spirit of God in his prophets, so do ye resist him in the apostles and ministers of the Gospel.

Ver. 52. *Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted?* &c.] Either by reviling and speaking all manner of evil of them, Matt. v. 11, 12. or by killing them, Matt. xxiii. 31, 37. *and they have slain them;* as Isaiah, Zachariah, and others: *which shewed before of the coming of the just one;* of Jesus the Messiah, whose character in the prophecies of the Old Testament is righteous servant, righteous branch, just, and having salvation; and whom Stephen styles so partly on account of the holiness of his nature, and the innocence and harmlessness of his life; and partly because he is the author of righteousness, and the end of the law for it to all that believe; of whose coming in the flesh all the prophets more or less spoke: and this being good news, and glad tidings, made the sin of the Jewish fathers the greater, in putting them to death, as the innocent character of Christ was an aggravation of the Jews' sin, in murdering of him, as it follows: *of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers;* Judas, one of their nation, betrayed him into the hands of the chief priests and elders; and they betrayed, or delivered him into the hands of Pontius Pilate to be condemned to death, which they greatly importuned, and would not be satisfied without; and therefore are rightly called the murderers, as well as the betrayers of him.

Ver. 53. *Who have received the law by the disposition of angels,* &c.] Who attended the angel that spake to Moses on Mount Sinai, ver. 38. who is the head of all principality and power, and whom he might make use of in giving the law to Moses: hence the law is said to be ordained by angels, in the hand of a Mediator, and is called the word spoken by angels, Gal. iii. 19. Heb. ii. 2. and certain it is, that there were great numbers of angels on Mount Sinai, when the law was given, Deut. xxxiii. 2. Psal. lxviii. 17. And so the Jews say[m], that "when the holy blessed God descended on Mount Sinai, there came down with him "many companies of angels, Michael and his company, and Gabriel and his company." Indeed they often say[n], "the law was not given to the ministering "angels:" their meaning is, it was not given to them to observe and keep, because there are some things in it, which do not concern angels; but then it might be given to them to deliver to Moses, who gave it to

[m] Debarim R. bba, sect. 2. fol. 237. 3.

[n] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 25. 2. Yoma. fol. 30. 1. Kiddushin, fol. 54. 1.

the Israelites, and so may be said to receive it by the ministration of angels, through the hands of Moses. And now the law being given and received in so grand a manner, was an aggravation of the sin of the Jews in violating it, as it follows: *and have not kept it*; but broke it in innumerable instances, and scarce kept it in any; for no man can keep it perfectly.

Ver. 54. *When they heard these things*, &c.] How that Abraham, the father of them, was called before he was circumcised, or the law was given to Moses, or the temple was built, which they were so bigotted to, and charged with speaking blasphemously of; and how that Joseph and Moses were very ill treated by the Jewish fathers, which seemed to resemble the usage Christ and his apostles met with from them; and how their ancestors behaved in the wilderness when they had received the law, and what idolatry they fell into there, and in after-times; and how that though there was a temple built by Solomon, yet the Lord was not confined to it, nor would he dwell in it always; and especially when they heard him calling them a stiff-necked people, and uncircumcised in heart and ears; saying, that they persecuted and slew the prophets, and were the betrayers and murderers of an innocent person; and notwithstanding all their zeal for the law, and even though it was ministered to them by angels, yet they did not observe it themselves: *they were cut to the heart*: as if they had been sawn asunder; they were filled with anguish, with great pain and uneasiness; they were full of wrath and madness, and could neither bear themselves nor him: *and they gnashed on him with* their *teeth*; being enraged at him, and full of fury and indignation against him.

Ver. 55. *But he being full of the Holy Ghost*, &c.] That is, Stephen, as Beza's ancient copy, and some others express it; and so the Ethiopic version; the Syriac version reads, *full of faith, and of the Holy Ghost*, as in ch. vi. 5. and so some copies; being under the influences of the spirit of God, and filled with his divine comforts, and strong in the faith of Jesus Christ, and having a holy boldness, courage, and intrepidity of mind; instead of being discouraged and dejected, of being cast down in his spirits, and looking down upon the ground, he *looked up steadfastly to heaven*; where he desired to be, and hoped and believed he should be; and from whence he knew his help came, and which he might now implore, as well as forgiveness for his enemies. *And saw the glory of God*; not the essential glory of God, but some extraordinary light and brightness, which was a token and representation of him: *and Jesus standing on the right hand of God*; of that glory which was a symbol of him: Jesus being risen from the dead, and ascended on high, was set at the right hand of God, in human nature, and so was visible to the corporeal eye of Stephen; whose visive faculty was so extraordinarily enlarged and assisted, as to reach the body of Christ in the third heavens; where he was seen by him standing, to denote his readiness to assist him, and his indignation at his enemies.

Ver. 56. *And said, behold, I see the heavens opened*, &c.] As they were at the baptism of Christ, Matt. iii. 16. see the note there: *and the son of man standing at the right hand of God*; he calls Jesus *the son of man*; a name by which he often called himself in his state of humiliation; and that though he was now glorified, it being the name of the Messiah in Psal. lxxx. 17. Dan. vii. 13. as was well known to the Jews; and this Stephen said to shew that God was on his side, and to let them know what honour was done him, what divine supports and comforts he had, and that he was an eye-witness of Jesus, and of his being alive, and in glory.

Ver. 57. *Then they cried out with a loud voice*, &c.] These were not the sanhedrim, but the common people; the Ethiopic version reads, *the Jews cried out*; which, they did, in a very clamorous way, either through rage and madness, or in a shew of zeal against blasphemy; and cried out, either to God to avenge the blasphemy, or rather to the sanhedrim to pass a sentence on him, or, it may be, to excite one another to rise up at once, and kill him, as they did: *and stopped their ears*; with their fingers, pretending they could not bear the blasphemy that was uttered. This was their usual method; hence they say[o], "if a man hears "any thing that is indecent, (or not fit to be heard,) let "him put his fingers in his ears—hence the whole ear "is hard, and the tip of it soft, that when he hears any "thing that is not becoming, he may bend the tip of "the ear within it." By either of these ways these men might stop their ears; either by putting in their fingers, or by turning the tip of the ear inward. *And ran upon him with one accord*; without any leave of the sanhedrim, or waiting for their determination, in the manner the zealots did; see the notes on Matt. x. 4. and John xvi. 2.

Ver. 58. *And cast* him *out of the city*, &c.] Of Jerusalem; for the place of stoning was without the city. The process, when regular, according to the sentence of the court, was after this manner[p]; "judg-"ment being finished, (or the trial over,) they brought "him out (the person condemned) to stone him; the "place of stoning was without the sanhedrim, as it "is said, Lev. xxiv. 14. *bring forth him that hath cursed* "*without the camp*——when he was ten cubits distant "from the place of stoning, they order him to con-"fess——and when four cubits from it, they take off "his garments——the place of stoning was twice a "man's height." And elsewhere[q] it is said, that the place of stoning was without three camps (the camp of the Shekinah, the camp of the Levites, and the camp of the Israelites): upon which the gloss has these words; "the court is the camp of the Shekinah, and "the mountain of the house the camp of the Levites, "and every city the camp of the Israelites; and in "the sanhedrim in every city, the place of stoning "was without the city like to Jerusalem." And these men, though transported with rage and fury, yet were so far mindful of rule, as to have him out of the city before they stoned him: *and they stoned him*; which was done after this manner, when in form[r]: "the wise "men say, a man was stoned naked, but not a woman;

[o] T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 5. 1. 2.
[p] Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 6. sect. 1, 2, 3, 4.
[q] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 42. 2.

[r] Moses Kotsensis Mitzvot Tora, pr. Affirm. 99. Vid. Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 6. sect. 4. & Maimon. Hilchot Sanhedrin, c. 15. sect. 1.

"and there was a place four cubits from the house of "stoning, where they plucked off his clothes, only "they covered his nakedness before. The place of "stoning was two men's heights, and there he went "up with his hands bound, and one of the witnesses "thrust him on his loins, that he might fall upon the "earth; and if he died not at that push, the witnesses "lifted up a stone, which lay there, the weight of "two men, and one cast it with all his strength upon "him; and if he died not, he was stoned by all "Israel." *And the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul*; for the witnesses, according to the above account, were first concerned in the stoning; and this was agreeably to the rule in Deut. xvii. 7. and which they seem to have observed amidst all their hurry and fury: and that they might perform their work with more ease and expedition, they plucked off their upper garments, and committed them to the care of Saul of Tarsus; who was now at Jerusalem, and belonged to the synagogue of the Cilicians, that disputed with Stephen, and suborned false witnesses against him. He is called a young man; not that he was properly a youth, for he must be thirty years of age, or more; since about thirty years after this he calls himself Paul the aged, Philem. ver. 9. when he must be at least sixty years of age, if not more; besides, Ananias calls him a *man*, ch. ix. 13. nor would the high-priests have given letters to a mere youth, investing him with so much power and authority as they did; but he is so called, because he was in the prime of his days, hale, strong, and active. The learned Alting has taken a great deal of pains to shew, that this Saul, who was afterwards Paul the apostle, is the same with Samuel the little, who is frequently mentioned in the Talmud; he living at this time, and being a disciple of Rabban Gamaliel, and a bitter enemy of the heretics, or Christians; and who, at the instigation of his master, composed a prayer against them; and his name and character agreeing with him: but it is not likely that the Jews would have retained so high an opinion of him to the last, had he been the same person: for they say [u], "that as the elders were "sitting in Jabneh, Bath Kol came forth, and said, "there is one among you fit to have the Holy Ghost, "or the Shekinah, dwell upon him; and they set their "eyes on Samuel the little; and when he died, they "said, ah the holy, ah the meek disciple of Hillell!"

Ver. 59. *And they stoned Stephen, calling upon* God, &c.] As he was praying, and putting up the following petition; *and saying, Lord Jesus receive my spirit*; from whence we learn, that the spirit or soul of man sleeps not, nor dies with the body, but remains after death; that Jesus Christ is a fit person to commit and commend the care of the soul unto immediately upon its separation; and that he must be truly and properly God; not only because he is equal to such a charge, which none but God is, but because divine worship and adoration are here given him. This is so glaring a proof of prayer being made unto him, that some Socinians, perceiving the force of it, would read the word Jesus in the genitive case, thus; *Lord of Jesus receive my spirit*; as if the prayer was made to the father of Christ, when it is Jesus he saw standing at the right hand of God, whom he invokes, and who is so frequently called Lord Jesus; whereas the father is never called the Lord of Jesus; and besides, these words are used in like manner in the vocative case, in Rev. xxii. 20. to which may be added, that the Syriac version reads, *our Lord Jesus*; and the Ethiopic version, *my Lord Jesus*.

Ver. 60. *And he kneeled down*, &c.] It seems as if he stood before while they were stoning him, and while he was commending his soul to Christ, but now he kneeled down; prayer may be performed either kneeling or standing: *and cried with a loud voice*; not only to shew that he was in good spirits, and not afraid to die, but chiefly to express his vehement and affectionate desire to have the following petition granted: *Lord, lay not this sin to their charge*; do not impute it to them, or place it to their account; let it not rise and stand in judgment against them, or they be condemned for it; grant them forgiveness for it, and for every other sin: there is a great deal of likeness between Christ and this first martyr of his at their deaths; Christ committed his spirit into the hands of his father, and Stephen commits his into the hands of Christ; both prayed for forgiveness for their enemies; and both cried with a loud voice before they expired; for so it follows here, *and when he had said this, he fell asleep*; or died; for death, especially the death of the saints, or dying in Jesus, is expressed by sleep. This way of speaking is common with the Jews, who say [w], that Rabbi such an one דמיך, *slept*; i. e. *died*; and this they say is a pure and honourable way of speaking with respect to an holy body, whose death is no other than as it were a sleep: and elsewhere [x] it is said, that one saw such an one מנמנם, *sleeping*; the gloss upon it is, נוסס, *expiring*; see the notes on John xi. 11. and 1 Thess. iv. 13. The Vulgate Latin version adds, *in the Lord*.

CHAP. VIII.

Ver. 1. *AND Saul was consenting unto his death*, &c.] This clause, in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic and Ethiopic versions, stands at the close of the preceding chapter, and which seems to be its proper place; and so it does in the Alexandrian copy: that Saul consented to the death of Stephen, and approved of that barbarous action, is evident from his taking care of the clothes of the witnesses that stoned him; but the word here used signifies not a bare consent only, but a consent with pleasure and delight; he was well

[t] Shilo, l. 4. c. 26, 27, 28.
[u] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 11. 1. T. Hieros. Sota, fol. 23. 2. Avoda Zara, fol. 42. 3. & Horayot, fol. 483.

[w] Bereshit Rabba. sect. 91. fol. 79. 3. & Mattanot Cehuna in ib. [x] T. Bab. Moed. Katon, fol. 28. 1.

pleased with it, it rejoiced his very heart; he joined with others in it, with the utmost pleasure and satisfaction; this, and what is before said concerning his having the clothes of the witnesses laid at his feet, as well as what follows, about his persecuting the saints, are the rather mentioned, because this violent persecutor was afterwards converted, and became an eminent preacher of the Gospel; and these accounts serve to set off and illustrate the grace of God, which was abundant towards him. *And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem:* it began *on that day*, as the words may be rendered, on which Stephen was stoned. As soon as they had put him to death, these bloodthirsty wretches were the more greedy after the blood of others; and being now in great numbers, and filled with rage and fury, fell upon the members of the church wherever they met them, and killed them; for that more, besides Stephen, were put to death, seems plain from Acts xxvi. 10. and, according to some accounts, though they cannot be depended on, two thousand persons suffered at this time: and if this was the case, it might be called a great persecution: *and they were all scattered abroad:* not all the members of the church, nor perhaps any of the private ones; for we afterwards read of devout men that carried Stephen to his grave; and of the church being made havoc of by Saul; and of men and women being haled out of their houses, and committed to prison by him; but all the preachers of the word, except the apostles; for they that were scattered, went about preaching the word, ver. 4. and ch. xi. 19. They seem to be the seventy disciples, and other ministers of the word, on whom the Holy Ghost fell at the day of Pentecost, or was since bestowed; among whom were Philip, who went to Samaria; and Ananias, who was at Damascus; and others that went as far as Phenice, Cyprus, and Antioch: and particularly they are said to be dispersed *throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria;* where their ministry was so greatly blessed, to the conversion of souls, that there were quickly many churches planted and formed in these parts, as appears from ch. ix. 31. so that this persecution was for the furtherance and spread of the Gospel: that upon this dispersion any of them came into France and England, or into any other parts of Europe, is not probable; since the particular places they went to are mentioned; and since they preached to Jew only: and this scattering by reason of the persecution, was of all the preachers, *except the apostles;* the twelve apostles, who staid at Jerusalem to take care of the church; to encourage the members of it to suffer cheerfully for the sake of Christ and his Gospel; and to animate them to abide by him: and this was not only an instance of courage and constancy in them, and of the divine protection and preservation of them, in the midst of their enemies; but also of the timidity of their adversaries, who might be afraid to meddle with them; remembering what miraculous works were performed by them, and how they had been delivered out of prison, and especially the case of Ananias and Sapphira, who were struck dead by Peter. Beza's ancient copy adds, *who remained in Jerusalem.*

Ver. 2. *And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, &c.*] These men were not Jewish proselytes, but members of the Christian church; who were eminent for their religion and piety, and who had courage enough, amidst this persecution, to shew a respect to the dead body of this holy martyr; which they took from under the stones, washed it, and wound it up in linen clothes, and put it into a coffin, or on a bier: they did every thing preparatory to the funeral, which is chiefly designed by the word here used, rather than the carrying of him out to his grave; though this also they did, and buried him: and to bear a corpse and follow it to the grave, and bury it, were with the Jews [x] reckoned among acts of kindness, mercy, and piety, and which would not fail of a reward; they have a saying [y], that "he that mourns, they shall mourn "for him; and he that buries, they shall bury him; "and he that lifts up (his voice in weeping and "lamentation), they shall lift up for him; he that "accompanies (a dead corpse), they shall accompany him; he that *carries*, they shall carry him;" as these devout men did, who would not suffer Stephen to be buried in the common burying-place of malefactors, but interred him elsewhere, in a more decent manner: but whether they had leave from the sanhedrim so to do, or whether they did this of themselves, is not certain; if the latter, which seems most likely, it is an instance of great boldness and resolution, and especially at this time; for "they did not "bury one that was stoned in the sepulchres of his "fathers, but there were two burying-places appointed "by the sanhedrim, one for those that are stoned "and burnt, and another for those that are slain with "the sword and strangled [z]." So that they acted contrary to the Jewish canon, as they also did in what follows: *and made great lamentation over him:* though they did not sorrow as those without hope, yet they did not put on a stoical apathy; but as men sensible of the loss the church of Christ had sustained, by the death of a person so eminent for his gifts and grace, they mourned over him in a becoming manner: in this they went contrary to the Jewish rule, which forbids lamentation for those that died as malefactors, and runs thus [a]; "they don't mourn, but they grieve; for "grief is only in the heart;" their reason for this was, as the commentators say [b], because they thought that "their disgrace was an atonement for their sin:" but these devout men knew that Stephen needed no such atonement, and that his sins were atoned for another way: otherwise the Jews looked upon mourning for the dead to be to the honour of him; hence they say [c], that mourning "is the glory of the dead "——whoever is backward to the mourning of a wise "man shall not prolong his days; and whoever is "sluggish in mourning for a good man, ought to be "buried alive; and whoever causes tears to descend "for a good man, lo, his reward is reserved for him "with the holy blessed God."

Ver. 3. *As for Saul, he made havoc of the church,*

[x] Maimon. & Bartenora in Misn. Peah, c. 1. sect. 1.
[y] T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 72. 1. & Moed Katon, fol. 28. 2.
[z] Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 6. sect. 5.
[a] Misn. Sanhedrin, sect. 6.
[b] Jarchi & Bartenora in ib.
[c] Maimon. Hilch. Ebel, c. 12. sect. 1, 2.

&c.] Did evil to the saints, destroyed them that called upon the name of Christ, ch. ix. 13, 21. and persecuted and wasted the church of God, as he himself says, Gal. i. 13. and now did Benjamin, of which tribe Saul was, ravine as a wolf, Gen. xlix. 27. *Entering into every house;* where the saints dwelt: *and haling men and women:* in a violent manner, without any regard to age or sex: *committed* them *to prison:* delivered them up into the hands of the chief priests and magistrates, in order to be committed and sent to prison; this he himself confesses, ch. xxii. 4. and xxvi. 10.

Ver. 4. *Therefore they that were scattered abroad,* &c.] By reason of the persecution in Jerusalem: the seventy disciples, and other ministers of the word; or the hundred and twenty, excepting the apostles, *went every where;* or *went through* the countries of Judea and Samaria, as far as Phenice, Cyrus, and Antioch: *preaching the word;* the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions add, *of God,* and so some copies; the Gospel, which is the word of God, and not man; which was not of men, nor received from men, but came from God, and by the revelation of Christ; and which was good news and glad tidings, of peace, pardon, righteousness and salvation, by Jesus Christ.

Ver. 5. *Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria,* &c.] The city which was formerly called Samaria, but now Sebaste; it had been destroyed by Hyrcanus, and was rebuilt by Herod; and called by him, in honour of Augustus, by the name of Sebaste[d]; and so R. Benjamin says[e], that "from Luz he came in a "day to Sebaste, היא שומרון, *this is Samaria;* where "yet may be discerned the palace of Ahab king of "Israel———and from thence are two *parsas* to "Neapolis, this is Sichem." Which last place, Sichem, is by Josephus said to be the *metropolis* of Samaria; and is thought by Dr. Lightfoot to be the city Philip went to, and where our Lord had before been, and preached to the conversion of many persons: this place lay lower than Jerusalem, and therefore Philip is said to go down to it; and who was not Philip the apostle, but Philip the deacon, for the apostles abode at Jerusalem; and beside, though this Philip preached the Gospel, and baptized, and wrought miracles, yet did not lay on hands, in order that persons might receive the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost; this was peculiar to the apostles, and therefore Peter and John came down for this purpose, when they heard of the success of Philip's ministry: the subject-matter of which follows: *and preached Christ unto them;* that Christ was come in the flesh, that Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ, and that he was the son of God, and the alone Saviour of men; who by his obedience, sufferings, and death, had wrought righteousness, procured peace and pardon, and obtained eternal redemption for his people; and was risen again, and ascended into heaven, and was set down at the right hand of God, where he ever lived to make intercession, and would come again a second time to judge both quick and dead.

Ver. 6. *And the people with one accord,* &c.] The inhabitants of the city of Samaria, as one man, came to hear the word: *and gave heed to those things which Philip spake;* they listened to them, took notice of them, gave their assent to them, believed and embraced them; being induced thereunto, not only upon the evidence by which these things came, but by reason of the miracles which he wrought, for the confirmation of them: for it follows, *hearing and seeing the miracles which he did;* and which are particularly mentioned in the next verse.

Ver. 7. *For unclean spirits,* &c.] Devils, so called; because they were unclean themselves, defiled others, and delighted in impure persons and places; see the note on Matt. x. 1. *crying with loud voice;* shewing their unwillingness to remove, and the irresistibleness of divine power they could not withstand: *came out of many that were possessed* with them; who had for a long time dwelt in them, and had greatly afflicted them: *and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed;* by Philip, in the name of Christ, through a word speaking, or by touching them, without making use of any means or medicines.

Ver. 8. *And there was great joy in that city.*] Both on a spiritual account, for the good of their souls, through the preaching of Christ and his Gospel to them; and on a temporal account, for the good of their bodies, or their friends, being dispossessed of devils, and healed of their diseases.

Ver. 9. *But there was a certain man called Simon,* &c.] Who, as Justin Martyr[f] says, was a Samaritan, and of a village called Gitton; and so a Jewish writer[g] calls him Simeon, השמרוני, *the Samaritan,* a wizard: here's a *but* upon this new church, the success of the Gospel in this place, and the joy that was there; a man of great wickedness and sophistry plays the hypocrite, feigns himself a believer, and gets in among them; see the note on ch. v. 1. *which beforetime in the same city used sorcery;* who before Philip came thither, practised magic arts; wherefore he is commonly called *Simon Magus,* for he was a magician, who had learned diabolical arts, and used enchantments and divinations, as Balaam and the magicians of Egypt did: *and bewitched the people of Samaria;* or rather astonished them, with the strange feats he performed; which were so unheard-of and unaccountable, that they were thrown into an ecstacy and rapture; and were as it were out of themselves, through wonder and admiration, at the amazing things that were done by him: *giving out that himself was some great one;* a divine person, or an extraordinary prophet, and it may be the Messiah; since the Samaritans expected the Messiah, as appears from John iv. 25. and which the Syriac version seems to incline to, which renders the words thus, *and he said, I am that great one;* that great person, whom Moses spake of as the seed of the *woman,* under the name of Shiloh, and the character of a prophet.

Ver. 10. *To whom they all gave heed,* &c.] Were not only attentive to the strange things he did, and to the wonderful things he gave out concerning himself; but they believed what he said and did as real

[d] Joseph de Bello Jud. l. 1, c. 2. sect. 7. & c. 21. sect. 2. Plin. l. 5. c. 13.

[e] Itinerar. p. 38.

[f] Apolog. 2. p. 69.

[g] Juchasin fol. 242. 2.

things, and were obedient to him: and that *from the least to the greatest*: which does not so much respect age, though the Ethiopic version renders it, *from the younger of them to the eldest of them*, as state and condition; persons of every rank and quality, high and low, rich and poor, magistrates and subjects, from the meanest to the greatest of them; and so the Syriac version renders it, *both great*, or *noble, and mean*; he drew the attention, and commanded the regard, both of princes and peasants, of the learned and unlearned, of the great men, and of the common people, who one and all wondered at him, and applauded him: *saying, this man is the great power of God*; or as the Alexandrian copy and some others, and the Vulgate Latin version read, *this is the power of God which is called great*; they took him for the supreme Deity, or as Justin Martyr [h] expresses it, they accounted him the first, or chief God, or they looked upon him to be the Messiah, *the great power of God*; as the Syriac version renders it; and who should be great, and called the son of the Highest, Luke ii. 32.

Ver. 11. *To him they had regard*, &c.] Which is repeated from the foregoing verse, for the sake of what follows: *because that of a long time he had bewitched them with sorceries*; or because he had, it may be for many years, astonished them with his magic arts, and the pranks he played in the use of them.

Ver. 12. *But when they believed Philip*, &c.] Though they had been carried away so long with this deceiver, and had been so much attached unto him, and held in admiration of him; yet when Philip came and preached Christ unto them, such was the power that attended his ministry, and such the efficacy of divine grace that was exerted, that they not only gave heed unto him, but believed what he said: *preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God*; concerning the kingdom of the Messiah, the Gospel dispensation, the doctrines and ordinances of the Gospel; and concerning the kingdom of grace, which is spiritual and internal, and which lies not in external things, as meat and drink, but in righteousness, peace, and joy; and concerning the kingdom of glory, the meetness for it, which lies in regenerating grace, and the right unto it, which is the righteousness of Christ: *and the name of Jesus Christ*; concerning the person of Christ, as the son of God: and the offices of Christ, as prophet, priest, and King; and the virtue of his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, for pardon, justification, and atonement: the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions read this clause, *in the name of Jesus Christ*; and connect it with the following words, *they were baptized, both men and women*: that is, when they heard Philip preach the Gospel, and believed in Christ, the sum and substance of it, and made a profession of faith, they were of each sex, both men and women, baptized by immersion, in the name of Jesus Christ.

Ver. 13. *Then Simon himself believed also*, &c.] With an historical and temporary faith, as that Jesus was the Messiah, &c. or at least he pretended to believe this, and professed that he did believe what others did, and Philip preached: *and when he was baptized*: upon profession of his faith, which he so artfully made, that Philip could not discover his hypocrisy; but taking him to be a sincere believer, admitted him to baptism: after which, *he continued with Philip*; kept close to him, and got into a familiar acquaintance with him; and constantly attended on his ministry, as if he had been a sincere disciple and follower of Christ: *and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done*: he was as much amazed at the miraculous performances of Philip, as the inhabitants of Samaria had been at his, which he could observe were real things; and this increased his wonder, and threw him into an ecstacy, that he was scarce himself: whereas he knew that what he did were only sham performances, and legerdemain tricks.

Ver. 14. *Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem*, &c.] Not that there were some at Jerusalem, and some elsewhere; for they all tarried at Jerusalem, when the rest of the ministers of the word were scattered abroad; though it is possible, that by this time, some of them might have departed from hence; but it seems more probable, that they were as yet all here: these *heard that Samaria had received the word of God*: that is, they heard that the Samaritans, who only received the five books of Moses, and that not the Hebrew, but their own copy of them, now received not only the whole Bible, but the Gospel of Christ, as preached by Philip; which they might hear by a letter, or messengers sent from Philip to them, to acquaint them with the success of the Gospel; or from some persons, who had been in those parts: upon which *they sent unto them Peter and John*: who were not only fellow-apostles, but very familiar and intimate companions; these they sent to confirm the doctrine of Philip, and establish the young converts in it, and to form them into a Gospel church-state, and ordain ministers over them.

Ver. 15. *Who when they were come down*, &c.] To the city of Samaria, where Philip was, and these converts dwelt: *prayed for them*; for some of them, unto God: *that they might receive the Holy Ghost*: the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost, as to be able to speak with tongues, to prophesy and work miracles: they might pray for them all, that they might have a larger measure of grace, and more spiritual light and knowledge; and that they might be established in the doctrines of the Gospel, and hold fast the profession of their faith unto the end; but it can hardly be thought that they should pray for them all, both men and women, that they might have the above extraordinary gifts, which were not necessary to them all: and that these are meant by the Holy Ghost is clear from what follows, since he was not yet fallen on any of them, which cannot be understood in any other sense; and seeing it was something visible, which Simon could discern, and therefore cannot mean internal grace, and an increase of that.

Ver. 16. (*For as yet he was fallen upon none of them*, &c.] They had received him as a spirit of illumination and sanctification, and as a spirit of conversion and faith; they had been regenerated, enlightened, and sanctified by him; and were converted by him, and brought to believe in Christ, and live by faith upon him; they were baptized believers, and no more; as

[h] Ut supra.

yet, none of them had gifts qualifying them for the ministry; and still less could any of them speak with tongues, or prophesy, or work miracles; the Holy Ghost had not yet descended on them for such purposes: *only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus*:) all as yet appeared in them was, that they were believers in Christ, and had been baptized in his name, upon a profession of their faith; and more than this they had been called to, or qualified for: the word *only*, does not respect the form of baptism, as if they had been baptized only in the name of Christ; whereas they were doubtless baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; but refers to baptism itself, which was the only ordinance as yet administered to them.

Ver. 17. *Then laid they* their *hands on them*, &c.] The Ethiopic version adds, *who had been baptized*; but not upon all of them, men and women, only on some they were directed unto by the spirit of God; whom he had designed, and now would qualify for the work of the ministry, that so this new church might be supplied with proper officers, pastors, and teachers, to feed them with knowledge and with understanding, and who might not only have ministerial gifts to qualify them for preaching the Gospel, but extraordinary ones, which would serve for the confirmation of it; and for this purpose the apostles, *both* of them, as the Arabic version reads, laid their hands on them: for it will not seem probable, that they laid their hands upon the women, on such an account; and it will hardly be received, that they should lay their hands on Simon Magus, otherwise he would have received the Holy Ghost too; so that it seems a plain case, that imposition of hands was not used to them all: *and they received the Holy Ghost*; that is, they received the gifts of the Holy Ghost; so that they could prophesy and speak with tongues, and heal diseases, and do other wonderful works: and since now these effects have ceased, the rite and ceremony which was peculiar to the apostles as such, it should seem should cease likewise.

Ver. 18. *And when Simon saw*, &c.] Whence it appears, that the Holy Ghost, or his gifts, which were received by imposition of hands, were something visible and discernible; and so something external, and not internal; otherwise they would have been out of Simon's reach, and would not have fallen under his notice; but he saw, *that through laying on of the apostles' hands, the Holy Ghost was given*: he saw, that upon this men began to prophesy, and to speak with divers tongues they had never learned, and to work miracles, cure men of their diseases, and the like: and when he observed this, *he offered them money*: to purchase such a power of conferring the like gifts, on whomsoever he should lay his hands: hence buying and selling spiritual things, or what relate thereunto, are commonly called *simony*: a vice which has greatly prevailed in the church of Rome, and among its popes; and who therefore may be more properly called the successors of Simon Magus, than of Simon Peter.

Ver. 19. *Saying, give me also this power*, &c.] He does not ask them to lay their hands on him, that he might receive the Holy Ghost, and have those gifts to exercise himself, but that he might have the power of conferring them on others: *that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost*: in which he discovered his ambition and avarice: his ambition, that he might be above Philip; who though he had these gifts, yet had not a power to lay on hands, and thereby convey them unto others; he perceived that this was purely apostolical; and indeed, what he requested was more than what the apostles could do; for though upon their prayers, and through the imposition of their hands, the gifts of the spirit were bestowed upon men; yet they never could, nor did give a power to others, to do as they did; and his avarice prompted him to this, that he might make gain of it; not by doing miracles himself, but by conveying a power to others to do them.

Ver. 20. *But Peter said to him*, &c.] With great abhorrence and indignation, resenting and detesting his proposal: *thy money perish with thee*; or *go into destruction with thee*; signifying, that he would not touch his money, or have any thing to do with that or him either, in any such way: the words do not so much design an imprecation on his person, as an abhorrence of his sin; and rather shew what his sin deserved, than what he desired might be; for the apostle did not simply wish his damnation, since he afterwards exhorts him to repentance, and to pray for forgiveness; but threatens, and even predicts what would be his case, should he live and die in such a state, in which he appeared to be: *because thou hast thought that the gift of God*: the Holy Ghost, and his extraordinary gifts, which are freely given, when and to whom the Lord himself pleases: *may be purchased with money*; he appears to have a wrong notion of the spirit of God and his gifts, and of the grace of God in bestowing them; as well as a wicked design of purchasing them with money, in order to sell them again; so that it was a sullying and lessening of the grace of God, as well as seeking himself, his own ambition, and filthy lucre: and let such observe how near they come to his sin, who seek to obtain the grace of justification, and the free gift of eternal life, by their own works.

Ver. 21. *Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter*, &c.] Or business of the gift of the Holy Ghost; signifying, that as he had not the grace of the spirit of God implanted in him, so he should not have any of the gifts of the spirit bestowed on him; and much less a power of communicating them to others, through laying on of hands: or *in this word*; the word of the Gospel, preached by the apostles; and in any of the blessings published in it, as the forgiveness of sins, a justifying righteousness, and eternal life; and so the Syriac version renders it, *in this faith*: neither in the grace of faith, nor in the doctrine of faith: it seems to answer to a way of speaking frequently used among the Jews, that such and such persons, אין להם חלק, *have no part or lot*, in the world to come[l]. The Ethiopic version reads, *because of this thy word*: because for his money, he had desired to have a power of be-

[l] Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 11. sect. 1.

stowing the Holy Ghost on persons, through the imposition of his hands; which shewed he had no share in the grace of God, and would have no part in eternal life, thus living and dying: *for thy heart is not right in the sight of God*: he had not a clean heart, nor a right spirit created in him; he had not true principles of grace wrought in him; his heart was full of covetousness, ambition, and hypocrisy; he had no good designs, ends, and aims, in what he said and did; in his profession of faith, in his baptism, in his attendance on Philip's ministry, and in his request for the above power, of conferring the Holy Ghost: his view was not the spread and confirmation of the Gospel, or the enlargement of the kingdom and interest of Christ, and the glory of God, but his own applause and worldly interest; and therefore, however he might be thought of by men, to be a good and disinterested man, he was otherwise in the sight of God, who is the searcher of the heart, and the trier of the reins of the children of men.

Ver. 22. *Repent therefore of this thy wickedness*, &c.] For a great piece of wickedness it was, to offer money for the gift of the Holy Ghost, and to imagine, that that could be purchased with money; and what made the wickedness still greater was, the evil design he had in this, to advance himself in opposition to Christ and his apostles, as he afterwards did; and when the apostle puts him upon repentance, his view is to shew the heinousness of his crime, the need he stood in of repentance, and that without it, his case must be miserable: *and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee*; though he was in a state of nature, the apostle exhorts him to the duty of prayer; for prayer is a natural duty, and binding upon all men, though none but a spiritual man can perform it in a spiritual way: and though this sin of Simon's was a very heinous one, and came very near unto, and looked very much like the sin against the Holy Ghost, yet it was not the unpardonable one; it might be pardoned by the grace of God, and through the blood of Christ; and therefore Peter, who wished his salvation and not his damnation, put him upon prayer for it; which was possible, though difficult, but not certain: the apostle says not this, as doubting; if it was a case wholly to be despaired of, then he would not have directed him to the means; and yet the wickedness was so horribly great, and he in such a wretched hardened state, that there was no great hope or expectation of his repentance, and so of the application of pardon to him: however, this advice was not given ironically: Peter was too grave and serious to speak sarcastically, or break a jest upon a man in such circumstances; whom no doubt he heartily pitied, though he abhorred his sin: the Syriac version renders it, *the deceit of thine heart*; and the Ethiopic version, *the evil thought of thine heart*; and such it was.

Ver. 23. *For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness*, &c.] Alluding to Deut. xxix. 18. and xxxii. 32. with which compare Heb. xii. 15. and signifying, that he was in a state of nature and unregeneracy; under the power and dominion of covetousness, ambition, and hypocrisy; and in a way pernicious to himself, infectious to others, and ungrateful to God, and to good men; and that instead of the root of the matter, the truth of grace being in him, there was nothing in him but the bitter root of sin; which bore gall and wormwood, and every thing that was nauseous and disagreeable: *and in the bond of iniquity*; referring to Prov. v. 22. or to Isa. lviii. 6. and suggesting, that he was held fast-bound in the bonds of sin, and with the cords of iniquity, or was entirely under the government of his lusts: the preposition εις, which we render *in*, may retain here, as is by some observed, its proper sense of *for*, or *into*; and have the same signification it has in Heb. i. 5. *I will be to him for a father*, or *a father*, and *he shall be to me for a son*, or *a son*: and then the sense of Peter is, I plainly perceive, and clearly see by thy words and actions, that thou art nothing else but a lump of bitter gall, and a bundle of sin and wickedness.

Ver. 24. *Then answered Simon, and said*, &c.] Whose conscience might be touched, and smote with what Peter had said; and he might be terrified with the wrath of God, and filled with fear of his judgment coming upon him for his wickedness, and might now stand trembling before the apostles: and if this was not his case, he was a most hardened and audacious wretch; and his following words must be understood in a different sense, from what they might seem to have, when they came out of his mouth: *pray ye to the Lord for me*: the Arabic version reads, *pray ye two*: the words are addressed both to Peter and John; for though Peter only spake to him, yet John joined with him, and assented to what he said, and approved of it; and which he might signify either by word or gesture; wherefore Simon desires both of them, that they would pray to the Lord for him; but whether he was serious, and in good earnest in this, is a question; since there is no reason to believe he truly repented, from the accounts given of him by ancient writers; who always represent him as an opposer of the apostles and their doctrine, as the father of all heresies, as a blasphemous wretch; who gave out that he was the Father in Samaria, the Son in Judea, and the Holy Ghost in other places; and as a very lewd and wicked man, who carried about with him a whore, whose name was Helena; whom he called the mother of the universe, and gave out the angels were made by her, and the world by them; with many other errors, blasphemies, and impieties: so that it should rather seem, that though Peter was serious in his advice to Simon, yet he was not so in his request to him; but in a sarcastic sneering way, desired his prayers for him; suggesting, that he was not in any pain about what he had said: and if he was in earnest, he did not take Peter's advice to pray for himself; nor did he declare any repentance for his sin; and his desire that the apostles would pray for him, might not be from any sense he had of the evil of his sin, but from a slavish fear of the evil, or mischief, that was like to come upon him for his sin, as appears by what follows: *that none of these things which ye have spoken come upon me*; as that his money should perish with him, and he with that; or that he should go into destruction; that everlasting destruction and ruin would be his portion; and that he should have no part nor lot in eternal life, unless he

repented, and his sin was pardoned: and this confirms what has been before observed, that John assented to what Peter spoke, or said the same, or such like things to Simon as he did.

Ver. 25. *And they, when they had testified*, &c. That is, Simeon (or Peter) and John, as the Syriac version expresses it; when they had bore their testimony to, and by it confirmed the Gospel as preached by Philip, and had established the young converts in it, and against the errors of Simon Magus: *and preached the word of the Lord:* or *of God*, as read the Alexandrian copy, and the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions; when they had preached the Gospel in the city of Samaria, the same as Philip had preached before; whereby it appeared, that there was an harmony and agreement between them: *returned to Jerusalem;* to the rest of the apostles there, to give them an account, how they found things at Samaria; what they had done, and what they had met with: and upon their return, whilst on their journey, they stopped at several places, which lay in their way; *and preached the Gospel in many villages of the Samaritans;* their first commission in Matt. x. 5. being now cancelled, and a new one given them to preach the Gospel to every creature; and being appointed witnesses for Christ in Samaria, as well as in Jerusalem and Judea; see ch. i. 8.

Ver. 26. *And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip*, &c.] To inquire who this angel was, whether Michael or Gabriel, or the tutelar angel of Ethiopia, or of the eunuch, or of Philip, is too curious; it was one of the ministering spirits sent forth by Christ, to serve a gracious purpose of his, and for the good of one of the heirs of salvation: *saying, arise;* at once, make haste and speed, and quick dispatch; the phrase denotes readiness, alacrity, and expedition: *and go toward the south;* the southern point from the city of Samaria, where Philip now was; or to the south of Jerusalem: the parts of Gaza, Lydda, Jamnia, Joppa, *&c.* were called the *south*; hence often mention is made of such a Rabbi and such a Rabbi, that he was דרומא, *of the south*[k]; so R. Joshua, who was of Lydda, is said to be of the south[l]. The Ethiopic version renders it *at noon-time*, and so the Arabic of De Dieu; as if it respected not the place whither he was to go, but the time when he was to go; and that it might be about the middle of the day, the following narrative seems to confirm: *unto the way which goes down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert;* this place is sometimes called Azzah, and sometimes Gaza, which is owing to the different pronunciation of the first letter of it; it was first inhabited by the Avim, or Hivites, who being destroyed by the Caphtorim, they dwelt in their stead, Deut. ii. 23. It fell to the lot of the tribe of Judah, but could not be held by it, because of the giants which remained in it; and was, as Jerom says[m], a famous city of Palestine in his day; and was formerly the border of the Canaanites towards Egypt; and the way to Egypt lay through it, in which the eunuch was travelling: the way from Jerusalem to this place lay through Bethlehem, as the above ancient writer observes, on Jer. xxxi. 15. where he says, "some of the Jews interpret this place thus; "that Jerusalem being taken by Vespasian, through "this way (Bethlehem and Ephrata, of which he is "speaking) to Gaza and Alexandria, a vast number "of captives were led to Rome." And as the same writer elsewhere says[n], Bethlehem was six miles from Ælia (or Jerusalem) to the south, in the way which leads to Hebron; and it is commonly believed that the way to Gaza was through Hebron, and is the way in which they go to it now; and to a hill near this place Samson carried the gates of Gaza, Judg. xvi. 1, 2, 3. And this also was to the south of Jerusalem, and two-and-twenty miles from it[o]: and it is also said by the same author[p], that there is a village called Bethsur, and in his time Bethsoron, in the way from Jerusalem to Hebron, about twenty miles from the former, at which there was a fountain, where it was reported the eunuch was baptized by Philip. There was it seems another way from Jerusalem to Gaza, through Diospolis, or Eleutheropolis, and so to Ascalon, and from thence to Gaza[q]: and this was the road the eunuch went, if their conjecture is right, that he was baptized in the river Eleutherus; but which way he went is not certain, nor where he was baptized. The situation of Gaza was, according to Arrianus[r], as follows: "Gaza is distant "from the sea at least twenty furlongs (two miles "and a half), and the access unto it is sandy and deep, "and the sea near the city is all muddy. Gaza was a "great city, and was built on high ground, and encompassed with a strong wall: it was the last of "those cities inhabited, as you go from Phœnicia "into Egypt, επι τη αρχη της ερημου, *at the beginning of the* "*desert.*" Which last words seem to furnish out a reason why it is here called Gaza, *which is desert;* because it was situated where the desert began: though this clause is differently understood; some apply it to Gaza; as if the sense was *Gaza the desert*, to distinguish old Gaza, which was destroyed by Alexander the great, and as Strabo says[s], *remained desert*, from new Gaza, built at some distance from it: Jerom has[t] this distinction of old and new Gaza: there is scarce any appearance, he says, of the foundations of the ancient city; and that which is now seen is built in another place; and an unknown Greek writer makes express mention of new Gaza, which is the city itself; and speaks of another Gaza at some distance, which he calls Gaza, η ερημος, *the desert*[u]; but the haven, which was seven furlongs distant from Gaza, was not called new Gaza till Julian's time: it was first called Majuma, and afterwards Constantia, by Constantine; either from his son Constantius, or his sister Constantia, it having embraced the Christian religion[w]: wherefore, as Beza observes, no regard

[k] T. Hieros. Succa, fol. 53. 4.
[l] Ib. Challa, fol. 57. 2.
[m] De locis Hebraicis, fol. 91. K.
[n] Ib. fol. 89. E.
[o] Ib. fol. 87. E.
[p] Fol. 89. G.

[q] Vid. Reland. Palestina Illustrata, l. 2. p. 407. & l. 3. p. 645, 659.
[r] De Expeditione Alexandri, l. 2.
[s] Geograph. l. 16.
[t] De locis Hebraicis, fol. 91. K.
[u] Apud Reland. ib. l. 2. p. 509.
[w] Euseb. de Vita Constantin. l. 4. c. 38. Sozomen. Hist. l. 5. c. 3.

could be had to this distinction in the times of Luke; and though it was besieged by Alexander and taken, yet it did not become a desolate place; it had its walls, gates, and fortifications afterwards; and was after this taken by Ptolomy, and then by Alexander Jannæus; it was repaired by Gabinius, and given to Herod by Augustus[x]: so that it could not be said to be desert, in the times of Philip and the eunuch, with respect to its inhabitants and fortifications: it seems rather therefore to be so called, for the above reason, because situated at the beginning of the desert; and the whole space between the parts of Egypt next the Nile, and Palestina, is called *the desert*, both by Arrianus[y] and Josephus[z]: others apply this epithet to the way, and read it as do the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, *to the way of the desert which goes from Jerusalem*; meaning the wilderness, which lay in the way from Jerusalem to Gaza. This place was distant from Jerusalem about seventy-five miles; for from Jerusalem to Ascalon was, as Josephus[a] says, five hundred and twenty furlongs, which make sixty-five miles; and from Ascalon to Gaza were ten miles, as our countryman Mr. Sandes says[b]; though according to the Itinerary of Antoninus[c], the distance was sixteen miles. The Talmudists make mention of this place, they represent it as a very pleasant place to dwell in; they say[d], Gaza is נויה יפה, *a beautiful habitation*; they speak of three famous markets, and one of them was the market of Gaza[e]; and very near to this city there was a beast-market[f]; and to which may be added, though it may not serve to strengthen the reason of its name being called Gaza the desert, there was a place on the border of the city, which was named חורבתא סגירתא, the *desert of the leper*[g]: there were also brooks about the parts of Gaza and Azotus[h]; in one of which, if the eunuch was near Gaza, to which he was going, he might be baptized; since it is uncertain whereabout Philip met him, and where the place of water was, in which the ordinance of baptism was administered to him. This city is now called Gazera, or Gazara, and is inhabited by Greeks, Turks, and Arabians.

Ver. 27. *And he arose and went*, &c.] As soon as he had his orders, he immediately obeyed them; he made no dispute about the matter, though he was directed only part of his way, and had no account of what he went about, or was to do; *and behold, a man of Ethiopia*; or *a man, an Ethiopian*; an Hebraism, such as *a man a Jew*, Zech. viii. 23. wherefore his being called a man, is no contradiction to his being an eunuch; for the word *man* does not regard his sex, but with the other the country of which he was; and it is the same as if he had only been called an Ethiopian, which signifies one of a black countenance; for Ethiopia was not so called from Ethiops, the son of Vulcan, who is said to reign over it, but from the colour of its inhabitants; see Jer. xiii. 23. Amos ix. 7. This country in the Hebrew language is called Cush, and the people of it Cushites, from Cush the son of Ham, Gen. x. 6. And so Josephus says[i], that the Ethiopians over whom he (Cush) reigned, are now by themselves, and by all in Asia, called Chuseans; and so likewise the inhabitants of upper Ethiopia, or the Abyssines, are to this day called Cussians, by the Portuguese. Geographers make mention of two Ethiopias, one in Africa, divided into upper and lower, and which is here meant; and the other in Asia and a part of Arabia, and which is the Ethiopia spoken of in the Old Testament: a note of admiration is prefixed, to observe to us what was remarkable in providence; that just at this time, and in this way, such a man should be travelling; and what was still a greater wonder of grace, that such an one should be the object of God's peculiar favour, and should be chosen and called, have the Gospel preached to him, and be admitted to an ordinance of it; whereby some prophecies began to have their accomplishment in part, Psal. lxviii. 31. Zeph. iii. 10. *An eunuch of great authority*: he might be one that was literally so, it being common for eastern princes and great men to have such persons as guards over their wives, to preserve their chastity; and so hereby was a fulfilment in part of Isa. lvi. 3, 4, 5. though this word is used to denote a person in office: so Potiphar is called סרים, an eunuch, though he had a wife, and which we rightly render an officer; and the Chaldee paraphrase renders it, רבא, a prince, or great man, Gen. xxxix. 1. So Balaam is said[k] to be one of the king's eunuchs, and yet Jannes and Jambres are said to be his sons; and so the word Dynastes here used, which we translate *of great authority*, may be considered as explanative of the word *eunuch*; to teach us, that this word was not expressive of his case, but a title of office: it is reported of this eunuch, that after his conversion he preached the Gospel to the inhabitants of Zeylan and Arabia Felix, and in the island of Traprobane in the Red sea, and at last suffered martyrdom[l]: this great person is said to be *under Candace queen of the Ethiopians*: that is, of those Ethiopians who inhabited the island of Meroe; for Candace, or Candaoce, as Pliny[m] reads it, was a common name of the queens of that island, as Pharaoh was of the Egyptian kings, and Cæsar of the Roman emperors: the word Candace signifies a governor of children, that is, servants; it is derived from the Ethiopic word קני, *Kani*, which signifies to *govern*; and from דק, *Dak, a child*, or servant; and the king of the Abyssines is to this day called Prestar Chan, or Kan, a prince of servants, who is commonly and corruptly called Prester John; and Chan, or Kan, is a well-known name for an emperor or governor in the eastern countries; as with the Tartars and Persians, witness the late famous Kouli Kan. Some say[n], her proper name was

[x] Joseph. Antiqu. l. 13. c. 13. sect. 3. & 14. 5. & 15. 7.
[y] Ut supra.
[z] De Bello Jud. l. 7. c. 5. sect. 3.
[a] Ib. l. 3. c. 2. sect. 1.
[b] Travels, p. 151.
[c] Apud Reland. ib. l. 2. p. 419.
[d] T. Hieros. Sheviith, fol. 37. 3.
[e] Ib. Avoda Zara, fol. 39. 4.
[f] T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 11. 2.

[g] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 71. 1.
[h] Aristeas de 70 Interpret. p. 41.
[i] Antiqu. l. 1. c. 6. sect. 2.
[k] Heb. Chron. Mosis, fol. 4. 2. & 6. 2.
[l] Fabricii Lux Evangelii, p. 115, 708.
[m] Hist. Nat. l. 6. c. 29. Vid. Alexand. ab Alex. l. 1. c. 2.
[n] Godignus de rebus Abyssinis, p. 117. apud Castel. Lex Polyglott. col. 4003.

Judith, others Lacasa [o], and others Hendake, or Indich; which, as Ludolphus [p] observes, is no other than Candace; though this last name Indich, according to Zaga Zabo, an ambassador of the king of the Ethiopians, was the name of the eunuch himself; his words, as reported by Damianus a Goes [q], are these; "we, "almost before all other Christians, received baptism "from the eunuch of Candace, queen of Ethiopia, "whose name was Indich:" *who had the charge of all her treasure;* was her lord-treasurer; which shews, that he was not an eunuch to her on account of chastity, but an high officer in her kingdom: the word Gaza here used, signifies in the Persian language treasure, or treasury [r]. The Ethiopic version takes it for the name of a place, and renders it, *and he was governor of the city of Gaza,* but very wrongly: *and had come to Jerusalem for to worship;* hence he seems to have been either a Jew by birth, or rather a proselyte to the Jewish religion; and had been at Jerusalem at one of their annual feasts, the passover, *pentecost,* or tabernacles, to worship the God of Israel, whom he believed to be the only true God.

Ver. 28. *Was returning,* &c.] From Jerusalem, having finished the parts of divine worship he came to perform; and it is remarkable, that though he must doubtless have heard of Jesus of Nazareth, and what had passed in Jerusalem lately, and of his apostles, yet heard them not; or however, was not converted by them, nor believed in Jesus; his conversion being ordered to be at another time, in another place, and by another instrument: *and sitting in his chariot:* as was the manner of princes and great persons: *read Esaias the Prophet;* the Book of the Prophecies of Isaiah the Prophet; and in Luke iv. 17. it is called the *Book of the Prophet Esaias;* and in the note there I have observed, that the prophets, especially the larger ones, were sometimes in separate and distinct books, and so might be the prophecy of Isaiah; and such an one was delivered to Christ, in the synagogue of Nazareth; and such an one the eunuch might have, and be reading in it: hence we read [s], that Daniel should say to the Israelites, who came to discourse with him about the prophecies of Jeremiah, bring me, says he, ספר ישעיה, *the Book of Isaiah;* he began to read, and went on till he came to this verse, *the burden of the desert of the sea,* &c. Isa. xxi. 1. and both the Arabic and Ethiopic versions here read, *the Book of the Prophet Isaiah.* Some think the eunuch might be reading over some passages of Scripture in this prophet, which he had heard expounded at Jerusalem, to refresh his memory with what he had heard. This prophet is a very evangelical one, and very delightful and profitable to read: many things are prophesied by him concerning the Messiah, and particularly in the chapter in which the eunuch was reading; and this being a time when there was great expectation of the Messiah, such passages might be read and expounded in their synagogues, which concerned him: however, the eunuch improved his time, as he was travelling, in a religious way, which was very commendable; and as this was the occasion and opportunity which the Holy Ghost took to bring on his conversion, it may serve greatly to recommend the reading of the Scriptures.

Ver. 29. *Then the spirit said unto Philip,* &c.] Not the angel, a ministering spirit, as in ver. 26. but the Holy Spirit, as the Syriac and Ethiopic versions read, the same with the spirit of the Lord, ver. 39. who spoke unto him, either by an articulative voice, such as was the Bath Kol among the Jews; or inwardly, by a secret impulse upon him, he directed him, saying; *go near, and join thyself to this chariot:* he bid him make up to the chariot, he saw driving on the road at such a distance, and follow it, and attend it closely; and not leave it, till an opportunity of conversing with the person in it offered.

Ver. 30. *And Philip ran thither to him,* &c.] Being very ready to obey the divine order, and hoping he might be an instrument of doing some good, which might issue in the glory of God, and the welfare of men: *and heard him read the prophet Esaias;* that is, *the Book of Isaiah the Prophet;* as before; and so the Ethiopic and Arabic versions read here, as there: he read it out, with a clear and distinct voice, so that Philip could hear him; and this he did, partly through reverence to the word of God, and partly to fix his attention to it the more, that he might the better understand and remember it, and also for delight and pleasure: it is very likely, that it was the Book of Isaiah in the Hebrew tongue in which he was reading, and which language he might understand, though he might be at a loss about the sense of the prophet: *and said, understandest thou what thou readest?* meaning not the language, but the sense; for overhearing him, he perceived it was a prophecy in Isaiah he was reading; which was not so easy to be understood as laws and precepts are, which command this, and forbid that; whereas prophecies were more abstruse, and regarded things to come.

Ver. 31. *And he said, how can I, except some man should guide me?* &c.] Which shews that he was of an excellent spirit and temper; since instead of answering in a haughty and disdainful manner, as great men are too apt to do; and instead of charging Philip with impertinence and insolence, in interrupting him whilst reading, and putting such a question to him, he expresses himself with great and uncommon modesty; with a sense and confession of his ignorance and incapacity, and of the necessity and usefulness of the instructions of men, appointed of God to open and explain the Scriptures: and though he wanted such a guide, and could have been glad of one, yet he was willing to use all diligence himself in reading, that he might, if possible, come at some knowledge of the truth; which was very commendable in him; and no doubt but the spirit he was in was much owing to his reading the word, and to the spirit of God disposing his mind in this manner: *and he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him:* which is an instance of his great humanity and courteousness, and of his meekness and condescension, as well as of his vehement thirst after the knowledge of the Scriptures; he concluding, or at least hoping by Philip's question, and by the air and look of the man, that he was one that might be useful to him this way.

[o] Mariani Reatini Catalog. Reg. Æthiop. in De Dieu in loc.
[p] Hist. Ethiop. l. 3. c. 2.
[q] In De Dieu in loc.
[r] Mela, v. 1. p. 29. Alex. ab Alex. l. 2. c. 2.
[s] Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 33. 1.

Ver. 32. *The place of the Scripture which he read was this,* &c.] Or the paragraph or section of Scripture; that part of it in which he was reading was Isa. liii. 7, 8. which shews, that by this time the Scriptures were divided into sections, chapters, and verses; whereas the Jews say the whole law at first was but one verse [1]. *He was led as a sheep to the slaughter, and like a lamb dumb before the shearer.* The metaphors of *sheep* and *lamb* express the innocence, meekness, and patience of Christ in his sufferings and death; and his being like these when led to the slaughter, and dumb before the shearer, shew his willingness to suffer and die for his people, and to become a sacrifice for their sins. The allusion is to the sheep led either by the butcher to the slaughter-house, or by the priest to the altar, and to the lamb of a year old being silent while it is shearing; and both denote the voluntariness of Christ in his sufferings, the stripping him of his good name, credit, and reputation among men, and of all worldly substance, though Lord of all, and even of the common blessings of nature, as of meat, drink, and raiment, and the light of the sun; and particularly the stripping him of his clothes, when his raiment was parted, and lots cast on his vesture, is very aptly signified by the shearing of the lamb, all which he took very patiently; and his being led forth to be crucified, when he was offered up as a sacrifice on the cross, very fitly answers to the sheep being led to the slaughter, without shewing any reluctance. It was a custom with the Heathens to offer no creature in sacrifice, that struggled as it was led, or made an opposition, or shewed any reluctance: it is remarkable, that there was nothing of this kind to be observed in Christ, who gave himself an offering, and a sacrifice; the reasons of which were, because of the great love he bore to his people: and because of the good and advantage that would come to them thereby: he was content to be poor, that they might be rich; to be made sin, that they might be made righteousness; to become a curse, that the blessings of the covenant might come upon them; to be stripped of all things, that they might enjoy all: and because no other sacrifice could atone for their sins; and because it was his father's will, which always involves his own. *So opened he not his mouth;* in defence of himself, when such false things were laid to his charge, and which he could have so easily refuted, and yet answered to nothing, to the astonishment of his judge; the reason was, because he had the sins of his people on him, for which he was willing to suffer; and therefore declined self-vindication, lest he should hinder the judicial process against him; nor did he open his mouth against his enemies by way of threatening or complaint, when they spat on him, blindfolded, and buffeted him, and bid him prophesy who smote him; and when the chief priests, Scribes, the common people, and thieves mocked at him, and reviled him on the cross, he opened not his lips unto them, nor against them, only for them, saying, Father, forgive them; nor did he open his mouth against the justice of God, as bearing hard upon him; neither did he complain of the strictness of its demands, abating him nothing; nor of the severity and weight of its strokes, not sparing him at all; nor did he say one word against his people, whose sins brought all his sorrows and sufferings on him, but made intercession for the transgressors, whose sins he bore.

Ver. 33. *In his humiliation his judgment was taken away,* &c.] The humiliation, or low estate of Christ, lay in his assumption of human nature, with the weaknesses and imperfections of it; in the meanness of his parentage and education; in the sorrows he endured from his cradle to his cross; in his last conflict with Satan in the garden; in his being apprehended, bound, scourged, and condemned, both by the sanhedrim, and the Roman governor; and in being enclosed with the assembly of the wicked soldiers, who put on him their own clothes, and a crown of thorns on his head, and a reed in his hand, and then in a mock manner bowed to him as king of the Jews; and last of all in his obedience to death, even the death of the cross, and in his being laid in the grave. Now in this his low estate, *his judgment was taken away;* in the text in Isa. liii. 8. the words are, *he was taken from prison and from judgment:* which some understand of his sufferings, and render the words thus, *by an assembly, and by judgment he was taken away;* that is, by the Jewish sanhedrim, and by the judgment or sentence of Pontius Pilate, his life was taken away: and others interpret it of his resurrection from the dead, when he was taken or delivered from the prison of the grave, and could not be held any longer by the cords and pains of death; and from the judgment or condemnation under which he lay, being justified in the spirit, when he was raised from the dead. The words, as here cited, differ from the original text; which have caused some to think, that there was a different reading of these words, which the Septuagint followed, and Luke after them. Dr. Pocock [a] has proposed a translation of the Hebrew text, as agreeable to this citation, without supposing a various reading, thus, *because of affliction, even from judgment he is taken;* or *when he was humbled, he was taken from judgment;* it being all one whether he was taken from judgment, condemnation, and punishment, as at his resurrection, or whether his punishment was taken from him: though the sense of the words, as they are here cited, rather seems to be this; when he was taken and bound by the Jews, and detained by them a prisoner, and arraigned before the high-priest, and at Pilate's bar, and false witnesses suborned, which was his time of humiliation and affliction; when he was reproached, blasphemed, buffeted, and spit upon, justice was not done him, right did not take place, but was removed from him, and he was treated in a most unjust and unrighteous manner: *and who shall declare his generation?* not his divine or human generation; nor the sorrows of his life; or the duration of his life since his resurrection; nor the numbers of his spiritual seed and offspring; senses put upon the words they will by no means bear; but the generation or age in which Christ lived, which for its wickedness among themselves, and their barbarity to him, and ill usage of him, cannot be sufficiently described and declared; and a great deal of it they themselves own; see the notes on Matt. x.

[1] Eliæ Levit. præfat. 3. ad Sepher Hammasoreth.

[a] Not. Miscell. c. 4. p. 72.

36. and xii. 39. *for his life is taken from the earth*, not in a common, but in a judicial way; in the most cruel, barbarous, and unjust manner, in a violent way; though not without his father's will, and his own consent; and though his life was taken from the earth, he now lives in heaven, and that for evermore.

Ver. 34. *And the eunuch answered Philip, and said*, &c.] After he had read the passage out, and Philip had put the question to him, whether he understood it; and after he had taken him up into his chariot to sit with him, and instruct him: *I pray thee, of whom speakest the prophet this?* being desirous of knowing who was the subject of this famous prophecy: which to know was very useful and edifying, and was not a matter of mere indifference and speculation, but of great moment and concern. A like way of speaking, in order to know the sense of a passage, is used by the Jews[w]: thus upon reading Prov. xxxi. 26. it is asked, "of whom "does Solomon say this Scripture? he does not say it "but of his father David." Does he speak *of himself, or of some other man?* which is very properly and pertinently put; since there might be some appearance of its application to Isaiah, who suffered under Manasseh; and it might be applied to different persons, as it has been since by the Jews; as to Josiah, Jeremiah in particular, and to the people of Israel in general, though very wrongly: Josiah could never be intended, as one of their noted commentators[x] expounds the paragraph; since it was not the sins of the people that were the cause of his death, but his own, and his vanity in meddling with what he had nothing to do with, and had no real call unto; nor can it be said of him that he did no violence, or that he bore the sins of others, and died for them, and made his soul an offering for sin; nor were his days prolonged; nor did the pleasure of the Lord prosper in his hand: nor is the passage applicable to Jeremiah, as another of their writers[y] would have it; he was not free from sin; nor was he wounded for the sins of his people; nor did he undergo his sufferings with patience; nor had he a large number of disciples; nor was he extolled and exalted, as this person is said to be: much less, as others[z] say, is the whole body of the people of Israel in captivity intended; since one single individual is spoken of throughout the whole; and is manifestly distinguished from the people of Israel, whose sins and sorrows he was to bear, and for whose transgressions he was to be stricken and wounded. In all which they go contrary to their Targum[a], Talmud[b], and other ancient writings[c], which interpret many things in this section or paragraph of the Messiah[d]: however, as it might be differently understood, or difficult to be understood, the eunuch very appositely puts this question.

Ver. 35. *Then Philip opened his mouth*, &c.] With freedom and boldness, and spoke clearly and distinctly, and expounded the passage to him. This is a phrase frequently used in Jewish writings, especially in the book of Zohar[e], when they give an account of this or the other Rabbi interpreting any place of Scripture; as for instance, *R. Eleazar* פתח, *opened*, and said, *my sabbaths ye shall keep*, &c. Again, *R. Aba* פתח, *opened*, and said, *and Manoah said unto his wife*, &c. Once more, *R. Simeon opened*, and said, *the heavens declare the glory of God, &c. and began at the same Scripture:* the *fifty-third* of *Isaiah: and preached unto him Jesus of Nazareth;* how that he was the true Messiah, and the person there designed, and that very rightly; for the Jews themselves, the ancient ones, have interpreted several passages in that chapter of the Messiah, as has been before observed; he shewed him how that he was born of a virgin, made under the law, and yielded perfect obedience to it in his life; and that he suffered and died for the sins of his people, and made satisfaction for them, and brought in an everlasting righteousness to justify them before God, and had obtained eternal redemption for them; that he was risen from the dead, was ascended into heaven, and now sat at the right hand of God, and ever lived to make intercession for transgressors; and would come a second time to judge both quick and dead; and in the mean while had left rules for the gathering, and forming, and governing his churches; and had appointed persons to preach his Gospel, and to administer the ordinances of baptism, and the supper of the Lord, which were to continue till his second coming.

Ver. 36. *And as they went on their way*, &c.] In the road from Jerusalem to Gaza; Philip preaching, and the eunuch hearing, and conversing in a religious and spiritual way together; and Beza says in one exemplar it is added, *conferring one with another:* about the person and office of Christ, the doctrines of the Gospel, and the ordinances of it; as appears by what follows, both by the eunuch's request to be admitted to baptism, and his confession of faith: *they came unto a certain water;* which some say was at Bethsoron, in the tribe of Judah or Benjamin; and others think it was the river Eleutherus; the former is more likely; concerning which Jerom[f] gives this account: "Bethsur in the "tribe of Judah, or Benjamin, and now called Beth-"soron, is a village as we go from Ælia (or Jerusalem) "to Hebron, twenty miles from it; near which is a "fountain, springing up at the bottom of a mountain, "and is swallowed up in the same ground in which it "is produced: and the Acts of the Apostles relate, "that the eunuch of queen Candace was baptized here "by Philip." This place was about two miles from Hebron; since that, according to the same writer[g], was twenty-two miles from Jerusalem. Borchardus[h] seems to place it further off from Hebron: "from He-"bron are three *leucas*, or six miles, northward, de-"clining a little to the west, to Nehel Escol, that is, *the* "*brook of the cluster*, from whence the spies carried the "cluster of grapes; to the left of this valley, for the "space of a mile, or half a *leuca*, runs a river, in which "Philip baptized the eunuch of queen Candace, not "far from Sicelech." And, according to Jerom[i],

[w] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 10. 1.
[x] Abarbinel in Isa. liii.
[y] Saadiah Gaon in Aben Ezra in ib.
[z] Jarchi, Aben Ezra, & Kimchi in ib.
[a] In Isa. lii. 13. and liii. 10.
[b] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 98. 2.
[c] Zohar in Exod. fol. 85. 2. Midrash Ruth, fol. 33. 2.
[d] See my Book of the Prophecies of the Messiah, p. 161, &c.
[e] In Gen. fol. 5. 3. 4. & 6. 1. 2. & 7. 1. 2. 3. & 8. 1. 2. 3. & passim.
[f] De locis Hebraicis, fol. 89. 6.
[g] Ib. fol. 87. E.
[h] Descript. Terræ Sanct. c. 9.
[i] Epitaph. Paulæ, fol. 59. 6. H.

Escol lay in the way from Bethsur to Hebron. This account of the historian sets aside that weak piece of criticism on ver. 38. used by some persons; as if when Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, no more is meant, than that they went to the water-side, or descended to the bank and brink of the river; seeing, here it is said, they came to a certain place of water; they came to the river itself, or the river-side, and after this went down into it. *And the eunuch said*, see here is *water, what doth hinder me to be baptized?* This question shews, that he had some knowledge of the ordinance of baptism, which he had received from the ministry and conversation of Philip; and that he had some desire after it, as regenerate persons have, after divine things, after Christ, his word, and ordinances; and that he was willing to take the first opportunity of submitting to it, but was jealous lest he should not be qualified for it; and therefore modestly proposes the affair to Philip, and desires to be examined and judged by him: and it also suggests, that there are some things which might be a just bar to this ordinance, as want of grace, and a disorderly life and conversation, which were the hindrances to the Pharisees and Sadducees, who came to John's baptism; and these are sufficient ones, even though persons may be born in a Christian land, and of believing parents, and have had a good education; yea, though they may have much notional light and speculative knowledge: but where the good work of grace is begun, and when a soul is spiritually enlightened, and has evangelical repentance for sin, and true faith in Christ, and sincere love to him, nothing should hinder: not any thing on his side; not a sense of his own unworthiness, which will never be otherwise, but rather increase; nor the corruptions of his heart and nature, which will always remain, as long as he is in the body; nor fears of falling away, since there cannot be more danger after baptism than before, and Christ is the same who is always able to keep from it; nor the reproaches of the world, which should be esteemed above riches; and more especially, since to be ashamed of Christ, his word, or ordinances, is highly resented by him; nor the opposition of relations and friends, who, though they are to be regarded and listened to in civil matters, yet should have no sway in religious ones to move from the cause of Christ; nor any difficulty in the ordinance itself, since it is but water-baptism, and not a bloody one, such as Christ was baptized with, and some of his followers have been called unto: nor should any thing hinder on the side of the administrator, when the above is the case; as not being circumcised, but Gentiles, as in the times of the apostles, Acts x. 47. so not the former life and conversation of the person, though it has been ever so wicked, as the instances of the crucifiers of Christ, of the jailor, of Saul the persecutor, and many of the Corinthians, shew; nor the weakness of grace; the day of small things is not to be despised, nor a bruised reed to be broken, or smoking flax to be quenched: agreeably to this the Ethiopic version renders it, *who doth hinder*, &c.

Ver. 37. *And Philip said, if thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest*, &c.] Intimating, that if he did not believe, he had no right to that ordinance; though he was a proselyte to the Jewish religion, a serious and devout man, and was employed in a religious way, when Philip came up to him, and was very desirous of being instructed in the knowledge of divine things; and yet notwithstanding all this, he had no right to the ordinance of baptism, unless he had faith in Christ, and made a profession of it; nor would Philip administer it to him without it; from whence it appears, that faith in Christ, and a profession of it, are necessary pre-requisites to baptism: and this faith should not be a mere historical and temporary faith, nor a feigned one, but a believing in Christ with the heart unto righteousness; or such a faith by which a soul relinquishes its own righteousness, and looks and goes unto Christ for righteousness, life, and salvation, and rests and relies upon him for them; and it should be a believing in him with the whole heart, which does not design a strong faith, or a full assurance of faith, but an hearty, sincere, and unfeigned one, though it may be but weak, and very imperfect. And that this is necessary to baptism is manifest, because without this it is impossible to please God; nor can submission and obedience to it be acceptable to him: nor indeed can the ordinance be grateful and pleasing to unbelievers; for though it is a command that is not grievous, and a yoke that is easy, yet it is only so to them that believe; nor can any other see to the end of this ordinance, or behold the sufferings, burial, and resurrection of Christ represented by it, or be baptized into his death, and partake of the benefits of it; and besides, whatsoever is not of faith is sin. *And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the son of God*; which though a short, is a very comprehensive summary of the articles of faith respecting the person, offices, and grace of Christ; as that he is a divine person, truly and properly God, the only-begotten of the father, of the same nature with him, and equal to him; that he existed from all eternity, as a divine person with him, and distinct from him; and that he is the Christ, the anointed of God, to be prophet, priest, and King; and is Jesus, the only Saviour of lost sinners, in whom he trusted and depended alone for righteousness, life, and salvation. This whole verse is wanting in the Alexandrian copy, and in five of Beza's copies, and in the Syriac and Ethiopic versions; but stands in the Vulgate Latin and Arabic versions, and in the Complutensian edition; and, as Beza observes, ought by no means to be expunged, since it contains so clear a confession of faith required of persons to be baptized, which was used in the truly apostolic times.

Ver. 38. *And he commanded the chariot to stand still*, &c.] That is, the eunuch ordered his chariot-driver to stop; for to him it better agrees to give this order than to Philip; though otherwise the words are so placed, that it would be difficult to say who gave the command. *And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him*: upon which Calvin has this note; "hence we see what was "the manner of baptizing with the ancients, for they "plunged the whole body into water." And indeed, if any other mode had been practised then, as sprinkling or pouring of water, there would have been no necessity of their going out of the chariot, and much less of their going down into the water; and as for change of apparel, it cannot be reasonably thought that so great a man should take so long a journey with-

out it. In like manner the Jewish ablutions and purifications, which were performed by immersion, and therefore called baptisms, Heb. ix. 10. are spoken of in the same sort of language as here: so a profluvious person, and a woman that had lain in, were obliged שירדה לטבול, *to go down and dip*[k]. "It is a tradition of the Rabbins[l], that he that sees any "nocturnal pollution on the day of atonement, ירד "וטבל, *goes down and dips himself.*——And so all "that are obliged to dipping, dip according to their "custom on the day of atonement; the profluvious "person, man or woman, the leprous person, man or "woman, the husband of a menstruous woman, and "one defiled with the dead, dip according to their "custom on the day of atonement."

Ver. 39. *And when they were come up out of the water*, &c.] Which is another circumstance, shewing that baptism was then performed by immersion; with this compare Matt. iii. 16. and so it is said of the high-priest, when he washed himself on the day of atonement, ירד וטבל עלה, *he went down and dipped, and came up*[m]; and so any other person that was obliged to dipping on any account, ירד וטבל ועלה, *went down and dipped, and came up*[n]. And again it is said[o], it happened to a servant-maid of Rabbi, שטבלה ועלתה, *that she dipped herself and came up. The spirit of the Lord caught away Philip*: as soon as the ordinance was over; so that the eunuch had no opportunity of rewarding him for his instructions and labour; and this might be done on purpose to shew that he had no mercenary end in joining himself to his chariot; and this sudden rapture and disappearance might be a confirmation to the eunuch that this whole affair was of God. The spirit of the Lord took up Philip, just as he is said to lift up Ezekiel between earth and heaven, Ezek. viii. 3. and carried him above the earth as far as Azotus. The Alexandrian copy, and one of Beza's, and some others, read the words thus, *the holy spirit fell upon the eunuch, but the angel of the Lord caught away Philip*; the same angel, it may be, that bid him go toward the south: *that the eunuch saw him no more*; neither at that time, nor perhaps ever after; for one went one way, and another another way: *and he went on his way*; towards Ethiopia; and, as the Ethiopic version reads, *into his own country*; which is one reason why he saw Philip no more: however, he went thither *rejoicing*, as he had great reason to do; being blessed with the saving knowledge of Christ, and true faith in the son of God, and admitted to the holy ordinance of baptism; having first received the baptism of the spirit, or having the grace of the spirit bestowed on him, and implanted in him: and, according to some copies just now mentioned, after his baptism the spirit fell on him in an extraordinary manner, and that without imposition of hands; so that, upon the whole, he had great reason to rejoice.

Ver. 40. *But Philip was found at Azotus*, &c.] The same with the Ashdod of the Philistines, famous for the temple of Dagon, 1 Sam. v. 1. where the Septuagint call it Azotus, as here: and so it is called in 1 Maccab. iv. 15. and x. 77, 84. and xi. 4. where mention is made of Beth Dagon, and the idol's temple in it; and by Herodotus[p], Pliny[q], and Ptolomy[r]; and it is now called Palmis, according to R. Benjamin[s]; it was about fifty-four miles from Jerusalem, and two hundred and seventy furlongs, or four and thirty miles[t] from Gaza: *and passing through*; or, as he passed along through that and other places: *he preached in all the cities*; that lay in his way; which shews his zeal and diligence: *till he came to Cæsarea*; not Cæsarea Philippi, Matt. xvi. 13. but that which was before called Strato's tower, and was rebuilt by Herod, and called Cæsarea, in honour of Augustus Cæsar[u]; and not by Cæsar himself, as R. Benjamin says[w]: it was six hundred furlongs, or seventy-five miles from Jerusalem[x]. This place was famous for Jewish Rabbins, and their schools of learning; frequent mention is made of רבנין דקיסרין, *the Rabbins of Cæsarea*[y]; here Philip seems to have stopped, and staid awhile.

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASWATI MAHAL

CHAP. IX.

Ver. 1. *AND Saul yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter*, &c.] The historian having given an account of the dispersion of all the preachers of the Gospel at Jerusalem, excepting the apostles, and of their success in other parts, especially of Philip's, returns to the history of Saul; who, not satisfied with the murder of Stephen, and with the havoc he made of the church at Jerusalem, haling them out of their houses to prison, continued not only to threaten them with confiscation of goods and imprisonment, but with death itself. The phrase here used is an Hebraism; so in Psal. xxvii. 12. יפח חמס, *one that breathes out violence*, or cruelty; and this shews the inward disposition of his mind, the rage, wrath, malice, envy, and blood-thirstiness he was full of; and is observed to illustrate the riches of divine grace in his conversion. And wonderful it is, that that same mouth which breathed out destruction and death to the followers of Christ, should afterwards publish and proclaim the Gospel of the grace of God; that he whose mouth was full of cursing and bitterness, should hereafter, and so very quickly, come forth in the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ. And this rage of his, who now ravined as a wolf, as was foretold of Benjamin,

[k] T. Bab. Nidda, fol. 42. 1. & 43. 1.
[l] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 88. 1.
[m] Misna Yoma, c. 3. sect. 4. 6. & 7. sect. 3. 4.
[n] T. Bab. Ceritot, fol. 15. 1.
[o] T. Bab. Nidda, fol. 66. 2.
[p] L. 2. c. 157.
[q] L. 5. c. 13.
[r] L. 5. c. 16.
[s] Itinerar. p. 51.
[t] Dioder. Sicul. l. 19. c. 95.
[u] Joseph. de Bello Jud. l. 1. c. 7. sect. 8. & c. 21. sect. 5. 7.
[w] Itinerar. p. 37.
[x] Joseph. de Bello Jud. l. 1. c. 3. sect. 5. & Antiqu. l. 13. c. 19.
[y] T. Hieros. Challa, fol. 57. 2. & passim.

of which tribe he was, was against the lambs of Christ, and the sheep of his fold: *against the disciples of the Lord*; not against wicked men, murderers, and thieves, and other evil-doers, but against the harmless and innocent followers of Jesus, and which was an aggravation of his cruelty: and being thus heated, and full of wrath, he *went unto the high-priest*; Annas or Caiaphas, who, notwithstanding the Jews were under the Roman government, had great authority to punish persons with stripes and death itself, who acted contrary to their law.

Ver. 2. *And desired of him letters to Damascus*, &c.] Damascus was the head or metropolis of Syria, Isa. vii. 8. And so Pliny [z] calls it Damascus of Syria: it was a very ancient city; it was in the times of Abraham; his servant Eliezer is said to be of it, Gen. xv. 2. and some say it was built by him the said Eliezer; though Josephus [a] makes Uz, a grandson of Shem, to be the founder of it; whose surname is conjectured, by some, to be Dimshak, seeing that and Uz differ not in sense: and Justin says [b], it had its name from Damascus, the king of it, in honour of whom the Syrians made a temple of the sepulchre of his wife Arathis, and her a goddess; after Damascus, he says, Azelus, then Azores, Abraham, and Israel were kings of it. Some think it has its name from blood, and that it signifies a *sack* or bag, or, as Jerom explains, a cup of blood [c], or one that drinks blood: who says, it is a true tradition, that the field in which Abel was killed by Cain, was in Damascus [d]: but it seems rather to be so called from the redness of the earth about it; for some very good writers affirm, that the earth in the fields of Damascus is like wax tinged with red lead; so if it be read Dammesek, as it commonly is, in the Arabic language, *Damma* signifies to *tinge*, and *Meshko* is used for *red earth*; or if *Dummesek*, as it is in 2 Kings xvi. 20. *Daumo*, in the same language, is *permanent*, what always abides, and *Meshko*, as before, *red earth*, and so *Dummesek* is never-failing red earth; or if it be *Darmesek*, as in 1 Chron. viii. 5, 6. the same with *Darmsuk*, it may be observed, that the Syrians call red earth *Doro sumoko*: so that, upon the whole, this seems to be the best etymology of the word [e], and the rise of the name of this famous city, which Justin calls the most noble city of Syria. It is said [f] to be an hundred and sixty miles from Jerusalem. Here might be many Christians before, and others might flee hither upon this persecution; and Saul, not content with driving them from their native place, persecuted them, as he himself says, to strange cities: and that he might do this with safety to himself, and with the greater force and cruelty to them, he got letters from the high-priest, and sanhedrim, at Jerusalem; either recommending him to the Jews at Damascus, and exhorting them to assist him in what he came about; or empowering him to act under his authority, or both: and these were directed to be delivered *to the synagogues*; to the rulers of them; for the Jews being numerous in this place, they had more synagogues than one. Josephus says [g], that under Nero the inhabitants of Damascus killed ten thousand Jews in their own city: and Benjamin Tudelensis [h] in his time says, there were about three thousand Jews (Pharisees), besides two hundred Karaites (or Scripturarians), and four hundred Samaritans, who lived in peace together. Now to these synagogues, and the chief men of them, was Saul recommended for assistance and direction, *that if he found any of this way*; of thinking; that were of this sect of religion, and either professed to believe, or preach, that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah: *whether they were men or women*; without any fear of one, or mercy to the other: *he might bring them bound to Jerusalem*; to be examined and punished by the sanhedrim there, as they should think fit; and for this purpose he must take with him a considerable number of men; and that he had men with him is certain from ver. 7.

Ver. 3. *And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus*, &c.] Some say it was a mile from Damascus: though no mention is made of his obtaining letters from the high-priest, only of his desiring them; yet there is no doubt but they were granted him; the design of the historian, under a divine direction, being to give an account of the temper and disposition of Saul; and he having got them, set out on his journey in high spirits, and proceeded on with the same wicked intentions, till he came near the city; where he designed to open and shew his commission, and execute his wrathful purposes; but he is not suffered to go into the city with such a spirit: *and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven*; which exceeded the light and brightness of the sun, for it was at mid-day, Acts xxvi. 13. and so the Ethiopic version here inserts this clause, *and it was noon-time*; which circumstance shews that the light was very extraordinary; and it was an emblem of that inward and spiritual light which was now quickly communicated to him, light being the first thing in the new, as in the old creation; and of that Gospel light he was hereafter to spread in the world.

Ver. 4. *And he fell to the earth*, &c.] Not being able to bear the light, and still less the divine glory and majesty which he perceived was present; and therefore, in great confusion, amazement, and fear, he fell with his face to the ground, and lay there prostrate; and so did also those that were with him, Acts xxvi. 14. *and heard a voice, saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* this voice was the real voice of Christ in his human nature, and who visibly and in person appeared, and was seen by the apostle; see Acts xxvi. 16. 1 Cor. xv. 8. the language he spoke in was the Hebrew tongue, and he calls him by his Hebrew name Saul, and which is doubled to denote vehemency and affection; see the note on Luke xxii. 31. he knew him as one of his sheep, though straying, and calls him by name, and expostulates with him, wherefore he should persecute him in his members as he did; for the union between Christ and his people is so close, that what is done to them is done to him.

[z] L. 36. c. 8.
[a] Antiqu. l. 1. c. 6. sect. 5.
[b] Ex Trogo, l. 36. c. 2.
[c] De Nominibus Hebraicis, fol. 97. F. & 101. K.
[d] Comment. in Ezek. xxvii. 18.
[e] Vid. Hiller. Onomasticum, p. 114, 115, 419, 793.
[f] Bunting's Itinerar. p. 394.
[g] De Bello Jud. l. 2. c. 20. sect. 2.
[h] Itinerar. p. 56, 57.

There seems to be a considerable emphasis on the word *me: me*, who have been thy surety from everlasting; *me*, who am thy Saviour in time; *me*, who hath loved thee and given myself for thee; *me*, who have shed my blood, laid down my life, and died for thee; *me*, who am now at my father's right hand, interceding for thee, that grace might be bestowed upon thee, the set time being now come.

Ver. 5. *And he said, who art thou, Lord?* &c.] For he knew not whether it was God, or an angel, or who it was that spake to him; he knew not Christ by his form or voice, as Stephen did, when he saw him standing at the right hand of God; he was in a state of ignorance, and knew neither the person, nor voice of Christ, and yet his heart was so far softened and wrought upon, that he was desirous of knowing who he was; *and the Lord said, I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest.* The Alexandrian copy, and the Syriac and Ethiopic versions, read Jesus of Nazareth; and one of Beza's copies, and another of Stephens, as in ch. xxii. 8. whose name thou art doing many things against, and whose people thou art destroying: it is *hard for thee to kick against the pricks*; or *to resist me*, as the Arabic version renders it; and which is the sense of the phrase; it is a proverbial expression, taken from beasts that are goaded, who kick against the goads or pricks, and hurt themselves the more thereby; and Christ uses it, suggesting hereby, that should Saul go on to persecute him and his people, to oppose his Gospel, and the strong evidence of it, in doctrine and miracles, and notwithstanding the present remonstrances made in such an extraordinary manner; he would find himself in the issue greatly hurt by it, and could not rationally expect to succeed against so powerful a person. This clause in the Syriac version is placed at the end of the fourth verse.

Ver. 6. *And he trembling and astonished*, &c.] At the light and voice, and appearance of Christ, and especially at the words last spoken; he was now pricked to the heart, and filled with a sense of sin, and loaded with guilt, and had dreadful apprehensions of his state and condition, on account of his past wickedness, and the present course of sin he was in: so persons under first convictions *tremble* at the sight of their sins, which rise up like so many ghosts, and stare them in the face, and load their consciences with guilt; at the swarms of corruptions they see in their hearts, which appear to them an habitation of devils, a hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird; at the curses of a righteous law which threatens with damnation and death; at the future judgment, and the apprehensions of divine wrath; and at the voice and word of God, which strikes terror, cuts them to the heart, and like an hammer breaks the rock in pieces: and they are *astonished* at their own wickedness and vileness, which they had no conception of before; at the sparing mercy and forbearance of God, who has continued them in being, and not sent them to hell, to be among devils and damned spirits; at the light around them, by which they see their sins, the plague of their own hearts, the insufficiency of their own righteousness, their lost state by nature, and need of salvation by Christ; and at the doctrines of the Gospel, so far as they have light into them; and at the person of Christ, and at his father's love and his in procuring salvation for them: *said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* signifying he was willing to do any thing he should direct him to, whereby he might make satisfaction for the injury he had done him, and by which he might be saved; for he was still upon the covenant of works, as persons under first convictions commonly are: *and the Lord said unto him*; this, with all that goes before in this verse, is wanting in the Alexandrian copy, and Syriac version: *arise and go into the city*; that is, of Damascus, as the Ethiopic version reads: *and it shall be told thee what thou must do*; what was appointed for him to do, ch. xxii. 10. and there it was told him both what he should do and suffer for Christ, but not to obtain salvation; and this was done internally by the spirit of God, who instructed him in the doctrines and ordinances of the Gospel, and externally by Ananias: in two of Beza's copies, and in the Syriac version, it is read, *there shall it be told thee*, &c.

Ver. 7. *And the men which journeyed with him*, &c.] Out of respect to him, to keep him company; or rather to assist him in his designs: *stood speechless*; astonished and amazed, they had not power to speak one word, nor to rise from the ground, and move one step forward; they were as if they were thunderstruck, and fastened to the earth; for this standing is not opposed to their being fallen to the earth, but to their going forward, and only expresses the surprise and stupidity that had seized them: *hearing a voice, but seeing no man*; that is, they heard the voice of Saul, saying, who art thou? and what wilt thou have me to do? but saw nobody that he spoke to, which surprised them; for it is certain they did not hear the voice of Christ, that spake to him, ch. xxii. 9. or if they heard the voice of Christ, it was only the sound of his voice, but did not understand what he said; but the former seems rather to be the sense, and the best way of reconciling the two passages.

Ver. 8. *And Saul arose from the earth*, &c.] As he was bid by Christ, ver. 6. *and when his eyes were opened he saw no man*; neither Christ, who appeared to him from heaven, whom he had before seen, nor even any of his companions, nor indeed any object: the Syriac version renders it, *he saw nothing*; not any thing at all; and the Ethiopic version, *he could not see*: when he opened his eye-lids, he perceived his sight was gone, and this shewed it to be real blindness; and which was an emblem of the ignorance and blindness he had been in: *but they led him by the hand*; the men that were with him, perceiving that he could not guide himself, took him by the hand, and led him on his journey; *and brought him into Damascus*; and now was fulfilled, at least in part, the prophecy in Zech. ix. 1.

Ver. 9. *And he was three days without sight*, &c.] Without bodily sight; for otherwise all this while his spiritual sight was increasing, and Christ was giving him by his spirit a full view of himself, his state and case, and where his salvation was; and a clear insight into the doctrines of the Gospel, which he is said to have by the revelation of Christ, whereby he was fitted for the immediate preaching of it: *and neither*

did eat nor drink: having no regard unto, or time for either; being filled with grief and sorrow, and true repentance for sin, and taken up in prayer to God, and employed in attending to, and receiving the doctrines of grace, he was afterwards to publish.

Ver. 10. *And there was a certain disciple at Damascus,* &c.] Who perhaps came hither upon the persecution at Jerusalem, or rather might have lived here some time; see ver. 13. that he was more than a private or ordinary disciple of Christ seems manifest, from his being sent to Saul on such an important affair; from his putting his hands upon him, upon which he was filled with the Holy Ghost; and from his baptizing him: some think he was one of the seventy disciples; some say he was a deacon; but it is certain he was not one of the first seven; others affirm he was a presbyter, and some report that he was afterwards bishop of Damascus, and died a martyr there; but these are things not to be depended on: *named Ananias:* a Jewish name, the same with Hananiah, Dan. i. 6. there was an high-priest of this name, Acts xxiii. 2. and it was a name in much use among the Jews; frequent mention is made in the Misnic and Talmudic writings of R. Hananiah, or Ananias: *and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias:* by *the Lord,* is meant the Lord Jesus Christ, as is evident from ver. 17. who appeared to Ananias in a vision; the Arabic version adds, *by night:* perhaps in a dream, as the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph the husband of Mary, and called him by his name Ananias, to which he answered: *and he said, behold,* I am here, *Lord:* in like manner as Samuel did, when a child, when the Lord called to him; shewing his readiness to hearken to his voice, to do his will, and obey his orders, be they what they would.

Ver. 11. *And the Lord* said *unto him, arise,* &c.] Quickly, directly, immediately, from off thy bed; the case required haste and dispatch: *and go into the street which is called Straight:* a street in the city of Damascus so called; the streets of cities were called by different names, to distinguish them as ours now are. So in Jerusalem there was the street of the house of God, which led to the temple, Ezra x. 9. and the upper street, in which idolatrous Gentiles, and such as were fullers by trade, dwelt[i]; and the street of the butchers; and the street of the wool-staplers[k]: and this street in Damascus might be called *Straight:* because it might be a long straight street, without any windings and turnings, which might go through the city. Whether or no this was one of the streets which Benhadad allowed Ahab to make in Damascus, 1 Kings xx. 34. cannot be said; *and inquire in the house of Judas:* which was in that street: who this Judas was is not certain, that he was a Jew appears by his name, but whether a believing, or an unbelieving Jew, is not known; however, he was Saul's host, and if this was the house he was recommended to from Jerusalem, or designed to go to when he set out from thence, it is very probable he was an unbeliever; but if it was an house he pitched on after his conversion, it is likely this Judas was a believer, and whether the same with Judas surnamed Barsabas may be considered, who is mentioned in Acts xv. 22, 32. however, at this man's house Ananias was to inquire *for one called Saul of Tarsus;* or *Saul by name the Tarsian.* So it is said[l] of Bigthan and Teresh, Esth. vi. 2. that they were שני תרסיים, *two Tarsians,* perhaps citizens of Tarsus, as Saul was. Tarsus was a city in Cilicia, and which Solinus[m] calls the mother of cities, and is the same with the Tarshish of the Old Testament; here Saul was born, and of it he was a citizen; see Acts xxi. 39. and xxii. 3. and therefore is here called Saul of Tarsus, or Saul the Tarsian: *for behold he prayeth:* so as he had never prayed before; now he prayed with the spirit, and with the understanding, from a feeling sense of his wants, for spiritual blessings, such as he had no knowledge of, nor desire after before. God has no still-born children; as soon as any are quickened by his grace, they cry unto him; prayer is the breath of a regenerate man, and shews him to be alive. He who before was breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of Christ, now breathes after communion with Christ and them. This is said, no doubt, to encourage Ananias to go to him. The Syriac and Arabic versions place this clause at the beginning of the next verse, *for behold, whilst he prayed he saw,* &c. the Ethiopic version has it not.

Ver. 12. *And hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias,* &c.] Some read this verse in a parenthesis, and take them to be the words of Luke the historian; but it is rather a continuation of the words of Christ, telling Ananias, for his greater encouragement to go to Saul, that he had seen him in a vision, and had knowledge both of his person, and of his name, and of what he was to do to him; for in the vision or dream, he had been represented to him as *coming in:* to the house, and into the room where he was: *and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight:* without which he had been three days, and which he did receive upon Ananias's putting his hands on him.

Ver. 13. *Then Ananias answered, Lord,* &c.] Though Ananias knew that it was the Lord that spoke, and acknowledged his power and dominion, and expressed his readiness to obey his commands; yet there was a timidity in him, and which was the more inexcusable, that it should appear after the Lord had told him of the vision which Saul had had of him; and yet still he was fearful of putting himself into his hands, who had been so violent a persecutor; and therefore obliquely excuses himself, by observing what Saul had done at Jerusalem, and the powers he came with to Damascus: *I have heard by many of this man:* which shews that Ananias had been at Damascus some time, and was not an eye-witness of the havoc Saul made of the church, only had the account of it from others; and these many who fled to Damascus upon the persecution, which Saul was at the head of; and being so, was particularly spoken of, and his name was well known, and was become infamous for his cruelty and barbarity: *how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem;* by entering into their houses with violence, haling men and women from thence, committing them to

[i] Misn. Shekalim, c. 8. sect. 1. Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.
[k] Misn. Eruvin, c. 10. sect. 9.
[l] T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 7. 1. & 13. 2. & Targum in Esther ii. 21.
[m] Polyhistor. c. 41.

prison, and persecuting them unto death. Believers in Christ are called his *saints*, because separated by his grace for his service, and sanctified by his spirit, and to whom he is made sanctification; and because they live holy lives and conversations; all which is an aggravation of the evil done them, and which will be avenged by Christ in his own time.

Ver. 14. *And here he hath authority from the chief priests*, &c.] His fury and madness against the saints did not stop at Jerusalem, but he had received a commission from the sanhedrim to go to Damascus, where he now was: *to bind all that call on thy name;* to take up all such persons and put them in bonds, and carry them bound to Jerusalem, whom he should find either praying to Christ, as God, as the first Christians used to do, and which is no inconsiderable proof of the deity of Christ; or professing the name of Christ, or were called by it.

Ver. 15. *But the Lord said unto him, go thy way*, &c.] The Syriac version reads, *arise, go thy way:* make no delay, nor any excuse, there is no reason for it; nothing is to be feared from him: *for he is a chosen vessel unto me;* a choice and excellent one, full of the heavenly treasure of the Gospel, full of the gifts and graces of the spirit, and so very fit and richly qualified for the use and service of Christ; and was כלי חמדתה, *a vessel of desire*, or a desirable one, as the Jews speak[n]: or he was, to render the words literally, *a vessel of election;* both an instrument of gathering in the election, or the elect of God, through the preaching of the Gospel; and was himself chosen of God, both to grace and glory, a vessel of mercy, and of honour prepared for glory; and was separated, predestinated, and appointed to the Gospel of God, to preach it among the Gentiles; which sense is confirmed by what follows: *to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel;* by the *name* of Christ is meant his Gospel, which is a declaration of his person, perfections, glories, and excellencies, of his offices, grace, righteousness, and salvation; and to *bear* it, is to preach it, to carry it about, spread abroad, and propagate it; in allusion either to the prophets of old, whose prophecies are often called a *burden*, which they bore and carried to the several nations to whom they were sent; or to the Levites bearing the tabernacle of the Lord, and its vessels, *be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord*, Isa. lii. 11. Upon which Aben Ezra has this note, "they are the Israelites, נושאי התורה, *that bear the* "*law;*" but Saul was a chosen vessel to bear the Gospel; or to the sower of seed, Psal. cxxvi. 6. *before the Gentiles*, or nations of the world; and he was an apostle, and teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity; the Gospel of the uncircumcision was particularly committed to him: and before *kings*, as he did before Agrippa, king of the Jews, and before Nero, emperor of Rome; and his bonds for the Gospel, and so the Gospel through his bonds became manifest in all the palace, or court of Cæsar. And before *the children of Israel;* the Jews, to whom he first preached it; but when they put it away he turned to the Gentiles, and afterwards, before the Jews, he bore a testimony for it.

Ver. 16. *For I will shew him*, &c.] In vision, and by prophecy, either now, or hereafter; or by facts, as they come upon him: *how great things he must suffer for my name's sake;* such as weariness, pain, and watchings, hunger, thirst, fastings, cold, and nakedness, perils on various accounts, and from different quarters, stripes, scourges, imprisonment, shipwreck, stoning, and death, of which he himself gives a detail, 2 Cor. xi. 23—28. so that Ananias had no reason to be afraid to go to him, and converse with him, and do unto him as he was directed.

Ver. 17. *And Ananias went his way*, &c.] He arose from off his bed or seat, where he was, went out of his house, and on the way to the place where Saul was; he had nothing more to say, his objections were answered; there was no room to excuse himself, nor did he now desire it, but quietly yields, and cheerfully obeys: *and entered into the house;* or *that house*, the house of Judas, where Saul was, and whither Ananias was directed, ver. 11. *and putting his hands on him;* on Saul, in the same form Saul had seen him, in vision, doing it: and which was done, either as a prayer-gesture; or for the healing of him, the restoring him to his sight; or that he might receive the gifts of the Holy Ghost; and it may be on all these accounts: and *said, brother Saul;* he calls him *brother*, not because he was of the same nation, but because he was now of the same faith; because he was a regenerate person, and belonged to the family of God, and was of the same household of faith: and this he said, not upon what he had received from Saul's own mouth, for he addressed him in this manner as soon as he came to him; but upon what the Lord had said concerning him; though it was indeed common with the Jewish doctors to salute one another with this name. "When R. Jose ben "Kisma was sick, R. Chanina ben Tradion went to "visit him; he said unto him, Chanina, אחי אחי, *my* "*brother, my brother*, &c.[o]" So Shemaiah called Abtalion his brother[p]. And in like manner R. Eleazar ben Azariah saluted R. Ishmael[q]. And R. Joshua speaks of R. Tarphon in the same language[r]: *the Lord, even Jesus that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest;* that is, who appeared to Saul as he was in the way to Damascus; not that Jesus was in the way, for he was in heaven, and appeared from thence to Saul, who was in the way: and he mentions Jesus by name, and this appearance of his, partly to assure him of his mission from him; for otherwise he could have known nothing of his appearance to him; and partly to shew the love of Christ to him, and though he had persecuted him in so violent a manner, he had a compassionate regard for him; as also to encourage and comfort him, who had been trembling, and astonished at what he had heard from Jesus. This same glorious person, adds he, *hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight;* his bodily sight, which he had been without three days, by the imposition of

[n] T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 6. 1.
[o] T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 18. 1. Vid. fol. 27. 2.
[p] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 35. 2.
[q] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 11. 1.
[r] Misn. Yadaim, c. 4. sect. 3.

hands: *and be filled with the Holy Ghost*: with the extraordinary gifts of the spirit, such as speaking with divers tongues, healing diseases, and the like; for as for the graces of the spirit, and even Gospel light and knowledge, and gifts for preaching it, he had received these already.

Ver. 18. *And immediately there fell from his eyes, as it had been scales*, &c.] Which were little thin skins or films, like the scales of fishes, which were formed from the defluxions that fell from his brain, through the excessive light that shone around him, and the surprise he was thrown into by it: these, as soon as Ananias put his hands upon him, dropped off; which were an emblem and representation of the scales of ignorance, of himself, of sin, of righteousness, of the law, of the Gospel, and of Jesus as the Messiah; and of unbelief in him, and of pride, malice, and envy, and of superstition and bigotry, and of error and false doctrine, which, upon his being enlightened by the spirit of God, fell from him: *and he received sight forthwith*: his corporeal sight, which was an emblem of that spiritual sight he had also received: the word *forthwith*, or *immediately*, is not in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions, but seems necessary; and indeed, if it was not expressed, it would be understood; for as soon as the scales fell from his eyes, he must receive his sight: the Ethiopic version places it after the word *baptized*, in the next clause: *and arose, and was baptized*: that is, after Ananias had appointed it to him, as his duty, had pressed him to it, and called upon him to submit to it without delay, Acts xxii. 16. And this shews that baptism was performed by immersion; for had it been done in any other way, either by pouring or sprinkling a little water, Saul might have kept his seat, and water might have been brought to him, and so the ordinance might have been performed; but he arose and went, either to a bath that might be in Judas's house, fit for such a purpose; for the Jews had their baths to bathe their whole bodies in on certain occasions; or he went to some certain place of water without doors, convenient for the administration of baptism, where it was administered by Ananias unto him. And this also may suggest to us, that only enlightened persons are the proper objects of this ordinance; such as have the scales of darkness, ignorance, and unbelief removed from them, and have a spiritual sight and sense of divine things: hence the ancients used to call baptism by the name of φωτισμος, *illumination*, and baptized persons *enlightened* ones.

Ver. 19. *And when he had received meat*, &c.] Which was set before him when he had received his sight, and after he was baptized, of which he had not tasted for three days: *he was strengthened*: in body, being before very weak and feeble; not so much through fatigue of his journey, as through the fear and surprise the appearance of Christ to him, and his words, threw him into; as also through his fasting so long, and his continuance and constancy in prayer all this while, and the attention he gave to the divine instructions which were communicated to him, internally and externally: *then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus*: who came from Jerusalem upon the persecution raised against them there: with these Saul continued some few days after his conversion and baptism, for quickly after he went into Arabia, as appears from Gal. i. 17. These disciples, with the new converts afterwards, it is highly probable, formed a church-state in Damascus; Ananias is said to be the bishop or pastor of it, and which remained in several ages. In the catalogue of the council of Nice, which was held in the beginning of the *fourth* century, Damascus is mentioned as the seat of a church: in the *fifth* century a bishop of Damascus was in the council at Ephesus; and in the same century it was reckoned a metropolitan church in Asia; in the seventh century it appears there was a church in this place; and even in the *eighth* century, though the Arabians ravaged in those parts, yet still a church continued here for some time, till Ulid, the prince of the Saracens, took away the temple from the Christians of this place, and dedicated it to Mahomet; after which we hear no more of the church at Damascus *.

Ver. 20. *And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues*, &c.] The Syriac version adds, *of the Jews*: that is, which were in Damascus, see ver. 2. from whence it appears, that he was immediately, as soon as converted, qualified for the work of preaching the Gospel: nor did he confer with flesh and blood, or stand disputing and debating with himself and carnal reason, what was best for him to do; but as soon as he knew Christ himself, he preached him to others, and whom he always made the subject of his ministry: and particularly, *that he is the son of God*: the only-begotten of the father, the eternal son of God, truly and properly God, of the same nature and essence with God his father, and equal to him. His design was to assert and maintain the dignity of his person, which is the foundation of his office, as Mediator, and of all the wonderful things he performed: had he meant no more than that he was the Messiah, the sense would only be, that he preached that Christ was the Christ; but the meaning is, that he preached that Jesus of Nazareth, the true Messiah, was not a mere man, but a divine person, even the son of God: he set out in his ministry, with the principal and most fundamental article of the Christian religion, that which Christ asserted, and for which he suffered, and which all the apostles, and first Christians believed. The Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions read *Jesus*, instead of *Christ*.

Ver. 21. *But all that heard* him *were amazed*, &c.] Not the disciples that believed in Christ, but the unbelievers, as appears from their words: *and said, is not this he that destroyed them that called on this name in Jerusalem?* they don't express the name of Christ, out of malice and ill will; which shews who they were that said these words, and were astonished to hear Saul preaching in this name, and proving him to be the son of God, and the true Messiah; when it was but a little while ago he consented to the death of Stephen, made havoc of the church, wasted and destroyed it as much as was in his power, and persecuted unto death such as called upon the name of Christ, or were called by

* Magdeburg. Hist. Eccles. cent. 4. c. 2. p. 2. cent. 5. c. 2. p. 3. & c. 7. p. 417. cent. 7. c. 2. p. 3. cent. 8. c. 2. p. 3. & c. 16. p. 514.

his name, he could find in Jerusalem: nor did this satisfy him, for it follows, *and came hither*, that is, to Damascus, *for that intent, that he might bring them bound to the chief priests:* whom he should find professing or invocating the name of Christ, or bearing it; now to see and hear him preach this same name, was surprising to them.

Ver. 22. *But Saul increased the more in strength*, &c.] Not of body, but of mind; his gifts and graces, and spiritual light and knowledge increased; his abilities were greater; his fortitude of mind, boldness, and freedom of speech, every day increased: he got more, and new, and fresh arguments, by which he himself was confirmed, and he confirmed others in the truths of Christ. Some copies read, he *was more strengthened in the word:* either in the word of God, having a clearer understanding, and being more confirmed in the truth of it; or in speech, being more ready and powerful in speaking it. *And confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus;* confuted them, and put them to silence, so that they had nothing to say for themselves, or against the truth: *proving that this is very Christ;* by joining and knitting passages of Scripture in the Old Testament together, by producing and citing express testimonies from thence, and by comparing the prophecies and the characters of the Messiah in them, with Jesus of Nazareth, he proved to a demonstration that he must be the Messiah.

Ver. 23. *And after that many days were fulfilled*, &c.] This phrase is used by the Septuagint on Exod. ii. 11, 23. and iv. 18. for a considerable length of time, for many years. The Jewish writers observe [f], that the phrase, *many days*, signify at least three days; for by *days*, in the plural number, two must be designed, and many signifies a third, or that one at least is added to them; but here it signifies three years, as it also does, 1 Kings xviii. 1. where it is said, *and it came to pass* after *many days, that the word of the Lord came to Elijah in the third year;* and such a space of time is designed by the many days here; for when the apostle had staid a little while at Damascus, and preached Christ in the synagogues, he went into Arabia, where he continued about three years, and then returned to Damascus, where what is related happened to him; see Gal. i. 17, 18. 2 Cor. xi. 32, 33. *the Jews took counsel to kill him;* being filled with indignation at him, that he had changed his religion, and from a persecutor was become a preacher of the Gospel; this they had meditated some time, and now upon his return to Damascus attempted to put their counsel into execution.

Ver. 24. *But their laying await was known of Saul*, &c.] Either by divine revelation, or by some friends, who had got knowledge of it, and gave him information, as in Acts xxiii. 16. *and they watched the gates night and day to kill him;* that is, the Jews, together with the governor of the city, and the garrison of soldiers in it. These all watched at the several gates of the city, night and day, that Saul might not make his escape, and that they might take him, and put him to death.

Ver. 25. *Then the disciples took him by night*, &c.] The Alexandrian copy reads, *his disciples;* the disciples of Saul, such as he had been instrumental in making at Damascus: but it is not usual for the saints to be called in Scripture the disciples of any man; therefore the common reading is best, and designs the disciples and followers of Christ; who being concerned for the preservation of so valuable a life, took Saul in the night season, *and let him down by the wall in a basket.* Damascus was a walled city; hence we read of the wall of Damascus, Jer. xlix. 27. And the house where Saul was, and which very likely was one of the disciples', was built upon the wall, as the house of Rahab was upon the town-wall of Jericho; and as she let down the spies from thence by a cord through the window, Josh. ii. 15. so the disciples let down Saul in a basket with cords through the window of the house, as appears from 2 Cor. xi. 33. see the note there: to this, no doubt, the disciples were directed by the overruling providence of God, in order to preserve the life of the apostle, who had much work to do for Christ in several parts of the world, and therefore must not fall into the hands of his enemies and die, his time not being yet come; and this shews, that it is lawful to make use of all prudent means and proper methods to prevent the designs of wicked men, and escape out of their hands, and preserve life when in danger; by which means Saul escaped their hands.

Ver. 26. *And when Saul was come to Jerusalem*, &c.] After he had escaped out of Damascus, in the manner before related, and which was three years after his conversion: *he assayed to join himself to the disciples;* not to the private members of the church, or ordinary disciples, as distinct from the apostles, but to the whole society, as consisting of apostles and private Christians; for his chief view in going to Jerusalem was to see Peter; and the Ethiopic version reads, *to the apostles:* the sense is, that he tried either to get into a free and familiar conversation with them, or to become one of their body, and a member of the church. He did not return to the high-priest from whom he had received letters to Damascus, to give him an account of the execution of his commission, or what use he had made of the letters he gave him, but to the disciples, against whom he had breathed out threatenings and slaughter. Grace had made a strange alteration in him; those whom he hated, and was exceeding mad against, he now loves; they are the excellent ones in the earth in whom is all his delight; and whom he persecuted to strange cities, he now courts their company, and attempts to get among them; accounting it his greatest honour and happiness to be one of their society. It is the duty and interest of every gracious soul to join himself to a church of Christ, which consists of the disciples of Christ, as the church at Jerusalem did; of such who have learned Christ, and the way of life and salvation by him; who have believed in him, and have been taught to deny themselves for his sake, and to take up the cross and follow him, in the way of his ordinances and appointments; and to be *joined* to a church, is to become an open subject of Christ's kingdom, a citizen of the heavenly Jerusalem, one of the family of God, and a member of the body of Christ visibly. The phrase is expressive of

[f] Maimon. & Bartenora in Misn. Zavim, c. 1. sect. 1.

that strict union there is between the saints in church relation, and of that close and intimate communion they have with each other, and shews that their incorporation together is by mutual consent and agreement. And a great privilege it is to be in such a relation, having the grace of God: for such have the best of company, and the most refreshing ordinances; are in the greatest safety, being under the watch and care of ministers and members, of angels, and of God himself; and shall never be disfranchised, or become foreigners and strangers; they may expect the presence of God, fresh supplies of his grace, and even life for evermore, and need fear no enemy. That which qualifies for church-membership, is not natural descent from religious parents, nor a religious education, nor mere morality and civility, nor even a constant attendance on the word of God, but faith in Christ Jesus, and a profession of it; and according to the order of the Gospel it is necessary that baptism in water should go before it; and these qualifications the apostle had. *But they were all afraid of him;* knowing him to have been such an enemy to Christ, and so violent a persecutor of his church in times past: *and believed not that he was a disciple;* or a true follower of Christ, but only pretended to be one, having some wicked design upon them in attempting to get among them: the reason of their not knowing any thing of his conversion might be, because not only of the distance between Damascus and Jerusalem, and the continuance of the persecution in the latter place, which might occasion few comers to and fro of the Christians; but because the apostle, soon after his conversion, went to Arabia, where he had been all this while. Hence it appears, that the primitive churches were very careful in the admission of persons into fellowship with them; as they could not bear them in their communion who were evil, so they would not admit any among them but such as they looked upon to be the true disciples of Christ: and this is a method worthy of imitation; and such persons who, before a profession of religion, have been either very scandalous in their lives and conversations, or notorious enemies to Christ and his Gospel, ought to be thoroughly examined into, and full satisfaction obtained concerning them, ere they be received into the bosom of the church.

Ver. 27. *But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the apostles,* &c.] To Peter and James, the brother of our Lord, for no other apostles did he see at this time, Gal. i. 18, 19. It is probable that Barnabas had been at Damascus, and had there related to him the whole account of Saul's conversion and entrance on the ministry, which he gives a particular relation of, as follows: *and declared unto them, how he had seen the Lord in the way;* he told the apostles, Peter and James, how that Christ had appeared to him in person, as he was on his way to Damascus: *and that he had spoken to him;* and expostulated with him about his persecution of him in his members, and bid him go into the city, where it should be told him what he should do: *and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus;* that he had used great freedom of speech, and had shewn courage and greatness of mind in preaching Christ at Damascus, both as soon as he was converted, and now upon his return thither. Hence it is manifest, that previous to admission into a church of Christ, and in order to satisfy the members of it, and gain their assent to such an admission, there ought to be a declaration made of the work of grace upon the souls of such, who propose to be joined to it; as how the Lord has met with them, and shewn them the evil of their ways, and given them repentance unto life; and how they have had a sight of him by faith, and have looked to Christ and believed in him for the salvation of their souls; and how they have embraced the doctrines of the Gospel, and have found much sweetness and comfort in them; and that from a principle of love to him, and faith in him, and with a view to his glory, they are willing to submit to his ordinances, and to walk in holy fellowship with his people; and such an account of Saul being given by Barnabas, who had had it from him; and this being, no doubt, declared and attested by Saul himself, he was received into fellowship with the disciples: hence it follows,

Ver. 28. *And he was with them,* &c.] Peter and James, and the rest of the disciples; he lived with them, conversed with them, and joined with them in all religious exercises; which is signified by his *coming in and going out at Jerusalem;* no one of the apostles or disciples forbidding or hindering him.

Ver. 29. *And he spake boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus,* &c.] He spoke the Gospel of Christ boldly, as it ought to be spoken; he spoke it openly, publicly, freely, and faithfully, not fearing the faces or revilings of any: the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions add, *to the Gentiles;* but this is not in any of the Greek copies: *and disputed against the Grecians;* or Hellenists, that is, the Hellenistical Jews; by whom are meant, not Greeks proselyted to the Jewish religion, but Jews who had been born and brought up in Greece, or at least had learned the Greek language, and used the Greek Bible; and so the Syriac version renders it, *he disputed with the Jews that knew Greek;* perhaps the same persons, of the synagogue of the Libertines, Alexandrians, Cyrenians, and of Cilicia and Asia, who disputed with Stephen, with whom he had before joined, Acts vi. 9, 10. *but they went about to slay him;* he being an over-match for them; and they not being able to resist him, but being confuted, and confounded, and put to silence, they were filled with indignation; and since they could not conquer him by arguments, they were for slaying him with the sword.

Ver. 30. Which *when the brethren knew,* &c.] When the members of the church heard of it, by some means or another: *they brought him down to Cæsarea;* not that which was before called Strato's tower, the same as in Acts viii. 40. but Cæsarea Philippi, mentioned in Matt. xvi. 13. the Syriac version adds, *by night,* and some copies, *and sent him forth to Tarsus;* a city of Cilicia, his own native place, where he might be more safe, and also useful among his friends and acquaintance; see Gal. i. 21.

Ver. 31. *Then had the churches rest,* &c.] Meaning not spiritual rest in Christ; this they had before, even in tribulation, but rest from persecution; not so much because of the conversion of Saul, the great persecutor of them, for his conversion had been three years before; but rather because of his removal to other parts, the

sight of whose person, and especially his ministry, had afresh stirred up the Jews to wrath and fury. The Alexandrian copy, and some others, the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, read in the singular number, *the church*: but the several countries hereafter mentioned shews that more are designed: for it follows, *throughout all Judea, and Galilee, and Samaria*; for by means of the dispersion, on account of persecution, the Gospel was preached in these several places, and churches gathered, and which shared in the persecution until this time, when they began to have rest; see Gal. i. 22. 1 Thess. ii. 14. *and were edified*; or built up on the foundation Christ, and their most holy faith, through the ministry of the word and ordinances, and their mutual love and holy conversation; and had an increase of members, and of grace, and of spiritual knowledge: *and walking in the fear of the Lord*; which was always before their eyes, and upon their hearts, continuing in religious exercises, and in the discharge of every duty, both to God and man. Not in a slavish fear of the wrath of the Lord, and of damnation for sin committed against him; for this is not consistent with their characters, as Gospel churches, made of persons who had received not the spirit of bondage to fear, but the spirit of adoption, nor with their edification in faith and holiness; for *he that feareth is not made perfect in love*; 1 John iv. 18. which edifies; nor with the comforts of the Holy Ghost, they are afterwards said to walk in: but in a godly fear, which has the Lord for its author, is not of a man's self, but of the grace of God, and is encouraged and increased by the discoveries of his grace and goodness: and which has the Lord for its object, whose name is holy and reverend, and is to be feared by all his saints: it shews itself in an hatred of sin; in a departure from it; in a carefulness not to offend the Lord; in withholding nothing from him, though ever so dear and valuable, he calls for; and in attending to all the parts of divine worship: and walking in it denotes a continuance in it, a constant progression in all the acts of internal and external worship, which are both included in the fear of the Lord; and it requires strength, and supposes pleasure and freedom. It is said of Enoch, that he *walked with God*; which the Targum of Onkelos paraphrases, he *walked in the fear of the Lord*, Gen. v. 22, 24. the same phrase which is here used. *And in the comfort of the Holy Ghost*; which he communicated by shedding abroad the love of God in them, taking the things of Christ, and shewing them to them, applying covenant-blessings and Gospel-promises to their souls, owning the word and ordinances, and making them useful to them, thereby leading them into fellowship with the father, and with the son. In all which he acts the part of a Comforter, and answers to the character he bears, and the office he is in: the love of God, which he directs into, and sheds abroad in the heart, refreshes and revives the spirit of God's people; it influences and encourages every grace that is wrought in them; and makes them easy and comfortable under all providences, even the most afflicting ones: the things of Christ he takes and shews unto them are his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice; which being applied, and interest in them shewn, produce abundance of peace, joy, and comfort: the promises of the covenant, and of the Gospel, he opens and applies, being such as hold forth the blessings of grace unto them; and being exceeding great, and precious, and suitable to their cases; and being absolute and unconditional, immutable, and sure, afford them much pleasure and satisfaction: and the word and ordinances being attended with the Holy Ghost, and much assurance, are breasts of consolation to them: and *walking* in those comforts which he administers, by such means, denotes a continuance of them, a long enjoyment of them, which is not very common; for, generally speaking, these comforts last but for a small time; and also it intimates much delight and pleasure in them, see Psal. xciv. 19. and so *were multiplied*; both in their gifts and graces, and in the number of converts added to them.

Ver. 32. *And it came to pass, as Peter passed through all quarters, &c.*] The Arabic version reads, *all the foresaid places*, as Judea, Galilee, and Samaria; through which he took a tour, in order to visit the new churches here planted, fix pastors over them, and confirm the Gospel by miracles, which they had received: *he came down also to the saints which dwelt at Lydda*; a city which lay on the west of Jerusalem, and is said [v] to be a day's journey from it; and a day's journey were ten *parsas*, or forty miles [w]: it was but thirty-two miles from Jerusalem, and was a place famous for Jewish doctors; for which reason it is frequently mentioned in the Talmudic writings, under the name of Lod or Lud. Mention is made of R. Simlai, who was of Lydda [x], and of the chambers of Beth Nithzah, and of Arum in Lydda [y], where the doctors disputed; there was a school here, of which R. Akiba was president [z]: here also the sanhedrim sometimes sat, since we are told that Ben Sutda was tried and stoned at Lud or Lydda [a]; and here likewise they intercalated the year [b], it being in Judea: this place was situated in a plain; so says Jerom [c], "they that dwell in Sephelá, that is, in the "plain, Lydda and Emmaus, which design Diospolis and Nicopolis, shall possess the Philistines." And with this agrees the account the Talmudists [d] give of it, "the country of Judea was divided into "three parts, the hill-country, the plain, and the "valley; from Bethoron to Emmaus was the hill-"country; from Emmaus to Lydda was the plain or "champaign country; and from Lydda to the sea, "the valley." Hence also we read [e] of שפלת לוד, *the plain of Lydda*; and now Peter coming from Jerusalem, and the hill-country of Judea, into this plain and champaign country, is properly said to come down to the saints there. So Quadrathus in Josephus [f] is said to come up from Lydda to Jerusalem. This place was near the Mediterranean sea; and was in Jerom's time

[v] Misn. Massersheni, c. 5. sect. 2. T. Bab. Betza, fol. 5. 1. & Roshhashana, fol. 31. 2. & Juchasin, fol. 37. 1.
[w] T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 93. 2. & Gloss. in ib.
[x] Juchasin, fol. 105. 1.
[y] T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 40. 2. T. Hieros. Pesachim, fol. 30. 2.
[z] Misn. Roshhashana, c. 1. sect. 6.

[a] T. Hieros. Sanhedrin, fol. 25. 4.
[b] Ib. fol. 18. 3.
[c] In Obad. 1. 19.
[d] T. Hieros. Sheviith, fol. 38. 4.
[e] Misn. Sheviith, c. 9. sect. 2.
[f] De Bello Jud. l. 2. c. 12. sect. 5.

called Diospolis[g], and in the time of R. Benjamin[h] Seguras; it is the same with Lod in Ezra ii. 33. Neh. vii. 37. The builder of it was Shamed the son of Elpaal, 1 Chron. viii. 12. It was in the times of Josephus[i] a village, yet not inferior to a city for greatness. It is now called S. Georgia. And here it seems some saints or Christians dwelt, whom Peter, among the rest, visited; and which is mentioned for the sake of the miracle he there wrought, next related. And these saints at Lydda very likely were converted under Philip's ministry, as he passed from Azotus to Cæsarea, chap. viii. 40. and, it may be, were in a church-state, or, however, were afterwards. Zenas the lawyer, the Apostle Paul speaks of in Tit. iii. 13. is said to be bishop of Diospolis, or Lydda; in the beginning of the fourth century Aetius was bishop of this place, who assisted in the council of Nice; and in the same century, anno 381, Dionysius, another bishop of this place, was present at a council at Constantinople; and in the fifth century Photinus wrote himself bishop of Lydda, in the Chalcedon council, anno 451[k].

Ver. 33. *And there he found a certain man*, &c.] In a house in that city, into which he entered: *named Eneas*; which is a Gentile name, and so might the person be; though there is mention made of this name among the Jews. We read of one R. Samuel Bar, אניא, *Ænea*, or *Æneas*[l]; but it was more common among the Greeks. Æneas the Trojan is well known in history, who, after the destruction of Troy, went into Italy, and settled there; and from him the Trojans are sometimes called Æneadæ. The name comes from the Greek word αινω, *ainoo*, which signifies *to praise*; and Æneas is one *worthy of praise*: though Jerom[m] takes it to be an Hebrew name, which he interprets *one that answers*, or a *poor man*, or *misery*: as if it came from the Hebrew word ענה, *anah*, which signifies *to answer*, or *to afflict*. *Which had kept his bed eight years, and was sick of the palsy*; so that the distemper was grown stubborn, and thought incurable; nor perhaps had he, or his friends, any hope of his ever being restored to health again.

Ver. 34. *And Peter said unto him, Eneas*, &c. He called him by his name, which he might without divine revelation know, though he was a stranger to him, by the people of the house, where he was: *Jesus Christ maketh thee whole*: Peter knew, by some secret impulse upon his mind, that Christ would cure this man by him as an instrument at this time, and therefore said these words; not as a prayer, as some render them, *may Jesus Christ heal thee*, though was it so, it was a prayer of faith; but as a promise that he would, or rather as a declaration of the then present exertion of his power to heal him; which he ascribes not to himself, but to Christ, in whose name, and by whose power the apostles wrought all their miracles; see ch. iii. 12, 14. and iv. 9, 10. *arise, and make thy bed*; which would be a full demonstration that he was perfectly whole: *and he arose immediately*: and also, no doubt, made his bed, as the man at Bethesda's pool was bid by Christ, to take up his bed and carry it, as a proof of his soundness.

Ver. 35. *And all that dwelt at Lydda and Saron*, &c.] Saron, which is here joined to Lydda, is the name of a fruitful country on the borders of the Mediterranean sea, between Joppa and Cæsarea, beginning at Lydda. There were two countries in the land of Israel called Saron, as Jerom observes[n]; there was one between Mount Tabor, and the lake of Tiberias; and there was another which reached from Cæsarea of Palestine, to the town of Joppa; the former was inhabited by the Gadites, and was beyond Jordan, 1 Chron. v. 16. the other was on this side Jordan, near Lydda. And this is what is here meant; and of which the same writer elsewhere says[o], the whole country by Joppa and Lydda is called Saron, in which are large and fruitful fields; and on Isa. lxv. 10. which the Vulgate Latin renders, *and the plains shall be for folds of flocks*, he observes, that *Sharon*, in the Hebrew text, is put for plains or champaign country; and adds, all the country about Lydda, Joppa, and Jamnia, is fit to feed flocks: and agreeably to this, in Jewish writings, the calves of Sharon[p] are spoken of as the best; and the word is by the commentators of the Misna interpreted[q] by מישר, *a plain*, or champaign country; for this was not the name of a single town or city, but of a country, bordering on Lydda, and the above-mentioned places; in which were several towns and villages, and the inhabitants of those that were nearest Lydda are here designed. It was such a fruitful and delightful country, that the Targum on Cant. ii. 1. has rendered it by the garden of Eden: it had its name either from שור, *Shur*, which signifies to behold afar off, from the fine and large prospect that might be taken on it; or from שר, *Shar*, which signifies the navel, because it was a valley or plain surrounded on every side with mountains and hills: it abounded in flowers and fruits; hence mention is made of the rose of Sharon, Cant. ii. 1. and in vines; hence we frequently read of the wine of Saron[r], and which was so very good, that they mixed two parts of water with one of wine[s]. It was a country, the Jews say[t], whose earth was not fit to make bricks of; and therefore houses made of them did not stand long, but needed repairing often in seven years: hence the high-priest, on the day of atonement, used to pray for the Saronites, that their houses might not become their graves[u]. Now when the inhabitants of this place, as well as of Lydda, *saw him*: that is, Eneas, made whole, who had been ill of a palsy, and had kept his bed eight years, they were so impressed with it, that it issued in their conversion: *and turned to the Lord*: they believed in Christ, embraced his Gospel preached by Peter, professed faith in him, and submitted to his ordinances; being turned by powerful efficacious grace, they turned their feet to keep his testimonies.

Ver. 36. *Now there was at Joppa*, &c.] The same with Japho, Josh. xix. 46. a sea-port town in the tribe

[g] Epitaph. Paulæ, fol. 59. A.
[h] Itinerar. p. 52.
[i] Antiqu. l. 20. c. 5. sect. 2.
[k] Reland. Palestina Illustrata, l. 3. p. 878, 879. Vid. Magdeburg. Hist. Eccles. cent. 4. c. 2. p. 2. cent. 5. c. 2. p. 2.
[l] T. Hieros. Yebamot, fol. 6. 2. & Midrash Kohelet, fol. 78. 3.
[m] De Nominibus Hebraicis, fol. 105. H.
[n] De locis Hebraicis, fol. 94. M.
[o] Comment. in Isa. xxxiii. 9.
[p] Misn. Bava Kama, c. 10. sect. 9.
[q] Maimon. & Bartenora in Misn. Bava Bathra, c. 6. sect. 2.
[r] Misn. Nidda, c. 2. sect. 7.
[s] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 77. 1.
[t] Gloss. in T. Bab. Sota, fol. 43. 1.
[u] T. Hieros. Sota, fol. 23. 1. Vajikra Rabba, sect. 20. fol. 161. 4.

of Dan, said by some historians [w] to be a very ancient one, even before the flood. It is now called Jaffa, and its name, in the Hebrew tongue, signifies beauty: some say it had its name from Jope, the daughter of Æolus, the wife of Cepheus, the founder of it; and others derive it from the name of Japhet, because it looks towards Europe, which is inhabited by the sons of Japhet. It was built upon a hill, as Pliny [x] says; and so high, as Strabo [y] reports, that Jerusalem, the metropolis of Judea, might be seen from thence, which was distant from it forty miles; as may be concluded from what Jerom [z] says, who lived at Bethlehem many years: his words are; from Joppa, to our little village Bethlehem, are forty-six miles; now Bethlehem was six miles distant from Jerusalem, to the south of it, and Joppa was to the west of it. The place is well known by Jonah's taking ship there, and going for Tarshish, when he was cast into the sea, and devoured by a fish; from whence the Ionian sea might have its name: and this was the occasion of the fable of Andromeda being exposed to a fish of a prodigious size at this place; the bones of which, Pliny [a] relates, were brought to Rome from hence, being forty foot long; and the stones, to which she was bound, Jerom [b] says, were shewn in his time on this shore: and here also, the inhabitants report, may be seen some stones in the sea, on which Peter stood and fished, when he dwelt in this place. *A certain disciple, called Tabitha;* this was a woman's name, the masculine name was Tabi. R. Gamaliel had a man-servant of this name [c], and also a maid-servant, whose name was Tabitha [d]; yea, every maid-servant of his was called mother Tabitha, and every man-servant father Tabi [e]: *which by interpretation is called Dorcas;* which signifies a roe in the Greek language, as Tabitha does in the Syriac: *this woman was full of good works;* was constantly employed in doing good; her works were both many and good: *and alms-deeds which she did;* she was very kind and beneficent to the poor; she wrought with her hands much for their sakes, as appears by what follows.

Ver. 37. *And it came to pass in those days,* &c.] While Peter was in those parts, and particularly at Lydda, which was near: *that she was sick and died;* fell ill with some disorder, and died of it: *whom, when they had washed;* as was the manner of the Jews; and this they did, even though it was on a sabbath-day: for so their canon runs [f], "they do all the necessaries for "the dead (on the sabbath), they anoint him, ומדיחין, "and *they wash him;*" yet that of Maimonides deserves some notice [g]; "it is forbidden to anoint part of the "body, as the whole body; but if it is to remove filth, "it is lawful; and so it is forbidden to wash part of "the body with hot water, but with cold water they "may wash his face, his hands, and his feet, but not "the whole body." This custom still continues, and their usual method is to wash the body with hot water, in which they put dried roses and camomile flowers: likewise, they take an egg, and beat it up in wine, and therewith anoint the head; and this washing and anointing are done by some at the house before the corpse is carried out (as here); but in some places, especially where there is a large number of Jews, all this is done in the burying-places; where they have a little house, whither they carry the corpse, and put it on a table, and there wash it; and after washing, put it into a coffin, and inter it [h]: and this has been the custom of other nations, if not of all nations: the custom with the Turks is this [i]; the body being laid upon a board, and covered with a linen cloth, one of the ecclesiastical elders washes it with hot water and soap, another being present to hand the water; but they don't suffer others to look on: the body is thrice washed; and the third time they mingle camphire with it; and being washed, it is put into a coffin. And Ludolphus [k] reports of the Abyssines, that their bodies being well washed and perfumed, they wrap them up in garments, and then are put upon a bier, and buried. And this was the practice both of the ancient Grecians and Romans, that as soon as ever any one was dead, the body was immediately washed and anointed. Thus Creon is said to fetch Jocaste to wash her dead son; and Antigone requests of Creon, that she might wash her brother [l]. It has been the custom of some countries to wash their dead bodies in rivers: and some people, in the northern parts, have chose, for this reason, to have their burying-places near the banks of rivers, that their dead bodies might be washed in running water: and the Indians, which live at a distance from the river Ganges, will go fifteen or twenty days journey thither, to wash their corpse in it, though then putrefied, and then burn them; yea, they take their sick alive when they think they will die, and put them up to their middle in rivers, that they may die in pure and clear water; and they enjoin a very severe penance on those who omit to bring such as are near death, to a river to be washed [m]: *they laid* her *in an upper chamber.* The Ethiopic version reads quite the reverse; *they put her in the lower part of the house;* which is not likely. Dr. Lightfoot conjectures that this upper chamber might be the common meeting-place of the saints; and that they put her here, that if Peter should work a miracle all might be spectators of it; and certain it is, that the Jewish doctors used to meet in upper rooms, and confer together; see the note on Mark ii. iv. Acts i. 13. and such there were in Lydda; see ver. 32.

Ver. 38. *And forasmuch as Lydda was nigh to Joppa,* &c.] Some say it was six miles distant, but it must be eight; since from Jerusalem to Joppa were forty miles, and from Jerusalem to Lydda thirty-two, and therefore it must be eight miles from thence to Joppa: *and the disciples had heard that Peter was there;* and also no doubt that he had healed Æneas of his palsy, and which might induce them to do as follows: *they sent*

[w] Mela, l. 1. Solin. Polyhistor. c. 47. Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 5. c. 13.
[x] Nat. Hist. ib.
[y] Geograph. l. 16.
[z] Epist. ad Dardanum, Tom. 3, fol. 23. K.
[a] Nat. Hist. l. 9. c. 5.
[b] Comment. in Jonam, c. 1. v. 3.
[c] Misn. Beracot, c. 2. sect. 7.
[d] T. Hieros. Nidda, fol. 49. 4. Vajikra Rabba, sect. 19. fol. 160. 4.
[e] Massecheth Semachot, c. 1. sect. 13.

[f] Misn. Sabbat, c. 23. sect. 5.
[g] Hilch. Ebel, c. 5. sect. 4.
[h] Buxtorf. Synagog. Jud. c. 49. p. 699, 700. Leo Modena's History of the Rites, &c. of the Jews, par. 5. c. 8.
[i] Bobovius de Visitat. Ægrot. p. 18. Georgievitz de Turc. Moribus, p. 36.
[k] Hist. Ethiop. l. 3. c. 6.
[l] Vid. Kirchmannum de Funeribus Roman. l. 1. c. 7.
[m] Sperling. de Baptismo Ethnicorum, c. 4. p. 26, 27.

unto him two men: very likely of their own company or church; for it is certain here were disciples or believers in Christ, and very likely were formed into a church-state; these seem to be converts under Philip's ministry, who when he went from Azotus, preached in all the cities, and so in Joppa, till he came to Cæsarea, chap. viii. 40. though we read nothing in ecclesiastical history of this church at Joppa, until the fifth century, when it appears there was a church in that place[n]; and in the same century we read of Fidus bishop of Joppa, that was present in the synod held at Ephesus, anno 431. and in the *sixth* century of Elias bishop of the same place, in the council at Jerusalem, anno 536[o]. and in the same century a bishop of the church here assisted in the synod of Rome and Constantinople[p]. *Desiring him, that he would not delay to come to them:* they entreated he would not refuse to come, and think it too great a burden on him, or make any difficulty about it, or shew any aversion to it; but that he would with all readiness and cheerfulness, and without delay immediately come unto them; for the case they wanted him for required speed and haste.

Ver. 39. *Then Peter arose and went with them,* &c.] After the messengers had delivered their message, and made their request to Peter in the name of the brethren, he at once agreed to go with them, and accordingly did; whether he went to restore Dorcas to life, whose death the messengers had informed him of, and whether this was the view of the brethren with respect to that, is not certain. However, he might go with them on other accounts, as to comfort them under the loss of so valuable and useful a person, and to strengthen and establish them in the faith, and to exhort and animate them to the discharge of their duty. *When he was come;* that is, to Joppa, and to Dorcas's house there: *they brought him into the upper chamber;* where the corpse of Dorcas lay: *and all the widows stood by him weeping;* these were poor widows, to whom Dorcas had been very liberal and beneficent, who stood about the apostle lamenting the death of their benefactress, and by their tears expressing their desire of her return to life, if it could be: *and shewing the coats and garments which Dorcas made while she was with them:* the Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read, *which Dorcas made for them;* and the Syriac version renders it, *which Tabitha gave unto them, while she was alive;* which last clause aptly explains, *while she was with them:* for now she was not, with respect to her better part, her immortal soul: the coats and garments were the inner and upper ones, wore in these countries; and it seems that she did not buy these garments, and give them unto them, but that she made them up herself for them, or at least wrought with them in making of them; which shews her diligence and industry, as also her humility, as well as her beneficence: and these the widows produced, and are shewn as proofs of the same; which was expressive of gratitude in them, and was done with a design to move Peter to be concerned for restoring so useful a life.

Ver. 40. *But Peter put them all forth,* &c.] As he had seen his Lord and Master do, when he raised the daughter of Jairus from the dead, Luke viii. 54. *and kneeled down and prayed;* it may be, as yet, he had not the mind of God in this matter, and therefore betook himself to prayer, in which he chose to be private and alone: *and turning him to the body;* the corpse of Dorcas, after he had prayed, and was well assured that the power of Christ would be exerted in raising of it: *said, Tabitha, arise;* which words were spoken in the name and faith of Christ, and were all one as if Christ himself had spoken them; for to his power, and not to the apostles, is the following miracle to be ascribed: *and she opened her eyes;* which, upon her death, had been closed by her friends; and perhaps the napkin was not yet bound about her face: or if it was, she must remove it ere she could open her eyes and see Peter: *and when she saw Peter;* whom she might know: *she sat up;* upon the bed or bier on which she lay.

Ver. 41. *And he gave her his hand, and lift her up,* &c.] Off of the bed or bier where she was: *and when he had called the saints and widows;* the disciples, brethren and sisters, who were come together on this occasion, as well as the poor widows she had been kind to; the Ethiopic version reads without a copulative, *the holy widows;* and so might these widows be, even such as are described in 1 Tim. v. 10. *presented her alive;* as Christ did the widow's son of Naim to her, Luke vii. 15. and which no doubt was matter of great joy as well as astonishment to all the saints, and especially to the poor widows.

Ver. 42. *And it was known throughout all Joppa,* &c.] The report of such a miracle, and wrought upon a person of note, was soon spread all over the place, which was very large, for it was a city, as it is called, chap. xi. 5. and it had, as Josephus[q] says, villages and little towns or cities round about it; all which might go by the name of Joppa, and throughout which the fame of this miracle might pass: *and many believed in the Lord;* in the Lord Jesus Christ, whom Peter preached, and the saints in Joppa professed, and in whose name, and by whose power, this miracle was done.

Ver. 43. *And it came to pass,* &c.] Or so it was; *that he tarried many days in Joppa;* conversing with the saints, confirming the disciples, and preaching the Gospel, to the conversion of sinners; and his abode *was with one Simon a tanner:* it seems as if persons of this trade used to dwell in towns near the sea, as fit for their business; so we read of some at Sidon, a city on the sea-coast, as Joppa was; "it happened at Sidon "that a certain בורסי, *tanner,* (the same word here "used, adopted into the Hebrew language,) died, and "he had a brother a tanner, &c.[r]," where the Gemara[s] distinguishes between a great tanner and a little tanner; the latter, the gloss says, is one that is poor and has but few skins: which of these Simon was, can't be said. This business was very contemptible with the Jews; they say[t] "woe to him whose trade

[n] Magdeburg. Hist. Eccles. cent. 5. c. 2. p. 2.
[o] Reland. Palestina Illustrata, l. 3. p. 867.
[p] Magdeburg. ib. cent. 6. c. 2. p. 2.
[q] De Bello Jud. l. 3. c. 8. sect. 4.

[r] Misn. Cetubot, c. 7. sect. 10.
[s] T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 77. 1.
[t] T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 82. 2. & Bava Bathra, fol. 16. 2.

" is a tanner;" and further observe*, that they never make one a king, nor an high-priest: but their doctors many of them were of as mean trades, as shoemakers, skinners, &c. see the note on Mark vi. 3. and Simon the Athenian philosopher was σκυτότομος, *a leather-cutter**; and according to the Ethiopic version, this our Simon was a shoemaker: with him Peter chose to abide, and not with Dorcas.

CHAP. X.

Ver. 1. *THERE was a certain man in Cesarea*, &c.] This was the Cæsarea formerly called Strato's tower, not Cæsarea Philippi; for the former, and not the latter, lay near Joppa: *called Cornelius;* which was a Roman name, and he himself was a Roman or an Italian: *a centurion of the band called the Italian* band; which consisted of soldiers collected out of Italy, from whence the band took its name, in which Cornelius was a centurion, having a hundred men under him, as the name of his office signifies.

Ver. 2. A *devout* man, &c.] A truly religious person, who had forsaken the Roman idolatry and superstition, in which he was brought up: *and one that feared God;* the one only living and true God, the God of Israel; he had the fear of God wrought in his heart, which is a part of the covenant of grace, a blessing of it, and the beginning of wisdom; he was truly a gracious man, a converted person, and who from an internal principle worshipped God externally: *with all his house;* he brought up his family in a religious way, as every good man should; and which was very remarkable in a Gentile, a soldier, and an officer: *which gave much alms to the people;* to the Jews that dwelt at Cæsarea, and therefore was of good report among them, and much beloved by them, ver. 22. he had regard to both tables of the law, both to the worship of God, and the love of the neighbour: *and prayed to God always;* every day, at the usual times of prayer; prayed privately in his closet, and with his family, as well as attended public service of this kind.

Ver. 3. *He saw in a vision evidently*, &c.] He was not in a dream, or in a trance, but he was thoroughly awake, and his eyes open, and was himself; it was not in the night, but in clear day: *about the ninth hour of the day;* or three o'clock in the afternoon, which was the hour of prayer, ch. iii. 1. in which exercise he was now engaged, ver. 30. at this time he saw *an angel of God coming to him;* into the room where he was at prayer: *and saying unto him, Cornelius;* he called him by his name, to let him know that he knew him, as angels are very knowing spirits; and to express his affection and friendship to him, and that he was a messenger, not of bad, but of good news to him, as well as to engage his attention to him: for he might be so intent at his devotion, that had he not called him by name, he would not have minded him.

Ver. 4. *And when he looked on him, he was afraid*, &c.] What with the brightness of his clothing, ver. 30. and the lustre of his countenance, and the majestic form in which he appeared, he perceived there was something uncommon and divine in this vision, and therefore was filled with awe and reverence, yea, with something of a panic fear; as it was usual, even with good persons, as the patriarchs and prophets of the Old Testament, Zacharias, the Virgin Mary, and others; from a sense of the greatness of the divine majesty, which they supposed to be near, or this to be an emblem of it, and from a notion that, at the sight of God, they should die. *And said, what is it, Lord?* what is the matter? what is to be said or done? what is the reason of this unusual appearance? Some of the Latin copies, and the Ethiopic version, read, *who art thou, Lord?* but by the angel's answer, not this, but the former was the question: for it follows, *and he said unto him, thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God;* that is, the prayers which he had put up in faith, for himself and family, and the charitable actions he had performed from a principle of love, were like sacrifices upon the altar, which ascended to God with acceptance; so these sacrifices of prayer and beneficence came up with acceptance from off that altar which sanctifies the gift, or were acceptable to God, through Jesus Christ; these were taken notice of, approved by God, and remembered by him, and the fruits and effects he was shortly to enjoy; for that Cornelius was a believer, need not be questioned; since he was not only a devout and religious person, but one that feared God, which includes the whole of religion, internal and external; and so faith in Christ, without which he could not pray aright: there is no doubt of it, but he had read the prophecies of the Old Testament, attended the synagogues of the Jews, and believed in the Messiah to come, though he did not know that he was come, and that Jesus of Nazareth was he; so that his faith was of the same kind with that of the saints before the coming of Christ: and in this faith he did all the good works he did, which became acceptable to God through Christ, and without which it is impossible to please him.

Ver. 5. *And now send men to Joppa*, &c.] Which lay near to Cæsarea; *and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter;* the angel was not sent to instruct Cornelius himself, but to direct him to an apostle of Christ, and minister of the Gospel, who should do it; for not angels, but men, are employed in the ministry of the word, which is the ordinary means of spiritual knowledge, and of increasing it. So the eunuch was instructed by Philip, and Saul by Ananias; which shews the excellency and usefulness of the Gospel ministry and ministers, and what dignity is put upon them, what use should be made of them, and in what esteem they should be had.

Ver. 6. *He lodgeth with one Simon a tanner*, &c.] Simon the tanner was his host; this man very probably was a good man, and one that lodged strangers; of his trade, see the note on chap. ix. 43. *whose house*

* [illegible] dush. fol. 82. 1.

* Laert. in Vit. Simon.

is by the sea-side; Joppa was a sea-port, 2 Chron. ii. 16. Jon. i. 3. hence we read of ימא דיפו, *the sea of Joppa*[x]; and also of למינה של יפו, *the port of Joppa*[y]; now Simon's house was in the outer part of the city, and by the sea-side, as well for convenience for his business, as because such trades might not be exercised within a city; being nauseous and disagreeable, because of their skins and manner of dressing them, and the dead carcasses from whence they often took them off; hence that rule of the Jews[z], "they place dead carcasses, "graves, ואת הבורסקי, *and a tanner's work-shop*, (in "which he dresses his skins,) fifty cubits from the "city; nor do they make a tanner's work-shop, but at "the eastern part of the city. R. Abika says, it may "be made at every part excepting the west." The reason of that, as given by the[a] commentators, is, because prayer was made towards the west, where the temple stood, and the divine presence was. The Ethiopic version very wrongly renders it, *and the house of Cornelius is near the sea:* for not his, but Simon's is meant: *he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do;* he was to tell him words, or to deliver doctrines to him, by which he and his family would be better instructed in the way of salvation, and arrive to a greater degree of knowledge of Christ, and faith in him, and be brought to a submission to his commands and ordinances; see ver. 22, 32. and chap xi. 14. this clause is left out in the Alexandrian copy, and in some others, and in the Syriac and Arabic versions.

Ver. 7. *And when the angel which spake unto Cornelius was departed,* &c.] For when he had delivered his message, he either disappeared, or withdrew, and immediately Cornelius shewed himself ready to obey the heavenly vision: for *he called two of his household servants:* who were not of the band of soldiers under him, but were servants in his family, and such as feared God [illegible] *a devout soldier of them that waited on him continually:* besides his household servants, there were soldiers that continually attended him, and among these there was one at least that was a devout and religious man; and him he called out from among the rest, and to him with the two household servants he communicated the vision: these three persons being religious, were very proper ones to be informed of this matter, and to be sent on the errand they were: and three might be particularly pitched upon, being a sufficient number to attest to Peter what they had from the mouth of their master, for by the mouth of two or three witnesses is every thing established; and partly for the honour of Peter, and to shew a proper respect to him, he would not send a single person, who could have told the story, and done the errand as well as three, but this would not have looked respectful enough.

Ver. 8. *And when he had declared all these things unto them,* &c.] Which he had heard and seen in the vision, and of which he gave them a particular account; partly to engage them the more cheerfully to go on the errand, and partly that they might be able to give a distinct relation of it to Peter, that so he might be moved the more to comply with the request, and come along with them: *he sent them to Joppa;* perhaps not that evening, since it was at the ninth hour, or three o'clock in the afternoon, when Cornelius had the vision; and some time must be taken up in discourse with the angel, and afterwards in sending for his servants, and relating the affair to them, and giving them their proper instructions. So that it may be they did not set out till early the next morning, as seems from the following verse.

Ver. 9. *On the morrow, as they went on their journey,* &c.] From Cæsarea to Joppa; Joppa is said to be six-and-thirty miles distant from Cæsarea; so far Cæsarea was from Lydda, but it seems to be further from Joppa; for according to Josephus[b], from Joppa to Antipatris were a hundred and fifty furlongs, which are almost nineteen miles, and from thence to Cæsarea were twenty-six miles; unless there was a nearer way by the sea-shore, as there was a way by that from Cæsarea to Joppa, of which the above author makes mention[c]; wherefore they must either have set out the evening before, or early that morning, to get to Joppa by the sixth hour, or twelve o'clock at noon; as it seems they did, by what follows: *and drew nigh unto the city:* that is, of Joppa, were but a little way distant from it: *Peter went up upon the house-top to pray;* the roofs of houses in Judea were flat, and persons might walk upon them, and hither they often retired for devotion and recreation; see the notes on Matt. x. 27. and xxiv. 17. it was on the former account, namely for prayer, that Peter went up thither, and that he might be private and alone, and undisturbed in the discharge of that duty. This being at a tanner's house, though not in his shop, brings to mind a canon of the Jews[d], "a man may not enter into a "bath, nor into a tanner's shop, near the Minchah," or time of prayer. Now this was *about the sixth hour;* or twelve o'clock at noon, when Peter went up to pray; at which time the messengers from Cornelius were near the city of Joppa; this was another time of prayer used by the Jews, and is what they call the great Minchah, which began at the sixth hour and an half, and so was as is here said, about the sixth hour; see the note on chap. iii. 1.

Ver. 10. *And he became very hungry,* &c.] It being in the middle of the day, when it was usual to eat; and perhaps he had ate nothing that day, for those were reckoned the most religious persons, who eat nothing before the Minchah: *and would have eaten:* though the Jews say[e], a man ought not to eat near the Minchah, not even the least, lest he should continue at it, and so neglect his prayers: *but while they made ready,* while Simon's family were getting dinner ready, preparing the food for it: *he fell into a trance;* or an ecstacy, or an ecstacy fell upon him; it was what was supernatural, and came from above, and did not arise from any natural cause in him: he was as it were out of the body, and entirely in the spirit: all

[x] Ezra iii. 7. Targum in 2 Chron. ii. 16.
[y] T. Hieros. Yoma, fol. 41. 1. Joseph. Antiqu. l. 11. c. 4. sect. 1. & 13. 9. 1 Maccab. xiv. 5. 1 Esdr. v. 55.
[z] Misn. Bava Bathra, c. 2. sect. 9.
[a] Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

[b] Antiqu. l. 13. c. 13.
[c] De Bello Jud. l. 5. c. 14.
[d] Misn. Sabbat, c. 1. sect. 2.
[e] Maimon. & Bartenora in Misn. Sabbat. ib.

the bodily organs and senses were shut up, and all sensible objects removed from him; and he was wholly intent on what was proposed to him in the vision, which filled him with wonder and astonishment.

Ver. 11. *And saw heaven opened, &c.*] Not literally, as at the baptism of Christ, and the stoning of Stephen; but in a visionary way, and which was an emblem of the opening and revealing the mystery of the calling of the Gentiles, which in other ages was not made known, as it now and afterwards was: *and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet*: which seems to represent the church of God, whose original is from heaven, and consists of persons born from above, who have their conversation in heaven, and were designed for it; and especially as under the Gospel dispensation, which Peter had a vision of in this emblematic way; the doctrines and ordinances of which are from heaven: and which may be compared to a linen sheet for its purity and holiness, through the blood and righteousness of Christ, and the grace of his spirit, and with respect to its discipline and conversation; and so to a great one for its largeness; for though the number of its members, when compared with the world, are few, yet in themselves are a number which no man can number: and though it was but small at first, yet the Gospel being carried among the Gentiles it increased, and in the last times will be large: *knit at the four corners*: which may denote the preaching of the Gospel, and the spread of it, and the planting of churches by it in the four parts of the world; and also the church being knit to Christ, and the members of it one to another: *and let down to the earth*; for Peter to see it, and where it was to continue for a while, even to the second coming of Christ, and when the whole church of the first-born will be let down to earth again; see Rev. xxi. 2.

Ver. 12. *Wherein were all manner of four-footed beasts of the earth, &c.*] Not as if they were painted upon it, and these were only pictures and representations of them made on the linen sheet; but as if they really and actually were upon it alive: since Peter is afterwards called upon to kill and eat: and these design four-footed beasts of every kind, that are tame, as distinct from the wild ones, after mentioned, as horses, camels, oxen, sheep, hogs, dogs, &c. *and wild beasts*: lions, tigers, panthers, bears, &c. This clause is left out in the Alexandrian copy, and in the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions; *and creeping things*; the above copy and version here add, *of the earth*, which they omit in the first clause; these intend serpents, snakes, worms, &c. *and fowls of the air*: birds of all sorts; now the whole of this signifies, that the church of Christ, under the Gospel dispensation, consists of all sorts of persons, of all nations, Jews and Gentiles, the one being reckoned clean, the other unclean; of men of all sorts of tempers and dispositions, comparable to wild or tame beasts; and of all sorts of sinners, who before conversion have been greater or lesser sinners; as well as denotes that the distinction of food under the ceremonial law was now ceased. This is not designed to represent that there are good and bad in Gospel churches, as there certainly are, and much less that immoral persons are to be received and retained there; but that those who have been of the blackest character, if called by grace, should be admitted into them; and chiefly to shew that Gentiles reckoned unclean, when converted, are not to be rejected.

Ver. 13. *And there came a voice to him, &c.*] Formed by an angel, or rather by Christ himself: *rise, Peter, kill and eat*; he might be on his knees when he fell into this trance, being at prayer, and therefore is bid to rise; and he is called by name, the more to encourage him to do as he was ordered; and he is bid to kill and eat of all the creatures without distinction, which were represented to him in the sheet; and the design of this was to teach him, that both the distinction between clean and unclean creatures in the law was now abolished, and men might lawfully eat of whatsoever they pleased; and that he might and should without any difference converse with all sorts of men, Jews and Gentiles, circumcised and uncircumcised, and preach the Gospel to one as to another, and maintain a church communion and fellowship with all equally alike.

Ver. 14. *But Peter said, not so, Lord, &c.*] God forbid I should do this, so contrary to the law of God, and to my own practice, throughout the whole course of my life: *for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean*; in a ceremonial sense, which was in common use with Gentiles, but unclean by the law of Moses: this shews that Peter as yet closely adhered to the ceremonial law, nor did he know that it was abolished by Christ; and notwithstanding the commission given to him and the rest of the apostles to preach the Gospel to every creature, and the extraordinary gifts of speaking with divers tongues for that purpose, bestowed on them at the day of Pentecost; yet he and they remained greatly strangers to the calling of the Gentiles, and the admitting of them to a civil and religious conversation with them; the knowledge of every truth was not at once communicated to them, but gradually, as it pleased the Lord to enlighten their minds.

Ver. 15. *And the voice spake unto him again the second time, &c.*] The following words, *what God hath cleansed*; that is, hath pronounced clean and lawful to be used, as he now had all sorts of food, Matt. xv. 11. Rom. xiv. 14. 1 Tim. iv. 4. *that call not thou common*; or pronounce it to be unholy or unclean, and unlawful to be used: and the same holds good of men, as well as things; for as hereby the Lord instructed Peter, that there was nothing of itself common, or unclean, and unfit for use; so that no man, not any Gentile, Barbarian, Scythian, or be he who he would, was common or unclean, and his company to be avoided as such. Distinctions both of men and meats were now to be laid aside; and the Jews themselves own, that what is now unclean, will be clean in the time to come, or the times of the Messiah. For they say [t], "every beast which is unclean in the "world, *the holy blessed God* [illegible], *cleanseth it* "in the time to come, (the times of the Messiah) as

[t] R. Moses Haddarsan in Galatin. l. 11. c. 12. & Bereshit Rabba in Pugio Fidei, c. 12. sect. 1.

"they were at first clean to the sons of Noah, Gen. "ix. 3, wherefore, as the herb was clean to all, and "as the beasts were clean to the sons of Noah; so also "in the time to come he will loose what he has bound, "or forbidden." And particularly they observe, that that a swine is called חזיר from חזר, *to return*, because the Lord will return it unto Israel[g].

Ver. 16. *This was done thrice*, &c.] That is, either the voice spoke the same words three times, or the sheet was let down three times; and it may be both; it may be, that every time the voice was spoke, the sheet was let down: this was done, not with respect to any mystical meaning in the number three, but for the confirmation of Peter, that he might be the more firmly assured of the truth of the things represented unto him: *and the vessel was received up again into heaven*; to denote, that when the general assembly and church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven, whether Jews or Gentiles, are all gathered in, by the preaching of the Gospel to them, they will be taken up to heaven, their original and native place, and be for ever with the Lord; as well as to certify to Peter, that what was now shewn him on earth, concerning the taking away the distinction of men and meats, was ratified in heaven.

Ver. 17. *Now while Peter doubted in himself*, &c.] For notwithstanding what he had heard and seen, he had not at once a full knowledge of this matter. Beza's most ancient copy reads, *as he was in himself, he doubted*; that is, when he came to himself, for he was before, as it were, out of himself, and was in a trance, or ecstacy; and now being come to himself, and reflecting on what he had seen and heard, he had some doubts and hesitations in his mind: *what this vision which he had seen should mean*; what the vessel or sheet should signify, what should be meant by the four-footed beasts, &c. why he should be called to arise, and kill, and eat such creatures, and what should be designed by God's cleansing them; and while he was revolving these things in his mind, and at some uncertainty about them, something providentially happened, which was a key unto, and opened the whole vision clearly to him: *behold, the men which were sent from Cornelius, had made inquiry for Simon's house*; they were come to Joppa, and, according to the direction given them, had inquired and found out the house of Simon the tanner, where Peter was: *and stood before the gate*; of the house; perhaps knocking at it, in order to bring out somebody within to them, of whom they might inquire for Peter.

Ver. 18. *And called, and asked*, &c.] That is, they called to the people of the house, Simon's family; and in a civil and courteous manner asked them, *whether Simon, which was surnamed Peter*; which they said to distinguish him from Simon the master of the house, and as Cornelius was directed, and they were instructed by him: concerning him they inquired, whether he *were lodged there*; the Ethiopic version adds, without any foundation for it, *and the place where they called at was Peter's lodging-room*.

Ver. 19. *While Peter thought on the vision*, &c.] Which greatly amused him, affected his mind, and employed his thoughts what should be the meaning and design of it: *the spirit said unto him*; the holy spirit of God, either by an articulate voice, or by making an impulse on his mind; *behold, three men seek thee*; the Arabic version leaves out the word *three*: the spirit of God is omniscient, and knows all things; if the deep things of God, then much more man, and the things of man.

Ver. 20. *Arise, therefore, and get thee down*, &c.] From the top of the house where he was: *and go with them*; the three men, to Cæsarea: *doubting nothing*; whether it is right or wrong, lawful or unlawful, to go with them, because not Jews, but uncircumcised Gentiles, laying aside all such Jewish scruples: *for I have sent them*; the spirit of God is said to do what Cornelius did at his instigation and direction, signified by an angel he sent to him, ver. 5, 8.

Ver. 21. *Then Peter went down to the men*, &c.] The Ethiopic version adds, *from the third floor*; to the place where the men were: the following clause, *which were sent unto him from Cornelius*, is not in Beza's most ancient copy, nor in the Alexandrian copy, nor in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions; *and said, behold, I am he whom ye seek*; without being called by any of the family he came down, and without being informed in that way who the men were inquiring for; it being suggested to him by the spirit of God, he declared himself to be the person they were seeking after: and put this question to them, *what is the cause wherefore ye are come?* for that was not intimated to him by the spirit; it was only told him there were three men seeking him, and he was bid to go with them, without any scruple or hesitation; but what they came for, or he was to go with them about, was not suggested.

Ver. 22. *And they said, Cornelius, the centurion*, &c.] A certain person, by name Cornelius, a Roman or Italian, as his name shews, and by office a *centurion*, that was over an hundred soldiers: *a just man*; before God, and in his sight, through the imputation of Christ's righteousness to him; and who was a new man, created in righteousness and true holiness; and lived soberly, righteously, and godly, and did justice between man and man; and so was just in the sight of men, which was very rare in a Gentile, and in a soldier: *and one that feareth God*; the true God, the God of Israel, and worshipped him, both internally and externally; for both sorts of worship are included in the fear of God: *and of good report among all the nation of the Jews*; that knew any thing of him, especially at Cæsarea, where many Jews, and even many of their most celebrated doctors lived: and this is the rather observed, to induce Peter, a Jew, to go along with them to him, since his character was so very good, and he was in so much credit and esteem with the people; for he must be something extraordinary to have their good word, who had such an abhorrence of uncircumcised Gentiles in general: this man, they add, *was warned from God by an holy angel to send for thee into his house*; they intimate hereby, that he did not send for him of himself, he was not led to it by any fancy of his own, or any curiosity in him; nor should he have presumed to have used such freedom with Peter, but that he had some instructions from God

[g] Abarbinel Rosh Amana, c. 12. fol. 18. 2.

himself, who had sent an holy angel to him, and had ordered him to send men to Joppa, and fetch Peter from thence to his house, for the end next mentioned: *and to hear words of thee:* the doctrines of the Gospel, and the ordinances of it; that being taught by the one, he and his might submit to the other.

Ver. 23. *Then called he them in,* &c.] Into Simon's house; not *into his own house,* as the Ethiopic version adds; as yet they stood without, before the gate of the house; he took them in, no doubt, with the leave of Simon, his host, and set provisions before them, and lodged them that night: *and in the morning Peter went away with them;* the next morning he set out with them towards Cæsarea: *and certain brethren from Joppa accompanied him;* there were six of them, as appears from ch. xi. 12. these went with him, not only to bear him company, and out of respect to him; but to be witnesses of what might be seen, heard, said, or done, and for Peter, should there be any occasion for it, as there afterwards was.

Ver. 24. *And the morrow after they entered into Cæsarea,* &c.] So that they were one day, and part of another, on their journey: *and Cornelius waited for them;* he had an eager desire to hear the word from Peter's mouth, and was longing and looking for the coming of him, with the men he sent for him; and he and his family were in a waiting posture, and ready to hear the word, when the apostle of Christ should come: it would be well if this was always the case of the hearers of the word, to assemble before their ministers come; and be waiting for them, and in full expectation of them, and ready to receive them, and the words of grace which drop from their lips: *and had called together his kinsmen and near friends;* or *necessary* ones; not only his relations according to the flesh, which might be in the Italian band, but his most familiar acquaintance, with whom he was in the strictest friendship; who may be called *necessary,* as they are both by the Greeks and Romans, because they are often necessary for assistance and counsel: this shews the true grace of God in him, which wherever it is, puts a man on seeking after the spiritual and eternal welfare of all with whom he is concerned, and especially his relatives and friends.

Ver. 25. *And as Peter was coming in,* &c.] Not into the city of Cæsarea, for his entrance there is mentioned before, but into the house of Cornelius: *Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet;* to testify his great affection for him, and reverence of him: *and worshipped* him; not with a religious adoration, or with worship due to God; for that would have been contrary to his character as a devout man, and one that feared God; but with civil worship and respect, in which he might exceed just bounds, and therefore is reproved by Peter: nor could he take him for an angel of God, or for one sent immediately from heaven to him; for he had been informed who he was, and what he was, and from whence he came, and what he was to do.

Ver. 26. *But Peter took him up,* &c.] As he lay at his feet, and lifted him up and set him on his legs: *saying, stand up;* and continue in this posture: *I myself also am a man;* a mortal man, a man of like passions with others, no better than others by nature: and it was by grace, and not any merit of his own, that he was a believer in Christ, and an apostle of his; and therefore he chose not to have any distinguishing homage and respect paid to him, and especially in any excessive and extravagant way; which though not designed, might carry in it a suggestion, as if he was more than a man.

Ver. 27. *And as he talked with him,* &c.] About the excessive respect he shewed him, and his own infirmity and frailty, and unworthiness, as a creature: *he went in:* to Cornelius's house, at the door, and through the porch, to some interior room and apartment in it: *and found many that were come together;* besides his family, many of his relations and intimate friends, whom he had got together on this occasion, that they might receive some advantage, as well as himself.

Ver. 28. *And he said unto them,* &c.] The whole company that were met together, who were chiefly, if not altogether Gentiles: *ye know that it is an unlawful thing:* what is forbidden by the law of Moses, Deut. vii. 2, 3. and by the traditions of the elders, which carry the matter further than the law did, and made it very criminal: *for a man that is a Jew, to keep company with, or come unto one of another nation;* besides entering into covenants and marriages with them, which were forbidden by the law, though they allowed of trade and commerce with the Gentiles, yet not any familiar conversation with them; it was prohibited to eat and drink any sort of liquor with them in their houses [h], nor might they walk with them in the streets, or on the road; says Maimonides [i], "it is forbidden a "Jew to unite himself to Gentiles, because they are "suspected of shedding blood, and he may not join "himself with them in the way; if he meets a Gentile "in the way, he causes him to turn to the right hand; "if they ascend by an ascent, or descend by a descent, "the Israelite may not be below, and the Gentile "above: but the Israelite must be above, and the "Gentile below, lest he should fall upon him and kill "him; and he may not go even with (or along-side "by him) lest he break his skull." It is said [k] of some Rabbins, that they saw a certain man coming; "says R. Chiyah, let us be gone, perhaps this man is "an idolatrous Gentile, or one of the people of the "earth, and it is forbidden to join with him in the "way." They looked upon the houses of Gentiles unclean, and therefore would not enter into them: see the note on John xviii. 28. yea they say [l], that "the "court of a stranger (or Gentile) is as the habitation "of a beast." Such an aversion was there in that people to all civil society with Gentiles: and so Apollonius says of them [m], that "they not only departed "from the Romans, but from all men, living a separate life from others; nor did they communicate at "table with others; neither in things sacred, nor in "any ceremonies:" and this was well known to Jews and Gentiles: *but God hath shewed me;* partly by the

[h] Mitzvot Tora, pr. neg. 148.
[i] Hilchot Rotzeach, c. 12. sect. 7.
[k] Zohar in Exod. fol. 21. 1.
[l] T. Bab. Erubin, fol. 62. 2.
[m] Philostrat. Vita Apollon. l. 5. c. 11.

vision he had seen, and partly by discourse with the men that came from Cornelius to him; and by comparing the vision and their message to him together, he saw that he was not obliged to abide by the customs and laws of the Jews: but was shewed, as he says, *that I should not call any man common or unclean*; that is, in a ceremonial sense; for otherwise, all by nature are morally unclean: and none are pure, but such who are washed in the blood of Christ, and are justified by his righteousness, and sanctified by his spirit: he saw there was now no difference between Jew and Gentile; that the one was not clean because of his circumcision, nor the other unclean on account of his uncircumcision, or to be avoided for that reason; that the Gospel was to be preached to all; and that every believer of whatsoever nation, was acceptable to God, and ought to be regarded by his ministers and people.

Ver. 29. *Therefore came I unto you, without gainsaying*, &c.] Readily and cheerfully, without objecting to it, or saying one word against it, or making any excuse to put it off: *as soon as I was sent for*: he immediately consented to go, as soon as ever the messengers from Cornelius acquainted him with their message, being previously directed so to do by the spirit of God; though he did not set out with them till the next day, it being more suitable and convenient: *I ask therefore for what intent ye have sent for me?* this he said, not as ignorant of the true cause, for he had inquired of the messengers, who had informed him of the reason of it; but he was willing to have it from the mouth of Cornelius himself; not only for further confirmation's sake, but for order sake, to lead him on regularly to what he had to say.

Ver. 30. *And Cornelius said*, &c.] The Syriac version adds, *to him*, to the apostle: the following he said, in a very submissive and humble manner: *four days ago I was fasting unto this hour*; in the Greek text it is, *from the fourth day unto this hour I was fasting*: which looks as if he had been fasting four days, and was still fasting at that hour; though the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions leave out the phrase *I was fasting*: but the sense which our version and others give is the truest; that four days ago, or reckoning four days back, Cornelius was fasting on that day, until such time in that day as now it was in this present day; and which perhaps might be the ninth hour, or three o'clock in the afternoon: the account of days exactly agrees; as soon as Cornelius had had the vision, he sends men to Joppa, which was one day; on the morrow they came to Joppa, which makes two days; Peter lodged them all night there, and the next day set out on the journey with them, so you have three days; and the day after that, which was the fourth, he entered into Cæsarea, and came to Cornelius's house, where he now was: *and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house*; which was one of the stated times of prayer; see the note on ch. iii. 1. *And behold a man stood before me in bright clothing*: or *in a white garment*, as the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions read: which was an emblem of the excellency, glory, and purity of the angel, and of the divine majesty in him: he calls him a man, because he appeared in the form of one, as angels used to do.

Ver. 31. *And said, Cornelius, thy prayer is heard*, &c.] What he was now particularly making to God, as well as others he had before put up to him: *and thine alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God*; see the note on ver. 4.

Ver. 32. *Send therefore to Joppa*, &c.] See th notes on ver. 5, 6. the last clause, *who when he cometh shall speak unto thee*, is left out in the Alexandrian copy, and in the Vulgate Latin, and Ethiopic versions, but agrees with ver. 6, 22.

Ver. 33. *Immediately therefore I sent unto thee*, &c.] This he said, to shew his obedience to the heavenly vision, and his faith in it; and to remove from himself any suspicion of pride, vanity, and imperiousness: he did not send for the apostle of himself, but by a divine order; which as soon as he had, he executed; for the self-same hour, he called his servants and gave them their instructions, and sent them away: *and thou hast well done, that thou art come*; a phrase expressive of benignity and goodness in Peter, and of thankfulness to him for his coming; it was not only doing that which was right in the sight of God, but was kind in him, and acceptable to Cornelius and his house: *now therefore are we all here present before God*; the searcher of hearts, the omniscient God, who knew the sincerity of their intentions in meeting together, and the eagerness of their souls, and their fervent desire to hear the word: it is a sort of an appeal to God, for the truth of all this: in Beza's most ancient copy, and in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, it is read *before thee*; before the apostle: *to hear all things that are commanded thee of God*; or *of the Lord*, as the Alexandrian copy and the Vulgate Latin versions read; that is, of the Lord Jesus Christ; and designs all things, both with respect to doctrine and practice, which Christ had commanded his apostles to teach: and particularly, what he had ordered Peter to instruct Cornelius and his friends in.

Ver. 34. *Then Peter opened his mouth*, &c.] See the note on ch. viii. 35. *And said, of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons*; which is to be understood, not of the substances of men, but of the outward state and condition, circumstances and qualities of men; he respects the proper persons of men themselves, but not because of their outward appearances; he does not prefer or despise men, because of their being of this or the other nation, as Jews or Gentiles; or because they are circumcised, or not circumcised; or because they are high or low, rich or poor, free or bound, or the like: the true sense here is, that God valued no man the more, because he was a Jew and circumcised, nor any one the less, because he was a Gentile and uncircumcised; and this the apostle found to be a most certain truth, of which he was fully persuaded; partly by the vision which he himself saw, and partly by that which Cornelius had, and which the more confirmed him in this matter: these words do not at all militate against the doctrines of personal election and reprobation; and indeed, those acts in God, are not according to the outward state and condition of men, or any circumstances that attend them, or any qualities they have, internal or external; but entirely proceed from the sovereign will of God; see the note on Rom. ii. 11.

Ver. 35. *But in every nation*, &c.] In any Gentile nation in the Roman empire, and in any part, even in Scythia, or in the most uncultivated parts of the universe, as well as in Judea: *he that feareth him:* God, not with a slavish fear, or with the fear of punishment to be inflicted by him, with a fear of hell and damnation, with which Cain, Pharaoh, Judas, and even the devils themselves have feared him; nor with an hypocritical fear; but with a godly filial fear; which is a new covenant blessing, springs from the love of God, is a grace implanted in the soul and regeneration, and includes all true religion, both external and internal; and faith among the rest, without which it is impossible to please God, or do works of righteousness acceptable in his sight, as it follows: *and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him;* that is, he who from such principles, as the fear of the Lord, love to him, and faith in Christ, does works of righteousness, particularly alms, as Cornelius did, and which the Jews often call צדקה, *righteousness;* see the note on Matt. vi. 1. such an one is acceptable, or well-pleasing to God, let him be of what nation he will: it should be observed, that though God accepts of such who fear him, and work righteousness from a right principle, and to a right end, without any regard to their being circumcised, or not circumcised, or to their being of this or the other nation, yet their fear of him, and working righteousness, are not the ground of their acceptance; but are to be considered as descriptive of the persons, who are accepted by him in Christ; for there is no acceptance of persons or services, but in Christ Jesus: the Jews themselves say, that "the godly of the nations of the world shall have their part and portion in the world to come *."

Ver. 36. *The word which God sent unto the children of Israel*, &c.] Now the apostle enters on his sermon or discourse, of which the above were only a preface, or an introduction; and his sense is, that the doctrine which he was now about to preach to them, was the doctrine of the Gospel; which it pleased God, of his infinite wisdom and rich grace, to send first to the people of the Jews, by the ministry of the apostles: this word is sometimes called the word of God, of which he is the author; and the word of Christ, of which he is the sum and substance; and the word of salvation, salvation by Christ alone being the principal part of it; and the word of righteousness, because therein is the righteousness of Christ revealed, from faith to faith; and the word of faith itself, because it is the means by which faith comes; and the word of truth, because it contains nothing but truth; and sometimes the word of reconciliation, because it publishes peace and reconciliation by Christ, as is hereafter signified: this word God is said to send; which shews that it comes from him, and is of a divine original, and therefore ought to be received, not as the word of man, but as the word of God; and it may be said to be *sent*, because the apostles were sent with it by Christ; who ordained them, and sent them forth to preach it in the several cities of Judea; and which shews that Christ is God, who sent this word by them, and so the text is a proof of his deity; and this was sent to the children of Israel, and to them only at first; the apostles were forbidden going in the way of the Gentiles, or entering into any of the cities of the Samaritans; and though their commission was now enlarged, and they might go to the Gentiles, as yet they had not done it, only published the Gospel to the Jews: the substance of which was, *preaching peace by Jesus Christ:* that word preached, or the apostles in the ministry of it preached; or rather God, who sent the word by them, preached through them the doctrine of peace and reconciliation by the blood of Christ; and this being so principal a doctrine of the Gospel, the whole is called from it, the Gospel of peace, and the word of reconciliation: by *peace* here is meant, not peace with the creatures of the earth, the beasts of the field, which, through the sin of men, are become troublesome to them; nor peace with men, which is desirable, and to be sought after, and to a good man the Lord makes his enemies to be at peace with him; nor peace with the saints, which ought by all means to be maintained, and which should rule in the hearts of God's people, and to which the Gospel calls them; but peace with God, which was broken by the sin of man, which filled his mind with enmity to God; and now he is incapable of restoring it, and reconciling himself to God; he has neither disposition, nor ability to perform it; but Christ is the sole author of it: a council of peace was held, in which the scheme of it was drawn; a covenant of peace was entered into, between the father and the son; Christ was provided, promised, and prophesied of, as the peace-maker; he came into the world for this purpose; the chastisement of our peace was laid on him, and he procured it by his obedience, sufferings; and death: and this is what the Gospel publishes; not peace made by men, by their repentance, humiliation, and works of righteousness; but made by Christ, the Prince of peace, by his blood and sacrifice: and not as to be made by him, or any other, but as already made; being not only a plan drawn, but executed, a finished work; and that not conditionally, if men will repent, believe, and obey, but absolutely, as a thing done, and not dependent on any condition required of man; and a wonderful blessing this is, being made on honourable terms, and so lasting, and bringing with it a train of other blessings; and this being an article in the Gospel, makes that to be good news, and glad tidings indeed: and these doctrines of peace with God by the blood of Christ, and reconciliation for sin by his sacrifice, were to be preached to them that were afar off, and to them that are nigh, both to the Jews and Gentiles; to strengthen which observation, the following clause put into a parenthesis is added, *he is Lord of all:* of the whole world, and all things in it; of all the nations of the world, Gentiles as well as Jews, and particularly of God's elect among them both; and therefore he will have the Gospel preached to one, as to another; see Eph. ii. 17.

Ver. 37. *The word (I say) you know*, &c.] By common fame and report, which had for some years past been published by John, Christ, and his apostles, in Judea and Galilee; especially some parts of it, or points in it, such as the apostle hereafter mentions must have

* Maimon. apud Shebet Juda. Ed. Gent. p. 232.

ached their ears: *which was published throughout all Judea:* by Christ, his twelve apostles, and seventy disciples; who were sent out by him into all places, where he himself would come: *and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached:* that is, after John had began to preach the ordinance of water-baptism, and to administer it; which were done, to set the Jews inquiring after the Messiah, and to make him manifest in Israel; upon which the word of the Gospel quickly began to be preached by Christ and his apostles, and that in Galilee; for here Christ began to preach himself, and here he called his apostles, and sent them forth to preach it.

Ver. 38. *How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth,* &c.] And so declared him to be the Messiah, that was promised to the Jews, and expected by them; the anointed prophet, priest, and King; who because his parents lived at Nazareth, and he was educated there, and there he chiefly preached and wrought his miracles, he was by way of contempt called Jesus of Nazareth: and him God anointed, *with the Holy Ghost and with power:* with the gifts and graces of the spirit, without measure; signified by the descent of the spirit, as a dove upon him at his baptism, and is what in Psal. xlv. 7. is called, *the oil of gladness.* The person anointed is elsewhere represented as a divine person; as God, and the son of God, Psal. ii. 6, 7. and xlv. 6, 7. but here under his most contemptible character, by which he was known among men, because it was in his human nature that he was anointed; and this anointing belongs to him, as considered in his office capacity; from whence he is called the Christ, or anointed of God. The anointer of him is God, which must be understood of God the father, who is the God of Christ, and the same that anoints his people, 2 Cor. i. 21. and none but God can anoint with the Holy Ghost; and he it is, with whom Christ is here said to be anointed; who is compared to oil, in allusion to the anointing-oil under the former dispensation, used for the anointing of persons, prophets, priests, and kings, and of the tabernacle, and the vessels of it; to the oil that was poured on Aaron's head, which ran down to the skirts of his garments, emblematical of the spirit poured on Christ, the head, and which from him descends to all the members of his body; and to common oil, both for ornament and refreshment: *power* is added, which is but another name for the Holy Spirit, Luke xxiv. 49. And one particular branch of the extraordinary and immeasurable gifts of the spirit, bestowed on him as man, was a power of doing miracles: for it follows, *who went about;* the land of Judea and all Galilee; which shews laboriousness, diligence, and delight: *doing good;* both to the bodies and souls of men; to the latter, by preaching the Gospel to them; and to the former, by curing all their diseases, of whatsoever sort: he did what none of Adam's sons could do, for there is none of them that does good, no not one, Rom. iii. 10. he was good himself, essentially and naturally good, and therefore he did good, and he did nothing but good: he knew no sin, he did none, nor could any be found in him; and he always did good, that which was according to the will of God, and well-pleasing in his sight; and without him no good is done, even by his own people; they have all the grace and strength from him, by which they perform the good things they do: he is the reverse of Satan, who goes about doing all the mischief he can; and he is to be imitated by his followers, who, as they have opportunity, should do good to all men, especially to the household of faith. *And healing all that were oppressed of the devil;* both in body, as *lunatics, epileptics,* and *demoniacs;* and in soul, such as were led captive by him: *for God was with him;* as his son, essentially, through union to him; and as man, from his cradle to his cross, supporting and assisting him, and with his gracious presence comforting him; and by various instances, shewing that he came from heaven, and had a divine mission and commission; which had he not, he would never have been encouraged and assisted as he was, as man, and could never have done the things he did: the Ethiopic version very wrongly reads, *for God was with them;* see John iii. 2. and viii. 29.

Ver. 39. *And we are witnesses of all things,* &c.] That is, Peter, and the rest of the apostles, were witnesses, even eye-witnesses, of Christ's going about from place to place, and of the good he did every where, and of the miracles which he wrought; and even of every thing *which he did both in the land of the Jews;* which takes in not only Judea, but Galilee, and beyond Jordan; *and in Jerusalem;* the metropolis of Judea: *whom they slew and hanged on a tree;* whom the Jews put to death; for since it was by their instigation, and at their request, it is ascribed to them; and who not content with any death, desired he might be crucified, or hanged on a tree; partly because of the pain and torture of it, and partly because of the shame and ignominy that attended it; as well as to throw off the scandal of his death from themselves to the Romans, crucifixion being a Roman punishment.

Ver. 40. *Him God raised up the third day,* &c.] According to the Scriptures, particularly Hos. vi. 2. The resurrection of Christ, though it is sometimes ascribed to himself, as God, whereby he was declared to be the son of God, yet generally to God the father, as here: *and shewed him openly;* in a glorious body, and yet numerically the same he before lived and suffered in, so as to be heard, seen, and handled; by which full proof was given of the truth of his resurrection, in which he appeared to be the conqueror over death and the grave.

Ver. 41. *Not to all the people,* &c.] Of the Jews, who crucified him; nor to the whole body of the Christians, though at one time to a large number, even five hundred brethren at once: *but unto witnesses chosen before of God;* by Christ himself, who is God: even *to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead;* namely, to the apostles, with whom he familiarly conversed by times, for the space of forty days after his resurrection; and Beza's most ancient copy, and the Ethiopic version here add, *forty days;* and particularly he did sometimes eat and drink with them; see Luke xxiv. 42, 43. John xxi. 12, 15. and though drinking is not mentioned, it is included in eating, as in Luke vii. 36. wherefore there is no need to connect the last clause, *after he rose from the dead,* with the latter part of the preceding verse, as some do, on that account.

Ver. 42. *And he commanded us to preach unto the people,* &c.] Not only of the Jews, but of the Gentiles; to all nations, to the whole world, and every creature; for the apostle seems to refer to the commission given to him, and the rest of the apostles, after Christ's resurrection, Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. Mark xvi. 15, 16. *And to testify that it is he which was ordained of God,* to be *the Judge of quick and dead:* the preaching of the Gospel is a testification of Christ, or a bearing a testimony for him; and among the rest to this truth, that he was from all eternity in the council and covenant of grace, appointed by God to have all power in heaven and in earth; and not only to judge and govern his church and people on earth, but to be the Judge of all men at the last day, of such who will be found alive at his coming, and of those that are dead; who will be raised again, and stand before his judgment-seat, to receive their proper sentence; and though this is not expressed in the commission given the apostles, yet is implied therein; see Matt. xxviii. 18. That there will be a general judgment at the last day is certain, from the reason of things; from the relation of creatures to God as their Creator, to whom they are accountable for their conduct and actions; from the justice of God, which requires it, which does not take place in the present state of things; and it has a testimony in the consciences of men, which the most daring of infidels, at times, shew by the fears they are possessed of about it; and it is abundantly clear from revelation, from the writings of the Old and New Testament; from whence it appears that it is future, it is yet to come; that it is certain, being appointed by God, though the time to men is uncertain; that it it will be universal, and reach to all men, righteous and wicked, quick and dead, and to all actions, good and bad, open and secret; and that it will be a righteous one, and be administered according to the strictest rules of justice and equity; and that it is an eternal one; not that it will be ever carrying on, but will issue in the determination of the states of men to all eternity: now Christ he is appointed to do this work, he was ordained to unto it in the purposes of God from everlasting; this was settled in the covenant between them; and for the execution of which, he has all power and authority given him as Mediator: and for it he is every way qualified: he is of great and infinite majesty, being the mighty God; of great sagacity and wisdom, having, as Mediator, the spirit of wisdom and knowledge upon him, whereby he is of quick understanding and discernment; and he is of great faithfulness and integrity, and will judge not after the sight of his eyes, and the hearing of his ears, but with righteousness and equity, and will do the thing that is right; and especially, inasmuch as he is omniscient, and knows the secrets of all hearts, and so capable of bringing every work into judgment, with every secret thing; and also omnipotent, and so able to raise the dead, summon all nations before him, separate the wicked and the righteous, and not only denounce the proper sentences upon them, but execute them.

Ver. 43. *To him give all the prophets witness,* &c.] As David, Psal. xxxii. 1, 2, 5. and ciii. 3. Isaiah ch. xliii. 25. and xliv. 22. and liii. 5. and lv. 7. Jeremiah, ch. xxxi. 34. Ezekiel, ch. xxxvi. 25. Daniel, ch. ix. 9, 24. Hosea, ch. xiv. 2, 4. Micah, ch. vii. 18. Zechariah, ch. iii. 4, 9. and xiii. 1. Malachi, ch. iii. 17. *that through his name, whosoever believeth in him, shall receive the remission of sins;* the meaning is, that whoever believes in Christ with a right and true faith, with the heart, he shall receive, not as what his faith procures or deserves, but as a gift of God's grace, the free and full forgiveness of his sins, through Christ; through the effusion of his blood, and the virtue of his sacrifice. Christ was set forth in the purposes of God, in the types, figures, and sacrifices of the law, and in the promises and prophecies of the Old Testament, as he that should obtain the remission of sins by his blood, without which there is no remission: he came in the fulness of time, and shed his blood for this purpose, and accordingly it is procured by it; and this is published in the everlasting Gospel, that whoever believes in Christ, not with an historical or temporary faith, or in professsion only, but with the faith of God's elect, which is the gift of God, and the operation of his spirit, which works by love, and makes Christ precious, shall receive it as a free gift; for it is not to be purchased by money, nor obtained by works of righteousness, nor procured by repentance, or by any thing done by the creature, but is according to the riches of divine grace and mercy: *through the name of Christ:* through the blood of Christ, which was shed for it; through the power of Christ, as God, who is able to forgive it; and through the hands of Christ, as Mediator, who is exalted to bestow it; and for the sake of Christ, and his mediation, whose blood calls aloud for it; and whoever looks by faith to him for it, shall have it, of whatsoever sex, state, or condition they be, of whatsoever people or nation, and how great sinners soever they have been, and whether they are weak or strong believers. Some copies read, *through his blood.*

Ver. 44. *While Peter yet spake these words,* &c.] As he was thus discoursing concerning Christ, his person, his miracles, his death and resurrection, and the efficacy of his blood for pardon, before he had done speaking, *the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.* This is not to be understood of the operations of the spirit of God upon the souls of men, under the ministry of the word; though true it is, that the spirit of God attends the preaching of the Gospel, and not only qualifies men for it, and assists them in it, but makes it effectual to many that hear it: hearers of the word lie in the way of the gracious operations of the spirit; and the gifts and graces of the spirit are given to persons, or the spirit falls upon them under such means: which may denote the original of the grace of the spirit, it falls down from above, from heaven; the freeness of it, it is bestowed on whom he pleases, under the same ministry; the suddenness of it, it comes at once, unthought of, and undesired, as well as undeserved; the power and efficacy of it, it falls with weight, it melts the heart, and converts the sinner; and the plenty of it, it falls in abundance, it is exceeding abundant with faith and love; and the permanency of it, it continues where it falls, and is a well of living water springing up unto everlasting life: and also the invisibility of it unto others. But this is not here intended, at least it is not only designed; for

though the spirit of God, in the operations of his grace, might fall upon them that heard the word, whereby they were regenerated, converted, and sanctified, and so became proper subjects for baptism; yet also the extraordinary gifts of the spirit came upon them, as they were hearing; not upon the men, the believing Jews, that came along with Peter; but upon Cornelius and his family, and upon all his relations and friends, who came together to hear the word at his invitation, and now were hearing it; and as they were, the Holy Ghost, in his miraculous gifts of speaking with divers tongues, fell upon them in a visible form, as upon the apostles on the day of Pentecost; for that it was in the same way seems probable from ch. xi. 15. These extraordinary gifts of the spirit were necessary at the first preaching of the Gospel to the Gentiles, for the confirmation of it: as well as for the further confirmation of Peter, that he was right in so doing; as also for the sake of the believing Jews he brought along with him.

Ver. 45. *And they of the circumcision which believed,* &c.] Or *of the* Jews *that believed,* as the Ethiopic version renders it; the circumcised Jews who believed in Jesus Christ: *were astonished, as many as came with Peter;* who were six brethren, as appears from ch. xi. 12. these were amazed, *because that on the Gentiles also was poured out of the gift of the Holy Ghost;* which they before thought was peculiar to the Jews; and this was according to their former notions, and the sentiments of the whole nation, that the Shekinah does not dwell without the land, and only in the land of Israel[o]; yea, they sometimes say, only upon the families in Israel, whose genealogies are clear[p]: the same they say of prophecy[q], which is one of the gifts of the Holy Ghost, and was one of those which were now bestowed. They own, that before the giving of the law, the Holy Ghost was among the Gentiles, but from that time ceased to be among them[r]: hence even these believing Jews wonder at the pouring it forth upon them; which they needed not, had they known that the legal dispensation was now at an end, and the Gospel dispensation had taken place; in which it had been foretold the spirit should be poured forth on the dry ground of the Gentiles.

Ver. 46. *For they heard them speak with tongues,* &c.] With divers tongues, which they had never learned, and before did not understand: *and magnify God;* they spoke of the wonderful works of God in these languages, as the apostles did at Pentecost, Acts ii. 11. they spoke greatly in the praise of God, and gave thanks for his rich grace and mercy bestowed on them: *then answered Peter;* as follows.

Ver. 47. *Can any man forbid water,* &c.] The use of his river, or bath, or what conveniency he may have for baptizing persons: which shews, that it required a place of some quantity of water, sufficient for baptism by immersion, otherwise it would not be in the power of any man to hinder them having a little water, to be sprinkled or poured on the face: unless rather by *water* should be meant baptism itself; and then the sense is, who can forbid these persons the ordinance of baptism, or deny the administration of it to them? for such who have the spirit of Christ, are openly Christ's, and therefore have a right to his ordinances; such, being enlightened by him, are able to see to the end of the ordinance; and to such only can it be of use, and they only can please God in it: nor should it be forbidden them; this is to withstand God, act contrary to the commission of Christ, and resist the Holy Ghost; no, not though Gentiles: converted Gentiles, have as good a right as any to this ordinance; descent from Abraham gives no right to it; there is no difference among men under the Gospel dispensation; Christ's commission reaches both to Jews and Gentiles; and there is but one baptism for both. *That these should not be baptized;* though they are uncircumcised Gentiles: *which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we;* the extraordinary gifts of the spirit; though, no doubt also, they had received the spirit, as a spirit of illumination and conviction, as a spirit of regeneration, sanctification, and conversion, and as a spirit of faith and adoption, and as a witness, earnest, and pledge of future glory: and receiving him supposes, that they were without him before, and that he is a gift of God's free grace unto them; and which is no other than the baptism of the spirit, and is a necessary pre-requisite to water-baptism; and they that have the one, are right subjects of the other; nor ought it to be denied them. From hence it appears that water-baptism is an ordinance of Christ, to be continued under the Gospel dispensation; it was not only what was practised in the times of John and of Christ, but what was practised by the apostles after the ascension of Christ, in compliance with the commission he gave, which could have respect to no other baptism; since the apostles were not capable of baptizing with any other, not with the baptism of the spirit: and it is certain from hence, and by other instances, that they did baptize in water; and from the apostle's question it seems, that it must be by immersion in water, as before observed; and from what follows it is clear, that such who are partakers of the Holy Spirit and his grace, are the proper subjects of it.

Ver. 48. *And he commanded them to be baptized,* &c.] By some of the six brethren that came with him from Joppa, who might all of them, at least some of them, be ministers of the Gospel: and this he ordered to be done *in the name of the Lord;* that is, of the Lord Jesus Christ, though not to the exclusion of the father, and of the spirit: perhaps the phrase, *in the name of the Lord,* may stand connected with the word *commanded:* and the sense be, that in the name of the Lord, and by authority from him, he ordered them to be baptized: *then prayed they him to tarry certain days:* partly to express their gratitude to him for the favour they had received through him as an instrument, and partly that they might be more instructed and established by him. And these baptized persons very likely laid the foundation of a Gospel church-state in this place, which we find to continue in succeeding ages; in the *second* century Theophilus presided over it; and in the *third* century Origen and Pamphilus,

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[o] Zohar in Gen. fol. 118. 4. & in Exod. fol. 2. 3. & 70. 2. Maimon. Kiddush Hachodesh, c. 4. sect. 12. & Jarchi in Jonah i. 3.

[p] T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 70. 2.

[q] Zohar in Gen. fol. 128. 4.

[r] Seder Olam Rabba, c. 21. p. 59.

were presbyters of it; and in the same age, succeeding one another, Theoctistus, Domnus, and Theotecnus were bishops of it; and in the beginning of the *fourth* century, Eusebius the famous ecclesiastical historian was bishop of this church, after him Acacius; in the fifth century Gelasius the successor of Eunomius bore the same office in it; and in the *sixth* century the bishop of this place was present in the fifth synod at Constantinople; and in the seventh century it appears there was a church in this place: in which century the Arabians, after they had besieged this city seven years, took it, and killed seven thousand persons in it; and since it has been in the hands of the Turks; and this seems to have put an end to the ecclesiastical state of this place, as Christian [s].

C H A P. XI.

Ver. 1. *AND the apostles and brethren that were in Judea,* &c.] The rest of the twelve apostles, and the private members of the churches that were in Judea, for there were in it now more churches than that at Jerusalem, ch. ix. 31. *heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God;* as well as Samaria, ch. viii. 14. the news by some means or other were quickly brought to them, and no doubt but they also heard that they had received the Holy Ghost, his extraordinary gifts, as well as his special grace, though no mention is made of them.

Ver. 2. *And when Peter was come up to Jerusalem,* &c.] From Cæsarea, after he had stayed some certain days in Cornelius's house; so a journey from Cæsarea to Jerusalem is called an ascending from the one to the other, ch. xxv. 1. because Jerusalem stood on higher ground, as well as was the metropolis of the country; and this was a journey of six hundred furlongs, or seventy-five miles, for so far, according to Josephus [t], was Cæsarea distant from Jerusalem: *they that were of the circumcision;* which phrase designs not only the circumcised Jews that believed in Christ, for such were all they of the church at Jerusalem, or at least proselytes that had been circumcised, for as yet there were no uncircumcised Gentiles among them; but those of them, who were most strenuous for circumcision, and made it not only a bar of church communion, but even of civil conversation: these *contended with him;* litigated the point, disputed the matter with him, complained against him, and quarrelled with him. Epiphanius says [u], that Cerinthus, that arch-heretic, was at the head of this contention.

Ver. 3. *Saying, thou wentest into men uncircumcised,* &c.] Into the houses of such, and lodged with them, and familiarly conversed with them: *and didst eat with them;* which, according to the traditions of the Jews, were unlawful; see the note on ch. x. 28. they say nothing about his preaching to them, and baptizing them, because these were so manifestly agreeable to the commission of Christ, in Matt. xxviii. 19. Mark xvi. 15. and yet how these could be without the other, is not easy to say.

Ver. 4. *But Peter rehearsed* the matter *from the beginning,* &c.] Of the vision at Joppa; *and expounded it by order unto them;* or related every particular, in a very methodical and orderly manner: he did not insist upon his authority as an apostle, and much less pretended to a primacy to the rest of the apostles; but submitted to have his case heard, examined, and judged of by the body of the brethren.

Ver. 5. *I was in the city of Joppa,* &c.] And so it is called by Josephus [w], and in 1 Maccab. x. 75. and 2 Maccab. xii. 3. here he was *praying* in an house of Simon the tanner, upon the top of it, and about the sixth hour of the day, or twelve o'clock at noon, which was one of the times of prayer with the Jews; see the note on ch. x. 9. *and in a trance I saw a vision;* with the eyes of his understanding; for the organs of his body were quite senseless and useless, which was as follows: *a certain vessel descend, as it had been a great sheet;* a vessel which looked like a great sheet, *let down from heaven by four corners;* to the earth, which four corners were knit, and perhaps were held and let down by angels, and in this visionary way were seen by Peter, though not expressed: *and it came even to me;* descended upon the house-top where Peter was praying; and which was necessary, that he might see what was upon it, and receive instruction from it; and that it was very near him is evident from what is after said to him, when he was bid to arise, and kill and eat what was upon it; and therefore it could not be hanging in the air, but must be let down upon the very spot where he was.

Ver. 6. *Upon the which when I had fastened mine eyes,* &c.] Not of his body, but of his mind; for this was only in vision presented to him, when he was as Paul was, not knowing whether in the body or out of it: *I considered;* being intent upon this object, he considered in his mind what it was, and what it should mean; it being something strange and unusual, which came down from heaven, and out of it, and came so close and near to him, that it engrossed all his thoughts, and was the subject of deep meditation: *and saw four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air;* not pourtrayed upon the sheet, but standing or walking upon it; the Syriac version leaves out, *the wild beasts;* and the Ethiopic version, *the creeping things;* but both are in the Greek copies, and in other versions.

Ver. 7. *And I heard a voice saying unto me,* &c.] As he apprehended in his mind; and this voice he heard in the same sense and manner as the Apostle Paul heard when in a trance, Acts xxii. 17, 18. 2 Cor. xii. 4. *arise, Peter, slay and eat;* that is, get up and slay some of these creatures upon the sheet, and dress them and eat them.

Ver. 8. *But I said, not so, Lord,* &c.] For he took

[s] Magdeburg. Hist. Eccles. cent. 2. c. 2. p. 2. cent. 3. c. 2. p. 1. c. 7. p. 109. c. 10. p. 153. cent. 4. c. 2. p. 2. cent. 5. c. 2. p. 2. cent. 6. c. 2. p. 3. cent. 7. c. 2. p. 2. c. 3. p. 19.

[t] De Bello Jud. l. 1. c. 3. sect. 5.

[u] Contr. Hæres. l. 1. Hæres. 28.

[w] Antiqu. l. 9. c. 10. sect. 2.

the voice he heard to be the voice of the Lord, and yet he was not obedient to the heavenly vision, and even though he was an hungry; which shews what a strict observer he was of the ceremonies of the law, and how much he was prejudiced in favour of them: *for nothing common or unclean hath at any time entered into my mouth;* he had not suffered any thing to come within his lips; he had not even tasted, and much less ate any thing that was forbidden by the ceremonial law, so strictly had he observed it.

Ver. 9. *But the voice answered me again from heaven,* &c.] From whence the former voice came, and was the voice of the Lord, or of an angel of the Lord, and which answered him again, or *a second time;* not that it said to him a second time kill and eat, but what follows; *what God hath cleansed,* that *call not thou common;* that is, had declared to be clean and fit for use, and did not defile, and could not defile the man into whose mouth it entered, and therefore ought not to be pronounced unclean, and of a defiling nature; this Jesus Christ did, who is God over all blessed for ever, and by whose death an end was put to the ceremonial law, and the distinctions of meats by it; see Matt. xv. 11. Rom. xiv. 14.

Ver. 10. *And this was done three times,* &c.] That is, the voice from heaven answered three times, and encouraged Peter to kill and eat; and so the Ethiopic version renders it, *and he likewise said unto me the third time;* the words as before: *and all were drawn up again into heaven;* the sheet with all the creatures upon it, by the same hands that let it down; the Syriac version renders it, *and all betook themselves to heaven;* as if it all went up to heaven of itself; and the Ethiopic version, *and the whole returned again to heaven;* see the note on ch. x. 16.

Ver. 11. *And behold, immediately,* &c.] The moment the vision was over; *there were three men already come unto the house where I was;* they stood before the gate, as in ch. x. 17. and as the Syriac and Ethiopic here have it, and were inquiring for Peter, whether he lodged there; and these men were *sent from Cæsarea unto me;* the Syriac version adds, *by Cornelius:* now this incident being just at the close of the above vision, served greatly to explain it to the apostle, and encouraged him to do what he had done; and besides which, he had also the express order of the spirit, for his going with them to Cornelius's house, as follows.

Ver. 12. *And the spirit bade me go with them, nothing doubting,* &c.] See the note on ch. x. 20. *moreover, these six brethren accompanied me;* it seems by this, that the six brethren that went along with Peter from Joppa to Cæsarea, came also with him from thence to Jerusalem, and were now present, whom he points to; so that it looks as if Peter was aware, that he should be called to an account for his conduct, when he should come to Jerusalem; and therefore brought these six brethren with him, to be witnesses for him, of what they had seen and heard, which was a very wise and prudential step: *and we entered into the man's house:* the house of Cornelius, for entering into whose house they were contending with him, and where he entered not alone, but the six brethren with him; the Ethiopic version wrongly reads *three.*

Ver. 13. *And he shewed us how he had seen an angel in his house,* &c.] The clause, *in his house,* is very appositely put; for since an angel had entered into his house, it could not be criminal in Peter, and the six brethren, to follow him. In one place he is called a man, and in another place an angel; see ch. x. 3, 30. because, though he was an angel, yet he appeared in the form of a man, as it was usual for angels to do; but whether Cornelius knew that he was an angel, is not certain, since he calls him a man; and not he, but Luke the historian, and Peter, who repeats the account of the vision, call him an angel; however, he looked upon him as an extraordinary person, as sent to him from God, and therefore obeyed the heavenly vision. The Ethiopic version reads, *an angel of God; which stood and said unto him, send men to Joppa, and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter;* see the note on ch. x. 5.

Ver. 14. *Who shall tell thee words,* &c.] Preach doctrines, such as relate to the person and office of Christ, to peace and pardon, and righteousness and salvation by him; such as Peter did preach, as appears by his discourse in the preceding chapter: *whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved;* that is, which would be a means of instructing him and his family in the right and true way of salvation; for the Gospel only points out the way of salvation, and is only effectual to it, when it is accompanied with the power of God: multitudes hear it, and yet are not saved by it, and those to whom it comes not in word only, but in power, are saved only by Christ, who is revealed in it, as God's way of salvation; it is not bare hearing the word and attending on ordinances that will save any, only such who believe in Christ with the heart, who is the sum and substance of the Gospel, are saved; and still less are any saved by the faith of others; the house or family of Cornelius were not saved by his believing in Christ; but the words of faith and sound doctrine being preached to them, as to him, and faith coming thereby to one as to another, they were saved in one and the same way, namely, through faith in Christ Jesus.

Ver. 15. *And as I began to speak,* &c.] That is, whilst he was speaking; the word *begin* with Luke, both in his Gospel and in this history, is used not to denote the time or order of any action, but the thing itself; as in Luke iv. 21. and xx. 9. Acts i. 1. for otherwise it was towards the close, and not at the beginning of his discourse, that what follows happened: *the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning;* of our ministry, since the death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ; meaning on the day of Pentecost, and that the Holy Ghost fell on Cornelius and those that were with him, in a like visible form, and in the same kind of gifts, as speaking with tongues, as on them.

Ver. 16. *Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said,* &c.] Just before his ascension, Acts i. 5. *John indeed baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost;* as they were on the day of Pentecost, and as now Cornelius and his family were; and since they had the greater baptism, the baptism of the spirit, the lesser baptism of water could not be denied them.

Ver. 17. *Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift,* &c.] Of the spirit, of speaking with divers tongues: *as he did unto us;* the apostles: *who believed on the*

Lord Jesus Christ: which clause stands either connected with *us* the apostles, and so is descriptive of them who first believed in Christ, and became followers of him; or with *them* the *Gentiles*, as the Syriac version renders it, *if therefore God gave that gift equally to these Gentiles which believed on our Lord Jesus Christ, as unto us:* for it seems most likely, that faith in Christ came by hearing Peter's discourse, before the extraordinary gifts of the spirit fell upon them: *what was I that I could withstand God?* or hinder the baptism of these persons in water, whom God baptized with the Holy Ghost, and who believed in Christ Jesus: from whence it appears that the spirit of God is a gift, which he bestows on whomsoever he pleases, without any desert of man's, and that both in his extraordinary operations, and in the common influences of his grace; for it is equally the gift of God to believe in Christ, which is a grace of the spirit, as it was to speak with divers tongues; and these, though they did not always go together, yet here they did, as on the apostles, so on Cornelius and his house: and hence they became qualified for the ordinance of baptism; not by the extraordinary gifts of the spirit, but by his special grace; the extraordinary gifts were partly to confirm the Gospel preached unto them by Peter; and partly to assure him that he was right in going in to the Gentiles, and preaching to them; and to encourage him to baptize these persons who appeared to have also the grace of the spirit, and to have believed in Christ; as well as to fit them, at least some of them, for public work and service: and now faith in Christ being a pre-requisite to baptism, and it being the will of Christ, and what he gave in commission to his disciples to baptize such as believed in him, and these being apparently such; to have refused to administer baptism to them, would have been acting contrary to the commission of Christ, a witnstanding the will of God, and opposing the grace of the spirit of God.

Ver. 18. *When they heard these things*, &c.] Peter's vision at Joppa, and Cornelius's at Cesarea, and the wonderful pouring forth of the spirit upon these Gentiles under Peter's sermon: *they held their peace;* and ceased contending and disputing with Peter, or blaming him for his conduct; for otherwise they were not silent, but made use of their tongues: *and glorified God;* praised his name, adored his rich grace, and gave him the glory of all the wonderful things related to them: *saying, then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.* The phrase *unto life*, is left out in the Ethiopic version, which only reads, *God hath also given to the Gentiles that they should repent;* but it ought not to be omitted, being in the Greek copies in general, and of considerable moment, rightly understood; the Arabic version directs to a wrong sense of it, *perhaps God hath given also to the Gentiles repentance, that they may live by it;* the word *perhaps*, is very wrongly put instead of *then*, which affirms that God had given them repentance, whereas this makes a doubt of it; and upon a supposition of it, the version ascribes too much to it; for it is not by repentance that men live spiritually, but by faith in Christ Jesus; nor do they obtain eternal life by it, but by Christ; though true repentance is an evidence of spiritual life, and it begins with it, for as soon as ever God quickens a sinner, he shews him the evil of sin, and gives him repentance for it: *repentance* here designs the grace of evangelical repentance, which is attended with faith in Christ, as it was in these Gentiles, and with views of pardon in Christ, and which springs from the love of God, and this is *unto life;* is a repentance from dead works, and is attended with a life of faith, and issues in eternal life: and it is also a *grant* from God; it is not in the power of man's free will, who though he may have time and means, yet if he has not grace given him to repent, he never will; his heart is hard and obdurate, and no means will do without an almighty power; not the most severe judgments, nor the greatest mercies, nor the most powerful ministry; it is a pure gift of God's free grace, and a blessing of the covenant of grace: and this being given to Gentiles, shews that the covenant of grace belongs to them, as well as to the Jews; and discovers a false opinion of the Jews, that the Gentiles should not be saved; and answers the design of the Gospel being sent among them, whereby the doctrines both of repentance and remission are preached unto them; and opens the glorious mystery of the calling of them, and may encourage sinners of the Gentiles to hope for this grace, and apply to Christ for it, who is exalted to give it.

Ver. 19. *Now they which were scattered abroad*, &c.] These were not the apostles, but the other ministers of the word; see ch. viii. 1. who were dispersed *upon the persecution that arose about Stephen;* his preaching and miracles, his oration in defence of himself, and his death: these *travelled as far as Phœnice;* a country near to Syria and Galilee; its chief towns and cities were Tripolis, Botrys, Biblus, Berytus, Tyre, Sidon, Ecdippa, Ptolemais, and Dora. It was famous, as Pliny says[x], for the invention of letters, and of the constellations, and of naval and warlike arts. It was a maritime country, reaching from Orthosia (now called Tortosa) to Pelusium, or from Sidon to the borders of Egypt: it is the same with Old Canaan, and was so called, and had its name from Canaan; who, according to Sanchuniathon[y], also had the name of Phœnix, from whom this country was called Phœnice, or Phœnicia. Some think the name is the same with פענק, *Pahanak*, or פאות ענק, *Peoth Anak*, the corners of the Anakites; it being the tract of land which the children of Anak, or the giants inhabited, when drove out of Hebron by Caleb, Josh. xv. 13, 14. Others say, it had its name from the palm-trees, with which it abounded; and here, it seems, dwelt some of God's elect, who being made righteous, flourished like the palm-trees: *and Cyprus and Antioch;* the former of these was an island, lying between the shores of Syria and Cilicia: it had Syria on the east, Pamphilia on the west, and Phœnice on the south, and Cilicia on the north; see the note on chap. iv. 36. and the latter was a city of Syria, built by Seleucus, king of Egypt, and called Antiochia, after his father's name Antiochus. The account Josephus gives[z] of it is, that it is the metropolis of Syria, and that for its greatness, and other happy acquirements, it has, without doubt, the third place among the cities

[x] L. 5. c. 12.
[y] Apud Euseb. Prepar. Evangel. l. 2. p. 39.
[z] De Bello Jud. l. 3. c. 2. sect. 4.

in the Roman empire; meaning, that it was the next to Rome and Alexandria: and elsewhere[a] he calls it the palace or royal seat of the Syrians: and the Jews, when they speak of a great city, and would describe one, instance in Antioch, a great city, say they[b], as Antioch; with them, it is the same as Hemath the great, spoken of in Amos vi. 2. on which words Jerom has this note: "Hemath the great is what is now called Antioch; "and it is called the great, to distinguish it from the "lesser Hemath, which is called Epiphania." And so the Jerusalem Targum on Gen. x. 18. renders the Hamathite, *Antioch*: and the Targum of Jonathan on Numb. xiii. 21. renders Hamath by *Antioch*. Here many Jews dwelt, to whom the ministers of the word preached the Gospel only at first. Josephus[c] speaks of many in this place, and gives reasons for it: "the "nation of the Jews, he says, was much spread "throughout the whole world, and great part of Syria, "because near, was mixed with them, especially there "were many in Antioch; partly because of the great- "ness of the city, and chiefly because of the liberty "of dwelling there, granted them by the successors "of Antiochus; for Antiochus, called Epiphanes, "having wasted Jerusalem, robbed the temple; "but those that reigned after him, whatsoever "among the things devoted to sacred use were of "brass, they returned to the Jews in Antioch, to be "laid up in their synagogue; and they granted to "them equally to partake of the city with the Greeks; "and many of the Grecians they brought over to their "religion, and made them, in some sort, a part of "themselves." Here the Jews also had schools and taught: it is said[d] R. Samlai taught in Antioch; and here also was a sanhedrim. It is often said[e], that Nebuchadnezzar came and sat down at Daphne of Antioch, and the great sanhedrim went out to meet him. Now Antioch was formerly called Epidaphne, because it was near a fountain of that name; and in the Targumists on Numb. xxxiv. 11. Daphne answers to Riblah, which was in the land of Hamath, 2 Kings xxiii. 33. and Riblah, Jerom[f] says, is what is now called Antioch of Syria: and that you may know, says he, that Riblah signifies this city, which is now the most noble in Cœle-Syria, it follows, over-against the fountain, (in Numbers it is, *on the east side of Ain*,) which, 'tis clear, signifies Daphne, out of which fountain the above-said city enjoys abundance of water. And so Josephus calls Antioch[g], Antiochia which is by Daphne of Syria; and in 2 Maccab. iv. 33. Daphne is said to be by Antioch. Some make it to be two hundred and eighty miles from Jerusalem. So far they went who were scattered abroad at Stephen's death, and carried the Gospel to this and other places, in which there was a manifest appearance of divine Providence, and of rich grace. *Preaching the word to none but to the Jews only*, which dwelt in those parts; so little was the commission of Christ, to preach the Gospel to all nations, understood, though it was so plain; or so it was ordered in providence, that as it was to be first preached to them, so it should be only for a while, till the elect of God of that generation were brought in, and until the rest put it away from them, and so were left without excuse.

Ver. 20. *And some of them were men of Cyprus, &c.*] That is, some of the preachers, that were scattered abroad, were Jews born at Cyprus: such was Barnabas particularly, Acts iv. 36. though he was not among these, as appears from ver. 22. *and Cyrene*: such were Simon that carried the cross after Christ, and his sons Alexander and Rufus, Mark xv. 21. and others that heard the apostles speak with tongues on the day of Pentecost, ch. ii. 10. *which when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the Grecians*: or Hellenist Jews, who were born and brought up in Greece, and spoke the Greek language; though the Alexandrian copy, and the Syriac version, read *Greeks*, as if they were native Greeks, and properly Gentiles, to whom these ministers spoke the word of the Lord; but the former seems most likely. *Preaching the Lord Jesus*: the dignity of his person, as the son of God; what he did and suffered to obtain salvation for lost sinners; his resurrection from the dead, ascension to heaven, and intercession; the virtue of his blood for peace and pardon of his sacrifice for atonement of sin, and of his righteousness for justification.

Ver. 21. *And the hand of the Lord was with them, &c.*] Not only his hand of providence, which brought them thither, and protected them; and his hand of love, grace and mercy, which was upon them, and supplied them with gifts and grace, and every thing necessary for them; and his hand of wisdom, which guided and directed them; but his hand of power, the same with the arm of the Lord, which when revealed, and made bare, the report of the Gospel is believed: but if that is not put forth, or efficacious grace is not exerted, no work is done, none are brought to believe, or are converted; ministers labour in vain, and spend their strength for nought: but this was not the case here, it was otherwise with these preachers; though they had travelled many miles, and were come into strange places, they were not left of God, nor without success, the power of God attended their ministry; so that the Gospel preached by them came not in word only, but in power, and it was the power of God unto salvation: hence it follows, *and a great number believed*; not the Gospel only, but in Christ preached in it, ver. 20. which was not owing to the force of moral suasion in the ministers, nor to the power of free will in the people, but to the hand or power of the Lord; for the work of faith is not a work of man's will, but of God's almighty power and grace; and when that is displayed, multitudes believe in Christ for righteousness and life: *and turned to the Lord*; and obeyed his commands; see Psal. cxix. 59, 60. as a fruit, effect, and consequence of believing in Christ; for not first conversion is here intended, which is not man's work, but God's, and in which God is the agent, and man is passive; but obedience to the ordinances of Christ, as the fruit of faith, is meant.

Ver. 22. *Then tidings of these things, &c.*] Of the

[a] Antiqu. l. 17. c. 5. sect. 7.
[b] T. Hieros. Erubin, fol. 22. 4.
[c] De Bello Jud. l. 7. c. 3. sect. 3.
[d] T. Hieros. Kiddushin, fol. 64. 4.
[e] T. Hieros. Shekalim, fol. 50. 2. Vajikra Rabba, sect. 19. fol. 161. 1. Prefat. Eccha Rabbati, fol. 41. 1.
[f] Comment. in Ezek. xlvii. fol. 261. C.
[g] Antiqu. l. 17. c. 2. sect. 3.

spread of the Gospel in several parts, and the success of it in the conversion of sinners, especially at Antioch: *came unto the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem;* these tidings were brought to the apostles and brethren there, by messengers which the ministers of the word sent unto them to let them know what success they met with; notwithstanding the persecution raised against the church of Jerusalem at the death of Stephen, and the havoc that was made of the members of it, and the dispersion of others, yet it still continued a church, and so it did for ages after: there are reckoned fifteen bishops of it unto the times of Trajan, and the destruction of the city by him, when the Jews were no longer suffered to live in it; and they are these, James the brother of our Lord, Simeon, Justus, Zaccheus, Tobias, Benjamin, John, Matthias, Philip, Seneca, Justus, Levi, Ephres, Joseph, and Judas; and these are said [h] to be all originally Hebrews: but after the destruction of the city by Trajan, and the Jews were forbid inhabiting it, the church consisted of Gentiles only; and of them bishops were constituted over it, and were as follow: Marcus, Cassianus, Publius, Maximus, Julianus, Gaianus, Symmachus, Caius, another Julianus, Capito, another Maximus, Antoninus, Valens, Dolychianus, Narcissus, Ælius, Germanio, Gordius, and another Narcissus; all these governed this church in the *second* century: and in the *third* century, the bishops of this church were Alexander, Mazabanes, Labdas, and Hermon, who was the last before the Dioclesian persecution: in the *fourth* century, Macarius, Maximus, and Cyril, presided over it; and these were succeeded in the *fifth* century by Joannes Nepos, Prayllius, Juvenalis, Anastasius, and Martyrius; in this age also Lucian and Hesychius were presbyters of this church. In the *sixth* century, the names of the bishops of this church were Salustius, Helias, Johannes, Petrus, Macarius, Eustochius, Johannes, Neamus, and Isicius: in the *seventh* century were Thomas, Johannes, Neannus, Isaac, Zacharias, and Sophronius, who was the last bishop of Jerusalem before the utter and last devastation of it by the Saracens [i]; since which time the city has underwent various fates, being sometimes in the hands of the Christians, and at other times possessed by the Turks, in whose power it now is. *And they sent forth Barnabas;* who was himself an Hellenist, and of the country of Cyprus, and so very fit to be sent to the Grecians or Hellenists at Antioch, who had received the Gospel to confirm them in it: for his orders were, *that he should go as far as Antioch;* which is said to be about fifteen or sixteen days' journey from Jerusalem: the phrase, *that he should go,* is not in the Alexandrian copy, nor in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions.

Ver. 23. *Who when he came, and had seen the grace of God, &c.*] The many instances of the powerful and efficacious grace of God in regeneration and conversion; the great goodness, love, and favour of God in enlightening, quickening, and converting so many souls; and the wonderful gifts of the spirit bestowed upon many of them, fitting them for public use and service: *was glad;* rejoiced at heart, and gave glory to God, as every good man will, at the success of the Gospel in the conversion of sinners, let it be by what instrument or means it will, and at the gifts and grace bestowed on them: *and exhorted them all;* in whom he saw the grace of God implanted, who had received the doctrine of the grace of God, and had gifts of grace qualifying them for usefulness, in some nation or another: *that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord;* that is, with a fixed resolution in the grace and strength of Christ, they would hold to his person, exercising grace upon him, abide by his truths and ordinances, keep close to his people, adhere to his cause and interest, and hold on and out unto the end. The Arabic version takes *the purpose of heart* to be meant of Barnabas, and reads the words thus, *and he exhorted them according to the usual firmness of his heart,* that *they would continue in the faith of the Lord;* in the doctrine and grace of faith in Christ.

Ver. 24. *For he was a good man, &c.*] He had the grace of God wrought in his soul, and did good works; he was very kind, and generous, and charitable; he sold what land he had, and gave the money to the apostles, for the use of the community, Acts iv. 37. *and full of the Holy Ghost, and of faith;* he was full of the several graces of the spirit, and particularly of faith; and he was full of the extraordinary gifts of the spirit, and of the faith of miracles; he was full of the doctrine of faith, and of spiritual gifts for the preaching of it: the same character is given of Stephen, ch. vi. 5. *and much people was added unto the Lord;* by the means of Barnabas, through his ministry, and the exercise of those gifts he was full of; so the Arabic version, *and he drew a large multitude to the Lord.*

Ver. 25. *Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus, &c.*] In Cilicia, *for to seek Saul;* who had been sent thither by the brethren, that he might escape the rage of the Grecians, who sought to slay him, ch. ix. 29, 30.

Ver. 26. *And when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch, &c.*] That he might be useful in directing, and assisting in settling this new and numerous church; in the establishing the members of it, and in putting them into Gospel order, and in a method to secure and maintain peace, especially as they might consist both of Jews and Gentiles; and none so proper to be concerned in such a work as the apostle of the Gentiles. *And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church;* preaching the Gospel, and administering the ordinances to them, during that time, at proper seasons. For here being a number of converts, they were embodied together in a church-state, very probably by the direction and assistance of Barnabas, who was sent to them from the church at Jerusalem, and in which he might be assisted by Saul: the first bishop, or pastor of this church, was Evodius, as Ignatius observes unto them [k]; Remember Evodius, your worthy and blessed pastor, who was first ordained over you by the apostles; and Ignatius himself was the next, of whom Origen speaking, says [l], that he was the second bishop of Antioch after Peter, who in per-

[h] Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. 4. c. 5.

[i] Magdeburg. Hist. Eccles. cent. 2. c. 2. p. 2. & c. 9. p. 126. cent. 3. c. 10. p. 146. 148. cent. 4. c. 10. p. 503. c. 5. cent. 10. p. 540. cent. 6. c. 10. p. 335. cent. 7. c. 10. p. 251.

[k] Epist. ad Antiochenos, p. 86.

[l] Homil. 6. in Luc. fol. 96. 1.

secution fought with beasts at Rome; next to him was Heron, after him Cornelius, then Eros; to whom succeeded Theophilus, who wrote three books to Autolycus, in vindication of the Christian religion, which are now extant, in the times of the emperor Aurelius Verus, about the year of Christ 171. He was succeeded by Maximinus [m] about the year 179, under Marcus Antoninus; and after him was Serapion, about the tenth year of the emperor Commodus, and of Christ 192; and about the year 214, Asclepiades succeeded in his room; next to him was Philetus, in the year 220, and then Zebennus in the year 231; next succeeded Babylas, the famous martyr, who suffered under Decius, and then followed Demetrianus, or Demetrius, about the year 255; and after him was the famous heretic Samosatenus, who was excommunicated from this church for his blasphemy against the son of God; and Domnus, the son of Demetrianus, was put into his room, about the year 270; after him was Timæus, in the year 274; and then Cyrillus, about the year 283: and these were the bishops or pastors of this church in the three first centuries [n]. *And taught much people*: besides the church, and with success, as to enlighten, convince, convert, comfort, and establish: *and the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch*: before they were called among themselves, the disciples, brethren, believers, the church, &c. and by others the Nazarenes, and Galileans: whether this name of Christians, which comes from Christ, and signifies *anointed* ones, was given by their enemies, or their friends, by others, or themselves, is not certain, though it is most likely the latter; and it may be they hit upon this general appellation, upon the union of the Jews and Gentiles in one Gospel church state, and so happily buried the distinction of Jews and Gentiles, or those of the circumcision that believed, and those of the uncircumcision. Luke is particular in relating the affairs of this church, he being himself a native of this place. John of Antioch [o] gives an account of this matter in these words; "at the beginning of the "reign of Claudius Cæsar, ten years after Jesus Christ, "our Lord and God, was ascended up into heaven, "Evodus, the first after the Apostle Peter, being "chosen bishop of Antioch, the great city of Syria, "became a patriarch, and under him they were called "Christians: for this same bishop, Evodus, conferring "with them, put this name upon them, whereas before "the Christians were called Nazarenes and Galileans." Epiphanius says [p], the disciples were called Jessæans before they took the name of Christians first at Antioch: they were called Jessæans, says he, I think, because of Jesse, seeing David was of Jesse, and Mary of David: and so the Scripture was fulfilled, in which the Lord says to David, *of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne*, &c.—Or else they were called Jessæans from the name of Jesus our Lord; and refers the reader to a book of Philo's, written by him, concerning the Jessæans, whom Epiphanius takes to be Christians; but those that Philo [q] treats of were not Jessæans, but Essæans, and seem to be the same with the Essenes, who were not Christians, but a sect of the Jews. Nor do we ever find that the Christians were called by this name.

Ver. 27. *And in these days came prophets from Jerusalem to Antioch.*] That is, some time in that year that Saul and Barnabas were at Antioch, there came from Jerusalem thither some Christian prophets; for such there were in the Christian church, who had not only a gift of expounding the more mysterious prophecies of the Old Testament, but also of foretelling things to come; see Acts xiii. 1. Eph. iv. 11.

Ver. 28. *And there stood up one of them named Agabus*, &c.] The same name with Hagaba in Neh. vii. 48. and with Hagabah, or Hagab in Ezra ii. 45, 46. and which the Septuagint there call Agaba and Agab. The name signifies *a grashopper*, Lev. xi. 22. or *a locust*, 2 Chron. vii. 13. In a book that goes under the name of Jerom [r], it is interpreted, *a messenger of tribulation*; respecting, it may be, not the true signification of the word, as the things which Agabus predicted, as the general dearth here, and the binding of the Apostle Paul, ch. xxi. 10. And the same writer observes, that this interpretation is a violent, or a forced one. Some take it to be the same with עגב, *Agab*, which signifies *to love*; and so may be the same with the Greek name *Agapetus*, which may be interpreted *beloved*. This Agabus is said to be one of the seventy disciples that Christ sent forth: he seems to have been an itinerant prophet, who went from place to place delivering out his prophecies; we hear of him again at Cæsarea, in ch. xxi. 10. Some say he was a native of Antioch; but this does not follow from his being here, any more than that he was a native of Cæsarea from his being there also; it seems most likely that he was a native of Judea, and perhaps of Jerusalem, since in both places he is said to come from thence: it is reported that he died at Antioch; and he is placed in the Roman martyrology on the third of February. *And signified by the spirit*: not by the position of the stars, or by any natural causes, or by mere conjecture, but by the spirit of God: *that there should be great dearth throughout all the world*; not only throughout all the land of Judea, but at least throughout the whole Roman empire; see Luke ii. 1. since other writers speak of it in other parts: *which came to pass in the days of Claudius Cæsar*; in the second year of his reign, as Dion Cassius [s], the Roman historian, says: and [t] Eusebius seems to speak of it, as in the beginning of his reign; for he says, Caius, who scarce reigned four years, Claudius the emperor succeeded, in whose time a famine afflicted the whole world; for this some writers, different from our religion, have made mention of in their histories: though he elsewhere affirms [u], that it was in the fourth year of his reign; both may be true, it might last so long: and indeed, according to what this writer [w] cites from Josephus, it must be after this time that the famine raged in Judea; for having observed the defeat of

[m] Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. 4. c. 20, 24.
[n] Ib. l. 5. c. 22. & l. 6. c. 29, 44, 46. & l. 7. c. 14, 27, 32.
[o] Apud Gregory's Notes, &c. p. 155.
[p] Contra Hæres. l. 1. Hæres. 29.
[q] Quod omnis probus liber, p. 876. De vita contemplativa, p. 889.

[r] De nominibus Hebraicis, fol. 101. H.
[s] L. 60.
[t] Eccl. Hist. l. 2. c. 8.
[u] In Chronicon.
[w] Eccl. Hist. l. 2. c. 11, 12.

Theudas by Cuspius Fadus, the Roman governor, he observes, that at the same time a very great famine happened in Judea: now Fadus was sent into Judea, after the death of king Agrippa, towards the end of the fourth year of Claudius; so that it must be in the fifth or sixth year of Claudius that this famine was [x]. The Magdeburgensian Centuriators say [y], it was about the ninth and tenth years of Claudius that this famine raged in Greece, Rome, and other parts of the world. Suetonius [z] makes mention of it, and ascribes it to a constant sterility or barrenness: and that it particularly affected Judea appears from hence, that Helena, queen of the Adiabeni, was at this time at Jerusalem, who sent for, and brought corn out of Egypt, and distributed it to the poor [a]; of which Josephus [b] gives this account: "her coming was very seasonable to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for a famine at that time much "afflicted their city, and many perished through want "of food. Helena, the queen, sent of her own people "some to Alexandria, who bought a great quantity of "corn, and some to Cyprus, who brought loads of "dry figs; who, as soon they came back, distributed "the food to the needy.—And her son Izates, hearing "of the famine, sent much money to the chief men of "Jerusalem." The Misnic doctors [c] speak of various gifts which Helena, and her son Monbaz, as they call him, gave to the Jews for the use of the temple, but make no mention of this bounty; though they represent the son as very liberal to the poor, and giving all his goods unto them [d].

Ver. 29. *Then the disciples*, &c.] That were at Antioch, *every man according to his ability*; whether rich or poor, master or servant, every one according to the substance he was possessed of, whether more or less, which was a good rule to go by: *determined to send relief to the brethren which dwelt in Judea*; either because that Agabus might have suggested, that the famine would be the severest in those parts; or because that the Christians there had parted with their substance already, in the support of one another, and for the spread of the Gospel in other parts; and therefore the Christians at Antioch, in gratitude to them for having received the Gospel, and Gospel ministers from them, resolved to help them with their temporal things, when in distress.

Ver. 30. *Which they also did*, &c.] They not only determined, but they put their resolutions into execution, and acted according to a rule which the apostle recommends, 2 Cor. viii. 11. and ix. 7. *and sent it to the elders*; to the apostles; for though there were deacons there, yet they chose to send it to them, that they might put it into proper hands to distribute to the necessitous: and this collection they sent *by the hands of Saul and Barnabas*; of this journey to Jerusalem, Paul makes no mention in Gal. i. 17, 18, 19, 21. and ii. 1.

CHAP. XII.

Ver. 1. *NOW about that time*, &c.] That the famine was in Judea, and Saul and Barnabas were sent thither with what the church at Antioch had collected. *Herod the king*: not Herod the great that slew the infants at Bethlehem, nor Herod Antipas that beheaded John, but Herod Agrippa; and so the Syriac version adds here, *who is surnamed Agrippa*; he was a grandson of Herod the great, and the son of Aristobulus: this prince *stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church*; Beza's ancient copy adds, *in Judea*: it seems to be the church at Jerusalem; perhaps some of the principal members of them; and so the Ethiopic version renders it, *the rulers of the house of God*. It is scarcely credible that he should lay hands on any of them himself in person; but it is very likely he encouraged his soldiers, or his servants, to abuse them, reproach them, strike and buffet them, as they met with them in the streets; or when at worship, might disturb them, and break them up.

Ver. 2. *And he killed James the brother of John with the sword.*] This was James, the son of Zebedee, whom our Lord told, that he should be baptized with the baptism he was baptized with, Matt. xx. 22. meaning the baptism of martyrdom; and he was the first martyr among the apostles: the death he was put to was one of the four capital punishments among the Jews, and was reckoned by them the most disgraceful of them all, and was inflicted upon deceivers of the people; and such an one James was thought to be [e].

Ver. 3. *And because he saw it pleased the Jews*, &c.] That is, as Beza's ancient copy adds, *his stretching out his hands upon the faithful*; this pleased the Jews, a bloodthirsty generation of men, who had killed the prophets, and the Lord Jesus, and who were now greedy after the death of the apostles: it may easily be seen from what principle and spirit Herod acted; it was not out of regard to the Jewish religion, rites, and ceremonies, but to ingratiate himself into the affections of the people: *he proceeded further to take Peter also*; a principal apostle, and who was well known, and against whom the Jews had doubtless a particular antipathy, and would have been glad to have been rid of him; this Herod was sensible of, and therefore to please them, ordered him to be taken up: *then were the days of unleavened bread*; or the feast of the passover.

Ver. 4. *When he had apprehended him*, &c.] When his officers he sent to take him had brought him: *he put him in prison*; in the common prison, very likely where he had been once before, ch. v. 18. *and delivered him to four quaternions of soldiers to keep him*; each quaternion consisted of four soldiers, so that they

[x] Vales. not. in Eccl. Hist. l. 2. c. 11, 12.
[y] Cent. 1. l. 2. c. 13. p. 501.
[z] In Vit. Claud. c. 18. & Victor. Aurel. de Cæsaribus in Claud.
[a] Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. 2. c. 12.
[b] Antiqu. l. 20. c. 2. sect. 6.
[c] Misn. Yoma, c. 3. sect. 10.
[d] T. Hieros. Peah, fol. 15. 2.
[e] Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 7. sect. 1, 3. & 11. 4.

were in all sixteen; and so the Syriac version renders it, *and delivered him to sixteen soldiers*: how the Ethiopic version should make *seventeen* of them is pretty strange: these perhaps might take their turns to watch him by four at a time, two to whom he was chained, and two others to keep the doors; or all the sixteen together, being posted in one place or another for greater security: and it may be, that the reason of all this caution, and strong guard, might be, because it was remembered that he, and the rest of the apostles, when committed to the same prison some years ago, were delivered out of it: *intending after Easter*, or the passover, *to bring him forth to the people*; to insult and abuse him, and to put him to what death they should desire.

Ver. 5. *Peter therefore was kept in prison*, &c.] Till the feast of the passover was at an end: *but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him*; this was not done by them as a body together, but either by them in several bands at different places, or by some of the principal of the church at some one certain place, and where they might frequently change companies, and keep on a continual incessant prayer for days together; and whereas it is very likely it might be at the beginning of the passover, when Peter was taken up, and it was now at the close of it, when he was delivered, the church might be engaged by companies alternately, a whole week together, in prayer, on this occasion.

Ver. 6. *And when Herod would have brought him forth*, &c.] The next morning; so he had determined not to dismiss him, but to expose him to the people, and to put him to such a death they should choose: *the same night, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers*; fearless of death, being in a good cause, and having nothing to ruffle and disturb his mind; and though he was in a prison, and in such company, God gave him, his beloved, sleep: *bound with two chains*; one on one hand, and one on the other, each of which were fastened to the soldiers; that on his right hand was fastened to the left hand of the soldier, that was on that side; and that on his left hand to the right hand of the soldier, on the other side him; such security was made, that he might not get away from them; to which is added, *and the keepers before the door kept the prison*; or watched it, that nobody went in, or came out.

Ver. 7. *And behold, the angel of the Lord came upon him*, &c.] Suddenly and at once, and stood by him; this was one of the ministering spirits sent forth by Christ, to minister to a servant of his: *and a light shined in the prison*: the Syriac version renders it, *in the whole house*: and the word that is used does signify an habitation, or a dwelling-house properly, but is used also by the Greek writers[f] for a prison: this was an uncommon light produced by the angel, partly as an emblem of the presence, majesty, and power of God, who was present, to work a great deliverance; and partly for the use of Peter, that when being awaked he might see to rise and walk by: *and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up*: he touched him on that side which lay uppermost, or punched him on it, in order to awake him, and raise him out of his sleep: *saying, arise up quickly*; without delay, make haste: *and his chains fell off from his hands*; from both his hands, and were left with the soldiers, between whom he slept; which must be ascribed to an almighty power, which caused them to drop off.

Ver. 8. *And the angel said unto him, gird thyself*, &c.] He slept in his inner garment loose about him; wherefore the angel bids him gird it up with his girdle, and prepare to walk out after him: *and bind on thy sandals*; which were a sort of shoes that covered only the soles of the feet, and were fastened to the legs with strings: *and so he did*; he did not ask any question, or the reason of these orders; he did not dispute the matter, but at once obeyed: *and he saith unto him, cast thy garment about thee*; meaning his upper garment, or cloak, which lay by him: *and follow me*; suggesting hereby, that he should take care of him, and shew him his way, and bring him safe out of the prison.

Ver. 9. *And he went out and followed him*, &c.] He came out from between the two soldiers, and out of that apartment in the prison, in which he was, and followed the angel where he led him: *and wist not that it was true that was done by the angel*: not that he thought the angel was a mere apparition, and all this that was done was a delusion; but he did not know whether this was matter of fact, or whether it was not represented to him in a visionary way, as what could be, or would be done: *but thought he saw a vision*; imagined he was in a dream or a trance, and only saw these things in a vision, and that they were not really done, the whole was so amazing and astonishing.

Ver. 10. *When they were past the first and the second ward*, &c.] Or watch, which were set within the prison, and might be some of the quaternions of soldiers to whom Peter was delivered; two of them were with him, and others might be placed at these two wards for further security; and these circumstances make the deliverance the more wonderful and remarkable; the watch must either be asleep, or their eyes were holden, or the angel and Peter passed by so swiftly that they were unobserved: *they came unto the iron gate that leadeth unto the city*: which was not one of the gates of the city, as if the prison was without the walls of it; but was the great and strong gate of the prison, which for the security of the prisoners was made of iron, and this gate led directly into the city of Jerusalem: *which opened to them of his own accord*; as the gates of the temple are said to do[g], forty years before the destruction of Jerusalem: this was done by a divine power; and because no human creature had any hand in it, it is said to be done of its own accord: *and they went out*. The Cambridge copy of Beza's adds, *they went down seven steps*; that is, from the prison into the city: *and passed on through one street*; what street this was is not certain; there were several streets in Jerusalem: see the note on ch. ix. 11. *and forthwith the angel departed from him*: he being now safe and out of danger, he left him to himself, to be[illegible] himself to what house he should think fit.

Ver. 11. *And when Peter was come* [illegible] For upon his being awaked out [illegible]

[f] Vid. Harpocratian Lex. p. 212.

[g] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 39. 2.

the uncommon light, which shone around him, and with the appearance of the angel, and the chains dropping from his hands, and his surprising escape through the several wards, together with the iron gate opening of itself, he was so filled with amazement, that he was not himself; he could scarcely tell whether he was in the body or not, and whether he was in a dream or a trance, or whether he saw a vision or not; but upon the angel's leaving him he came to himself, the amazement wore off, and he found himself thoroughly awake, and perfectly in his senses, and that the deliverance was real: and then, *he said, now know I of a surety, that the Lord hath sent his angel;* this was a thanksgiving to God, and an acknowledgment, that the deliverance, though it was by the ministry of an angel, yet was owing to the goodness and power of God; it was God that sent his angel, and the salvation was of the Lord's doing, and it was marvellous in the eyes of Peter, and gratefully owned by him: *and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod:* who intended that morning to have brought him forth, and sacrificed him to the will of the people: *and* from *all the expectation of the people of the Jews:* not only the inhabitants of Jerusalem, but the body of the Jewish nation, who were now at Jerusalem, on account of the passover; and who before they departed into their several cities and towns, expected to have had Peter brought forth, and put to death before them; but now both Herod and they were disappointed.

Ver. 12. *And when he had considered* the thing, &c.] The whole of the salvation wrought for him; or rather, where he should go, to what house he should betake himself; ere he was aware, *he came to the house of Mary the mother of John, whose surname was Mark.* This good woman seems to be a widow, no mention being made of her husband, and was sister to Barnabas, Col. iv. 10. She is described by a son she had, whose name was John Mark, because of the frequent mention made of him hereafter; her house being large, and her heart as large as her house, the saints met here, and were welcome, and where they were at this time, though so late: *where many were gathered together, praying:* the Ethiopic version adds, *for him:* and there were some in other places, for one place could not hold them all; see ver. 17. they held out to the end in prayer; this was their last effort in this way, and in this they were no doubt exceeding vehement and importunate, and they succeeded; so true is that observation in James v. 16.

Ver. 13. *And as Peter knocked at the door of the gate,* &c. The lesser door in the great gate, or the door of the porch through which they entered into the house. So the Jews distinguish between פתח, *the door*, and שער, *the gate;* see Judg. xviii. 16, 17. Ezek. xl. 11. where the Septuagint use the same words as here. Kimchi[h] says, "פתח, *the door* is what is of the gate, "without the folding-doors; for all is called שער, *the* "*gate*, whether within or without, with the folding-"doors, and the outward threshold, as that is joined "to the side-posts and lintel." The door was kept shut, for fear of the Jews, lest they should be disturbed: here Peter stood and knocked: *a damsel came to hearken;* hearing a knocking, she came out to the door, and listened, to try if she could know who it was, a friend or a foe, before she opened; or she came *to answer*, as the Syriac version renders it, to know who was there, and what he or she wanted, and to give an answer. And the damsel was *named* Rhoda, which signifies a rose in the Greek language: so the Jewish women often had their names, in the Hebrew tongue, from flowers and trees, as Susanna from a lily, or rose: and which, perhaps, was the Hebrew name of this damsel; and Esther was called Hadassah, from the myrtle-tree.

Ver. 14. *And when she knew Peter's voice,* &c.] Having often heard him preach and converse in the family: *she opened not the gate for gladness:* filled with joy to hear his voice, and that he was delivered from prison, and in haste to carry the welcome news to the company within, staid not to open the gate, and let Peter in: *but ran in and told how Peter stood before the gate:* she went into the house in a great hurry, and related to them within, that Peter was at the door without.

Ver. 15. *And they said unto her, thou art mad,* &c. Or *art thou not mad?* as the Ethiopic version, and two of Beza's exemplars read, and some others: they thought the girl must be out of her senses; they looked upon the thing impossible; for though they were praying for him, and praying in faith, yet they might have no expectation of a deliverance; but were praying that they might be supported under such a trial, and that it might be sanctified to them; and for Peter, that he might be strengthened and made steadfast, and kept faithful to the last; and bear, by his sufferings and death, a glorious and honourable testimony for Christ: *but she constantly affirmed that it was even so;* she asserted it over and over, and was positive in it; nothing they could say could beat her off of it; she was sure of it; which when they observed, they could not tell what to say to it, but as follows: *then said they, it is his angel;* not his tutelar or guardian angel, every one having, as some think, a particular angel to attend him; whereas some times one angel attends many persons, and sometimes many angels encamp about, and are a guard to a single saint; nor did they think it was an angel sent to give notice of his death, as some persons, by one means or another, have had previous notices of the death of their friends; but rather, that it was an angel in Peter's shape, who had something to communicate: and this agrees with the notions of the Jews, who think that angels do assume the shapes of men on certain occasions: so they say[i], when Moses was in danger in Pharaoh's court, God sent Michael, the prince of the host of heaven, *in the shape of an executioner;* who brought him at once out of Egypt, and set him at the border of it, the distance of three days' journey: Bar Kaphra says[k], an angel descended בדמות משה, *in the likeness of Moses*, and caused him to flee, and they thought the angel had been Moses: and so it is elsewhere said[l], that an angel descended *in the likeness of Solomon,* sit-

[h] [illegible] rad. פתח.
[i] [illegible] 6. 1.

[k] Debarim Rabba, sect. 2. fol. 237. 1.
[l] Midrash Kohelet, fol. 64. 4.

ting upon his throne: there are some who think, that the sense of the brethren praying for Peter, was not that it was an angel, a celestial spirit, but a messenger sent by Peter from the prison on some errand: who personating him, or mentioning his name, the damsel took him for Peter himself. Beza's ancient copy reads, *then said they unto her, perhaps it is his angel*; and so the Syriac version.

Ver. 16. *But Peter continued knocking*, &c.] That they might come to him, and let him in; beginning to be impatient, and being very desirous of seeing his friends, as well as being in danger of being taken up, and had to prison again, should any of his enemies come by, who knew him: *and when they had opened the door, and saw him, they were astonished*: they could hardly believe their own eyes; it was amazing to them, how it should be, that he should be delivered out of prison, when they knew there was such a strong guard about him.

Ver. 17. *But he beckoning unto them with the hand*, &c.] This is what the Jews call רמיזה, *an hint*[m], which is a beckoning, or making signs, either with the head or hand: and this was now made, *to hold their peace*; to be silent, and not clamorous in their expressions of joy and wonder, lest it should alarm the neighbourhood, and the consequence be bad both to him and them; as also that he might have an opportunity of relating the whole affair to them; which he did, after he had entered into the house; which though not expressed is understood, and is added in Beza's ancient copy, and in the Syriac version: *and he went in*; that is, into the house: and *declared unto them how the Lord had brought him out of prison*; how he had sent his angel to him in prison, what a light shone about him, how his chains fell from his hands, and how the angel conducted him through the several wards, till they came to the iron gate, which opened of itself; and how when he had brought him into the public streets, he left him; he ascribes this wonderful deliverance not to the angel, but to the Lord himself: *and he said, go shew these things to James*; the son of Alpheus, sometimes called the brother of our Lord; for James the son of Zebedee, the brother of John, Herod had lately killed with the sword, ver. 2. and this other James very likely succeeded him as pastor of the church at Jerusalem, or at least had the superintendency of affairs there: *and to the brethren*; the rest of the apostles, and even all the members; whom he would have acquainted with these things, which he knew would be matter of joy unto them, and a means of strengthening them in the ways of the Lord: *and he departed, and went into another place*: to Rome, say the Papists, but without any foundation; if he went out of the city, and to any distant place for more safety, very likely he went to Antioch; but the words do not necessarily oblige us to conclude, that he went out of the city at that time, only that he went from Mary's house; *and went*, as the Ethiopic version reads, *to another house*; where another company of saints might be assembled, and where he might be more private and secure.

Ver. 18. *Now as soon as it was day*, &c.] When it was morning; as soon as there was any light in the prison, by which the guards could discern one another and their prisoners: *there was no small stir among the soldiers*; the two between whom Peter slept, and the rest of the quaternions that were employed in the wards to keep watch; who were now all in an uproar, and in the utmost concern and fright: *what was become of Peter*; whether he was in any other part of the prison, by what means he could escape, and whither he was gone.

Ver. 19. *And when Herod had sought for him and found him not*, &c.] Neither in the prison, nor in any part of the city: *he examined the keepers*; of the prison, and those that were upon the watch, whether they had not been accessary to his escape: *and commanded that they should be put to death*; or *brought forth*, not before a judge to be tried and judged, because they had been examined by Herod already; but either that they should be carried and laid in bonds, or be led forth to suffer punishment; and so our version directs, and which is confirmed by the Syriac; and the Greeks say[n], that απαγωγη is a kind of punishment: *and he went down from Judea to Cæsarea*: not Peter, but Herod: *and there abode*; of this journey of Agrippa's to Cæsarea, Josephus makes mention[o]; this place was distant from Jerusalem six hundred furlongs, or seventy-five miles[p].

Ver. 20. *And Herod was highly displeased with them of Tyre and Sidon*, &c.] Two cities on the sea-coast, in the land of Phœnicia; with the inhabitants of which Herod was so enraged, that though he had not declared war against them, yet he had meditated it in his mind, and intended to do it at a proper time: what gave him this offence is not certain; that it should be for entertaining and concealing of Peter, when he made his escape, is without any foundation; and nothing but this following on that account, could ever occasion such a thought: *but they came with one accord to him*; the ambassadors from both cities united in an address to him, and joined in ways and means to reconcile him to them: *and having made Blastus the king's chamberlain their friend*; not merely by arguments, entreaties, and good works, but very likely by gifts, by making presents to him: persons in such an office had usually very great interest in the princes they served[q], as Blastus doubtless had with Herod; Commodus the emperor did every thing at the instances of his chamberlains, and so other princes; for these officers had access when others could not, the king's bed-chamber being next to sacred; and therefore the Tyrians and Sidonians privately applied to him first: *desired peace*; either of Herod himself, to whom, by the means of Blastus, they were introduced; and in their address to him, entreated he would forgive the offence, and be at peace with them; or else of Blastus, whom by some means or another they made their friend; and therefore entreated of him, that he would use his interest with the king, and procure peace for them; and this sense the Arabic version inclines to, which renders the words thus, *and they prayed him that he would*

[m] Bartenora in Misn. Gittin, c. 5, sect. 7.
[n] Harpocration. Lex. p. 32.
[o] Antiqu. l. 19. c. 8. sect. 2.
[p] De Bello Jud. l. 1. c. 3. sect. 5.
[q] Vid. Pignorium de servis, p. 480, 481. Popmam de operis serv. p. 33. & Alstorph. de Lectis veterum, c. 12. p. 63.

take care of reconciliation and peace: though the former seems to be the true sense: *because their country was nourished by the king's* country. These cities were seaports, and the inhabitants of them were much concerned in sending ships to sea, and in merchandise; and it was in Judea and Galilee, which were under Herod's jurisdiction, where they vented the goods they imported, and from whence they were supplied with wheat, honey, and oil, both for their own use, and perhaps to export abroad; see 1 Kings v. 1, 11. Ezek. xxvii. 3, 17, &c. And it looks as if Herod had forbid all commerce with them, which if it had been continued, would have been the ruin of them.

Ver. 21. *And upon a set day,* &c.] Either on some feast-day of divine appointment, as a feast-day was by the Jews called מועד, *a stated day;* or on some day appointed by Herod, for the receiving of the ambassadors of Tyre and Sidon, and of hearing their petitions; or as Josephus[r] says, it was on the second day of the sports and plays, instituted by him in honour of Cæsar: *Herod, arrayed in royal apparel;* the same Jewish historian in the same place says, that this his apparel was all of silver, and of a wonderful contexture; and that going in this very early in the morning into the theatre, the silver shone so with the rays of the rising sun, that it struck the spectators with terror and admiration: *sat upon his throne;* and very likely with the other ensigns of royalty, as a crown on his head, and a sceptre in his hand: *and made an oration unto them:* either unto the ambassadors from Tyre and Sidon, or rather unto the common people, the multitude that were gathered together in the theatre, where the above historian says he was.

Ver. 22. *And the people gave a shout,* &c.] At the end of the oration; these were flatterers, as Josephus says in the place before referred to, who cried out one from another, saluting him as God; saying, be merciful to us, hitherto we have revered thee as a man, henceforward we confess thee somewhat more excellent than mortal nature: and so it follows here, saying it is *the voice of a God, and not of a man:* the Vulgate Latin version reads, *the voices of God and not men;* and the Ethiopic version, *the city shouted in,* or *with the voice of God, with the voice of man;* as if this referred to the acclamation of the people, and not the speech of the king; very wrongly.

Ver. 23. *And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him,* &c.] With a disease after mentioned; this angel, according to Josephus, appeared in the form of an owl; for he says, that a little after (the shout of the people) the king looked up, and saw an owl sitting upon a rope over his head; whom he immediately understood to be an angel, or messenger of evil things to him, as it had been before of good things; for it seems by the same historian[s], that when he was bound by the order of Caligula, he saw an owl sitting on that tree, on which he leaned; when a certain German predicted, that things would in a short time be changed with him, and he should be advanced to great honour; but remember, says he, whenever you see that bird again, you'll die in five days' time. Eusebius[t], out of Josephus, makes no mention of the owl, but relates it thus; that a little after (the oration and the salutation of the people) the king looked up, and saw an angel sitting over his head, whom he immediately understood to be the cause of evil things to him, as he had formerly been of good: the reason of the angel's smiting him was, *because he gave not glory to God:* or as the Jewish historian says, because he reproved not the flatterers, nor rejected their impious flattery, but tacitly took that to himself, which belonged to God: *and he was eaten of worms;* Beza's most ancient copy adds, *while he was alive;* Josephus only makes mention of pains in his belly, but these were occasioned by the gnawing of the worms: this was accounted by the Jews a very accursed death; they say[u], that the spies which brought an ill report on the good land, died this death: their account is this, that "their tongues swelled and fell "upon their navels, and worms came out of their "tongues and went into their navels, and out of their "navels they went into their tongues," of this death died many tyrants, oppressors, and persecutors; as Antiochus, 2 Maccab. ix. 9. and Herod the great, the grandfather of this, according to Josephus[w]; and Maximianus Galerius, according to Eusebius[x], and many others: *and gave up the ghost:* not directly, but five days after, as Josephus relates, in the fifty-fourth year of his age, and when he had reigned seven years; but before he died, and as soon as he was smitten, he turned to his friends and said, I your God am obliged to depart this life, and now fate reproves the lying words you have just now spoke of me; and I who was called immortal by you, am led away to die, with more, as related by Josephus: by such a token as this, a man was discovered to be a murderer with the Jews; for so they say[y], that "out of the beheaded heifer went a "vast number of worms, and went to the place where "the murderer was, and ascended upon him, and "then the sanhedrim laid hold on him and condemned "him."

Ver. 24. *But the word of God grew and multiplied.*] The number of those who were converted by it, and embraced and professed it, increased; otherwise the word is the same, whether the professors of it be more or fewer; and this it did, notwithstanding the persecution raised against it by Herod whilst he was living; and after his death, it still gained more ground, met with less opposition, and was more freely professed.

Ver. 25. *And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem,* &c.] Two of Beza's exemplars, the Complutensian edition and the Syriac version, add, *unto Antioch;* and certain it is, that from thence they were sent, and thither they returned, for we find them there in the beginning of the next chapter: *when they had fulfilled their ministry;* which was the carrying the relief, or the money collected by the Christians at Antioch, for the brethren in Judea, on account of the famine that was there: *and took with them John, whose surname was Mark:* the son of Mary, at whose house the disciples were met together, and praying; and

[r] Antiqu. l. 19. c. 8. sect. 2.
[s] Ib. l. 18. c. 7. sect. 7.
[t] Eccl. Hist. l. 2. c. 10.
[u] Bab. Sota, fol. 35. 1.
[w] Antiqu. l. 17. c. 6. sect. 5.
[x] Hist. Eccl. l. 8. c. 16.
[y] Targum Jon. in Deut. xxi. 8.

where Peter first went, after he was delivered from prison, ver. 12. him they brought with them from Jerusalem to Antioch, being a kinsman of Barnabas; and a man of promising gifts and usefulness, and judged to be a fit companion with them in their travels, for the spread of the Gospel.

CHAP. XIII.

Ver. 1. *NOW there were in the church that was at Antioch*, &c.] This was Antioch in Syria, where was a Gospel church, and where the disciples were first called Christians; from whence Saul and Barnabas had been sent to Jerusalem, with a supply for the poor saints there, in a time of famine, and from whence they were now returned: and here were *certain prophets and teachers*: who were both prophets and teachers, though these are sometimes distinguished; who had both a gift of foretelling things to come, as Agabus and others, and of expiaining the prophecies of the Old Testament, and of teaching the people evangelic truths; these, at least some of them, came from Jerusalem hither, ch. xi. 27. *As Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger*: the former of these was a Levite, and of the country of Cyprus, who sold his land and brought the money to the apostles; and who was first sent hither by the church at Jerusalem, upon hearing that many in this place believed, and turned to the Lord, ch. iv. 36, 37. and xi. 22. but of the latter no mention is made elsewhere; by his first name he appears to be a Jew, who by the Romans was called Niger; very likely from the blackness of his complexion, for that word signifies *black*: and so the Ethiopic version interprets it: *and Lucius of Cyrene*: who very probably was one of the synagogue of the Cyrenians, and seems manifestly to be one of the men of Cyrene, that went abroad upon the persecution raised at the death of Stephen, ch. vi. 9. and xi. 19. 20. he is said to be bishop of Cyrene; some take him to be the same Lucius mentioned in Rom. xvi. 21. and others think he is the same with Luke the Evangelist: *and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch*: or his foster-brother. The Syriac version calls him Manail, and one of Stephens's copies Manael, and the Ethiopic version Manache, and renders what is said of him, *the son of king Herod's nurse*: which accounts for their being brought up, nourished, and suckled together: the name seems to be the same with Menachem, or Menahem, a name frequent with the Jews; there was one of this name, who was very intimate with Herod the great, and was in his service, though before he was vice-president of the sanhedrim: the account that is given of him is this[z]: "Hillell and "Shammai received from them (*i. e.* from Shemaia "and Abtalion, who were presidents before them), "but at first there were Hillell and Menahem, but "Menahem went out, לעבודת המלך, *into the service of* "*the king*, with fourscore men clad in gold—— "Menahem was a very wise man, and a sort of a "prophet, who delivered out many prophecies; and "he told Herod when he was little, that he should "reign; and after he was king, he sent for him, and "he told him again, that he should reign more than "thirty years, and he reigned thirty-seven years, and "he gave him great riches." Of this Menahem, and of his going into the king's service, mention is made elsewhere[a]: now though this Menahem can't be the same with Manaen here, yet this Manaen, as Dr. Lightfoot conjectures, might be the son of him, and called after his name; who might be brought up with the son of Herod the great, here called the tetrarch: and who was Herod Antipas, the same that beheaded John the Baptist: and Saul; who afterwards was called Paul.

Ver. 2. *As they ministered to the Lord*, &c.] That is, the five prophets and teachers before mentioned; and whose ministry lay in preaching the Gospel, teaching the people the doctrines of it, and expounding prophecies, and also in prayer; to which latter the Syriac version restrains their ministry, rendering it, *as they prayed to God*: but the phrase seems to be more extensive: *and fasted*: which the Jews were much used to, and the believing ones had not yet left it off; their custom was to fast on Mondays and Thursdays: see the note on Luke xviii. 12. Whether it was on one of those days, that these men were ministering and fasting, is not certain; but this we may be sure of, it was not on the Jewish sabbath, for on that day they never fasted; very likely that this was a fast appointed and fixed among themselves, on some particular occasion; it may be on account of the famine, which was at this time, chap. xi. 28. *The Holy Ghost said*: either with an articulate voice, or by an internal impulse, upon the minds of three of the prophets: *separate me Barnabas and Saul, for the work whereunto I have called them*: the work which the Holy Ghost had appointed, and called them to before this, was to go and preach the Gospel among the Gentiles, distinct from the Jews, of which we read in the latter part of this chapter; and now he would have them be separated from their brethren, as Aaron and his sons were from theirs, and be sent forth from hence directly, upon that work: this shews the spirit to be a person, since speaking and commanding in an authoritative way, and calling to a work, are ascribed unto him; and that he is a divine person, and truly God, and equal with God, since calling to a sacred office is attributed to him; and a separation to it is ordered for himself, for his service, honour, and glory; he does not say separate them to the Lord, or to God, but to me.

Ver. 3. *And when they had fasted and prayed*, &c.] Not when they had done fasting and praying, at the time the Holy Ghost made an impulse on their minds, to separate two of their brethren to a work they were appointed to; but at another time, which was fixed

[z] Juchasin, fol. 19. 1.

[a] Misn. Chagiga, c. 2. sect. 2. & Maimon. & Bart[illegible] T. Bab. Chagiga, fol. 16. 2.

for that purpose; when they fasted and prayed, not for direction, who they were to set apart and send; for the persons were before pointed out to them, but that they might have every needful gift and qualification for the work, and be succeeded in it: *and laid their hands on them*: not as ordaining them, for this was not an ordination; the Apostle Paul particularly was not ordained an apostle by man, but by Jesus Christ; who personally appeared to him, and made and ordained him his minister and apostle; and much less by men inferior to himself, as Simeon, Lucius, and Manaen were; but this was a gesture and ceremony used among the Jews, when they wished any blessing or happiness to attend any persons; and so these prophets, when they separated Paul and Barnabas from their company, and were parting from them, put their hands on them, and wished them all prosperity and success: could this be thought to be an ordination, as it cannot, since both of them were stated and authorized ministers of the word, and one of them an apostle long before this; there might seem some likeness between it and the Jewish ordination of elders, which was done by three[b], as here were Simeon, Lucius, and Manaen; but then this was not done without the land of Israel, as here, nor by imposition of hands[c]: now when they had thus prayed for them, and wished them well, *they sent* them *away*; to do the work they were called unto; not in an authoritative way, but in a friendly manner they parted with them, and bid them farewell.

Ver. 4. *So they being sent forth of the Holy Ghost*, &c.] This is said, lest it should be thought they were sent by men; it was the Holy Ghost that moved the prophets at Antioch to separate them from them, and to send them away; and who inclined their minds to go, and directed them what course to steer: and accordingly they *departed to Seleucia*; which was a city of Syria, called by Pliny, Seleucia Pieria[d]; it had its name from Seleucus Nicanor, king of Egypt, who was the builder of it: it was not far from Antioch, it is said to be twenty-four miles from it; it is the first city of Syria from Cilicia, and was situated at the mouth of the river Orontes; wherefore Saul and Barnabas made no stay here; and it seems that their coming hither was only in order to take shipping for the island of Cyprus; for Seleucia was upon the sea-coast, as appears from 1 Maccab. xi. 8. and was the proper place to set sail from to Cyprus. So we read of Apollonius Tyaneus and his companions[e], that "they went down to the sea by Seleucia, where "having got a ship, they sailed to Cyprus:" and so it follows here, *and from thence they sailed to Cyprus*; an island in the Mediterranean sea, the native country of Barnabas, ch. iv. 36. see the note there.

Ver. 5. *And when they were at Salamis*, &c.] A chief city of Cyprus; and so Herodotus[f] calls it Salamis of Cyprus; and in this island it is placed by Pliny[g] and Ptolomy[h]: it was built by Teucer, the son of Telamon, after his return from the Trojan war; and so called by him, from his native country Salamine, in Greece, as is generally agreed by historians[i]; it was the birth-place of the famous philosopher Solon, who is from thence called Salaminius; he died in the island of Cyprus, in the eightieth year of his age; and before he died, gave orders to carry his bones to Salamis, and being reduced to ashes, to scatter them throughout the province[k]: it was also claimed by the Cyprians, as the birth-place of Homer, and is said[l] to be prophesied of that it should be; it was afterwards called Constantia, and now Famagusta, and is in the hands of the Turks; of it Jerom[m] thus writes; "Salamis, a city in the island of Cyprus, now called "Constantia, which, in the time of the Emperor Trajan, the Jews detroyed, having killed all the inhabitants of it:" which shews what a multitude of Jews dwelt in this island, and even in this place; hence, in this verse, mention is afterwards made of synagogues of Jews in it, where the apostles preached, and which was the reason of their coming hither. This place, with the whole island, was taken from the Venetians by Mustapha, general to Selimus the Second, emperor of the Turks, in the year 1571, after a siege of eleven months; which, when he was possessed of, contrary to the agreement made, he put all the Christians to death; and having cut off the ears and nose of Bragadinus, the governor of it, took off his skin alive[n]. Epiphanius, an ancient writer of the *fourth* century, famous for his books against heresies, was bishop of this place[o], when it was called Constantia, from Constantius Augustus, the emperor; and before him, we read of Gelasius, bishop of this place, who was in the council of Nice; there was a church here in the *fifth* century; and mention is made of a presbyter of it, in the *sixth* century, present at the fifth council at Constantinople; and in the *seventh* century, a bishop of this church was in the sixth council of Constantinople; and in the Nicene synod, in the *eighth* century, John, bishop of this place, assisted[p]: *they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews*; the Jews being in great numbers in these parts, to them the apostles first preached, though they were sent unto the Gentiles; and this they continued to do, 'till the Jews put away the Gospel, which made their way more clear and open to the Gentiles: *and they had also John to their minister*: this was John Mark, whom they brought with them from Jerusalem, ch. xii. 12, 25. who waited upon them, and provided for them the necessaries of life; for this is not to be understood of the ministry of the word, which is peculiarly ascribed to them, or of his being an assistant to them in it; nor can it be understood of his being the minister in any of the synagogues for them, to bring out the book of the

[b] Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 1. sect. 3.
[c] Maimon. & Bartenora in ib. & Maimon. Hilchot Sanhedrin, c. 4. sect. 2, 3.
[d] L. 5. c. 12, 21.
[e] Philostrat. Vita Apollon. l. 3. c. 16.
[f] L. 4. c. 162.
[g] Nat. Hist. l. 5. c. 31.
[h] Geograph. l. 5. c. 14.
[i] Vellei Patercul. Hist. l. 1. in initio, Isocratis Evagoras, p. 375. Vid. Horat. Carmin. l. 1. ode 7.
[k] Laert. Vit. Philosoph. l. 1. p. 30, 41.
[l] Pausanias, l. 10. p. 656.
[m] De locis Hebraicis, fol. 96. 1.
[n] Petav. Rationar. Temp. par. 1. l. 9. c. 12. p. 507.
[o] Epitaph. Paulæ, fol. 58. K & Vita Hilarion. fol. 82. M.
[p] Magdeburg. Hist. Eccles. cent. 4. c. 2. p. 5. cent. 5. c. 2. p. 6. cent. 6. c. 2. p. 5. cent. 7. c. 2. p. 4. cent. 8. c. 2. p. 6.

law, and direct public service, where it cannot be thought he should have any such office and authority; but of his ministering in civil and secular things to the apostles, or to the poor by their orders.

Ver. 6. *And when they had gone through the isle unto Paphos,* &c.] The Alexandrian copy, and the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions read, *the whole isle;* for through the midst of the whole island they must go, to go from Salamis to Paphos; for Salamis was on the east, and Paphos on the west of the island [q]: it had its name from the Phœnician word, פאת פאות, *peathpaoth, the corner of corners;* because both old and new Paphos were situated in the extreme part of the island; and not from Paphus, the son of Pygmalion, by any ivory statue which he had made, whom Venus, at his request, according to the fables of the Heathens, turned into a woman: some say [r], that Cinyras, a king of the Assyrians, coming into Cyprus, built Paphos; but Pausanias [s] affirms, that Agapenor, who came hither after the Trojan war, was the builder of this place, and also of the temple of Venus in it, for which it was famous [t]; and in a certain area of which, Pliny [u] says it never rained; and from this place, Venus was called Paphia: according to Chrysostom, it was the metropolis of Cyprus; and it is indeed mentioned by Pliny [w], first of the fifteen cities that were in it; and seems at this time to have been the seat of the Roman deputy Paulus Sergius, afterwards spoken of: concerning this place Jerom says [x], "Paphus, a city on "the sea-coast, in the island of Cyprus, formerly "famous for the sacred rites of Venus, and the verses "of the poets; which fell by frequent earthquakes, "and now only shews, by its ruins, what it formerly "was:" so Seneca [y] says, quotiens in se Paphus corruit? *how often has Paphus fell within itself?*" that is, by earthquakes: the ruins of many goodly churches and buildings are to be seen in it; and the walls of a strong, and almost impregnable tower, situated upon a hill in the middle of the city, supposed to be the habitation of Sergius Paulus; there is also shewn, under a certain church, a prison divided into seven rooms, where they say Paul and Barnabas were imprisoned, for preaching the Gospel; what remains of it, is now called Bapho: here *they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew, whose name was Barjesus,* or the son of Jesus; Jesus was a name frequent among the Jews, and is the same with Joshua, and was in use long before our Saviour's time; there was Jesus the son of Sirach, the author of Ecclesiasticus, and who had a grandfather of the same name: the Syriac version here calls him *Barsuma,* which some render the *son of a name;* that is, a man of note, a famous person, of great renown; others, the *son of a swelling,* or *the son of ulcers;* he professing to be a physician, and to cure them, with which they make the name of Barjesus to agree, deriving it from a root, which signifies to heal: Jerom [z] pronounces this name Barieu, and observes, that some corruptly read it Barjesu; and he makes it to signify an evil man, or one in evil; and Drusius says, he found the name *βαριεου, Barjeou,* in some papers of his; and a very learned man [a] of later years says, it is the same with Bar-Jehu, the son of Jehu; and affirms, that the Greek word is Βαριευς, *Barjeus,* which others wrongly turn into *Bar-jesus;* the Magdeburgensian Centuriators call him, *Elymas Barjehu;* the reason Beda gives, why it should be so read, and not *Bar-jesus,* is because that a magician was unworthy to be called the son of Jesus, the Saviour, when he was a child of the devil; but the Greek copies agree in *Barjesus;* his name shews him to be a Jew, as he is here called: and he was one of those false prophets our Lord said should arise, and deceive many; he pretended to foretel things to come, and practised sorcery, and was given to magic arts.

Ver. 7. *Which was with the deputy of the country,* &c. Or the Roman governor of the island; who very likely dwelt at Paphos, it being a principal, if not the principal city in the island, since Pliny mentions it first of all the cities in it, as before observed: and with this governor, or pro-consul, as the word signifies, or rather prætor, Bar-jesus was: either he lived with him, making great pretensions to knowledge and learning, which the governor might be a favourer of, or in quality of a physician; the Ethiopic version adds, *and he was a servant of the governor;* or he might be only with him occasionally and accidentally, just at that time, though the former seems most likely: and the name of this deputy was Sergius Paulus; the name of Paulus was common among the Romans; Pliny the younger speaks [b] of one Passienus Paulus, a famous Roman knight, and very learned, who wrote elegies; and Trajan [c], in an epistle to him, makes mention of Paulus the pro-consul; and Pliny the elder, among his authors from whom he compiled his history, cites one of this very name, Sergius Paulus [d]. The island of Cyprus was at this time in the hands of the Romans, and this man was the governor of it; it was first inhabited by some of the sons of Japhet; Josephus [e] assigns it to Cittim: Cittim, he says, "had the island Chetima, "which now is called Cyprus; and from it all the "islands, and most places about the sea, are called "Chethim by the Hebrews; and as a proof of what I "say, (adds he,) one of the cities in Cyprus still retains "the name; for it is called Citium by those who "have made it Greek, and not much differing from the "name Chethimus." After the Trojan war, it came into the hands of the Grecians; and continued with them from the times of Teucer, until Evagoras and his son Nicocles; and then it fell into the hands of the Romans, and through them to the kings of Egypt; and after them became a Roman colony, in the following manner: Clodius Pulcher adjudged Cyprus to the Roman people, to possess which Cato being sent, Ptolomy the king of the island, having cast his money into the sea, prevented the ignominy of it by a vo-

[q] Ptolom. Geograph. l. 5. c. 14.
[r] Apollodorus de deorum orig. l. 3. p. 193.
[s] Arcadica, sive l. 8. p. 461.
[t] Philostrat. Vita Apollonii, l. 3. c. 16.
[u] Nat. Hist. l. 2. c. 96.
[w] Ib. l. 5. c. 31.
[x] De locis Hebraicis, fol. 95. F. & Vita Hilarion, fol. 86. C.
[y] Ep. 91.
[z] De nominibus Hebraicis, fol. 105. I.
[a] Hileri Onomasticum Sacrum, p. 760.
[b] L. 6. ep. 15. p. 139.
[c] Ib. l. 10. ep. 68. p. 267.
[d] Elenchos Hist. ex autoribus, l. 2. & l. 13.
[e] Antiqu. l. 1. c. 6. sect. 1.

luntary death, Anno U. C. 698[f]. The Roman historian says[g], Cyprus being conquered, the glory of it was not assigned to any, seeing it was made a province by the decree of the senate, by the means of Cato, through the death of the king, which he brought upon himself; and from that time, as Strabo says[h], it became a prætorian province, and was now governed by a prætor, though he is called a deputy, or pro-consul; the reason of which Dr. Hammond thinks was, because that P. Lentulus, Ap. Claudius, and M. Cicero, being pro-consuls of Cilicia, had the administration of Cyprus also granted to them by the senate; hence afterwards the governors of Cyprus were called pro-consuls, or deputies. This same Greek word here used, is adopted by the Jewish Rabbins into their language; hence we read of אנטיפוטא, ανθυπατος, *the deputy*, or *pro-consul* of Cæsarea[i]; which is explained by a governor, and a judge[k], or a third from the king[l]; and it is retained in the Syriac version: this deputy is said to be *a prudent man.* The Arabic version seems to distinguish Paul the prudent man, from Sergius the deputy, or tribune, as it calls him; reading the words thus, *who was by Sergius the tribune, with Paul a prudent man*; but Sergius and Paulus undoubtedly design one and the same man, who was prudent: he is said to be *a prudent man*, in the management of his affairs, as a governor; and might be very learned, ingenious, and an understanding man; a man of great sagacity and penetration, who very likely saw through the vain pretensions, and impostures of Bar-jesus, and was desirous to expose him in a public manner; or at least might conclude he would be discovered and exposed by those good men, who were come into the city; and what follows seems to be mentioned as an instance of his prudence: *who called for Barnabas and Saul;* sent messengers to them, to desire them to come to him; Barnabas is mentioned first, though the inferior person, because he was a native of the country, and might be best known: *and desired to hear the word of God*; whether this was at first from mere curiosity, or from any political view, or from a true desire of knowing the way of life and salvation, which might be wrought in his soul by the spirit of God, is not certain; though the latter seems most likely, since it issued in his conversion.

Ver. 8. *But Elymas the sorcerer, for so is his name by interpretation,* &c.] Not that Magus a sorcerer is by interpretation Elymas; as if Luke was interpreting the Persic word *Magus*, which is sometimes used in a good sense, for a wise man, as in Matt. ii. 1. by an Arabic word *Elim*, which signifies *knowing;* but *Elymas* is the interpretation of his name *Bar-jesus;* which as that signifies the son of salvation, or of healing, so this, as De Dieu observes, may be derived from חלם, *Chalam*, which signifies *to heal*, or to be sound and in health. Junius thinks the name comes from the Arabic word אלאם, which signifies to *mutter*, as wizards and sorcerers, and such sort of men used to do; and though he rejects the opinion of Tremellius, taking it for an Hebrew name, and to be the same with אלימעץ, *Elimaatz*, which signifies *divine counsel*; yet this, or what is near to it, is embraced by a late learned man[m]; who observes, that Elymas is in Hebrew, אלמעץ, *Elmahatz;* the interpretation of which is, God's counsel, or the counsel of God; the name of a man, Maaz, is read in 1 Chron. ii. 27. and that it is the same with Elymoteros, as Olympas is the same with Olympiodorus; and he further observes, that Barjeus, as Jerom or Origen say it was anciently read, and not Bar-jesus, is the same with בר יעץ, Barjeutz, or Barjeus, the *son of counsel*, and so agrees with Elymas: now he *withstood them;* Saul and Barnabas, just as Jannes and Jambres, the magicians of Egypt, withstood Moses: he did all he could to prevent their coming into the governor's house, and them from preaching to him, and him from hearing of them; and especially from giving heed to, and embracing the doctrines preached by them; which he opposed and argued against, with all the cunning and sophistry he was master of: *seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith;* the doctrine of faith, from hearing and receiving it; and when he had received it, he endeavoured to set him against it, and cause him to deny and reject it with abhorrence; the Ethiopic version calls him *the king*, as in the former verse *the prince.*

Ver. 9. *Then Saul (who also* is called *Paul*), &c.] He was called by both these names; as he was a Jew by birth, his parents called him Saul, that was his Jewish name, and by which he went among the Jews; and as he was a citizen of a Roman city, Tarsus in Cilicia, he went among the Romans, or Gentiles, by the name of Paul, a Roman name; and it was usual with the Jews to be called after this manner, that is, to have one name among themselves, and another among the Gentiles: it is a rule with them[n], that "the Israelites out of the "land, their names are as the names of the Gentiles;" yea, their names differed in Judea and Galilee; a woman went by one name in Judea, and another in Galilee[o]; and it is observable, that Luke calls the apostle by his Jewish name Saul, whilst he was among the Jews, and only preached among them; but now he is got among the Gentiles, and was about to appear openly to be their apostle, he all along hereafter calls him by his Gentile name Paul: though some think his name was changed upon his conversion, as it was usual with Jewish penitents to do; when a man repented of his sin, he changed his name (says Maimonides)[p], "as if "he should say, I am another, and not the man that "did those (evil) works." So when Maachah, Asa's mother, or rather grandmother, was converted, or became right, she changed her name into Michaihu, the daughter of Uriel of Gibeah; that her former name might not be remembered, lest it should be a reproach unto her[q]: though others think, that the apostle was so called, from Sergius Paulus the deputy, whose conversion he was the instrument of; and whose family

[f] Pelav. Rationar. Temp. par. 1. l. 4. c. 18. p. 191.
[g] Velleius Paterculus, l. 2.
[h] Geograph. l. 14. p. 471.
[i] T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 9. 1. Midrash Kohelet, fol. 66. 3. & 82. 2.
[k] Aruch apud Mattanot Cehuna in Midrash ib.
[l] David de Pomis Lex. Heb. fol. 9. 2.
[m] Hilleri Onomasticum Sacrum, p. 803.
[n] T. Hieros. Gittin, fol. 43. 2.
[o] Ib. fol. 45. 3.
[p] Hilchot Teshuva, c. 2. sect. 4.
[q] Targum in 2 Chron. xv. 16.

might choose to call him so, because of the nearness in sound between the two names: others think he had his name Paul, or Paulus, from the smallness of his stature and voice, to which he seems to have some respect, in 2 Cor. x. 10. and there is one Samuel the little, which the Jewish doctors often speak of, and who by some is taken to be the same with the Apostle Paul. This name is by Jerom, or Origen[r], interpreted *wonderful*, as if it came from the Hebrew word פלא, *pala*: and others derive it from פעל, *paal*, which signifies to *work*; and a laborious worker the apostle was, and a workman also which needed not to be ashamed; but since 'tis certain that Saul was his Hebrew name, it is most likely that this was a Gentile one, and not of Hebrew derivation: the first account of these names, and the reason of them, seems to be the best: now of him it is said, that he was *filled with the Holy Ghost*; which does not design the gifts and graces of the Holy Ghost in general, with which he was always filled, and thereby qualified for his work as an apostle; but in particular, that he had by the spirit, not only a discerning of the wickedness of this man, but of the will of God, to make him at this time a public example of divine wrath and vengeance, for his opposition to the Gospel: wherefore he *set his eyes on him*; very earnestly, thereby expressing an abhorrence of him, and indignation against him, and as it were threatening him with some sore judgment to fall upon him.

Ver. 10. *And said, O full of all subtlety and all mischief*, &c.] Which may have regard both to his general character as a sorcerer, and a false prophet; in acting up to which he used much deceit and cunning among the people, and did much mischief to them; to which there was a promptness and readiness in him, as the word used signifies; and also to the sophistry he used, and the mischief he endeavoured to do in seeking to turn the deputy from the faith. The minds of carnal men are vain and empty, and destitute of all that is good, and full of all that is evil: their character is, *filled with all unrighteousness*, Rom. i. 29. They have many of them a great deal of wit, but it is wicked wit, and they employ it in an evil and mischievous way, both to the hurt of themselves and others; they are like the old serpent, whose seed they are, who was more subtle than any beast of the field; they are wiser in their generation than the children of light; they are wise to do evil, though they have no knowledge of what is spiritually good; they are able to form very cunning and artful schemes, to commit sin, and do mischief; for all their craft and subtlety are used in such a way; nor can they sleep, or be easy in their minds, unless they are doing mischief. *Thou child of the devil*; perhaps alluding to his name, that instead of Bar-Jesus, the son of a saviour, he should have been called Bar-Satan, the son of Satan, or Ben-Belial, a son of Belial. The phrase בכור שטן, *the first-born of Satan*, is used by the Jews, sometimes in a good sense, for one that is acute, sharp, and subtle, and that abides by his doctrine, and does his work[s]: but here a child of the devil is used in an ill sense, for being like him in wicked cunning and subtlety; in like sense as the other phrase was used by Polycarp, whom Marcion the heretic met, and said unto him, know us; to whom Polycarp replied, I know thee, the first-born of Satan[t]: *thou enemy of all righteousness*; a wicked man is an enemy to all righteousness in every branch of it, in whatsoever light it may be considered: he is an enemy, yea, enmity itself against God the righteous being, and who is the fountain of all righteousness; he is an enemy to Jesus Christ the righteous, who is the Lord our righteousness; he is an enemy to that righteousness which he has wrought out; he is an enemy to all righteous persons, and hates their holy and righteous conversation; he is an enemy to the law, and can't be subject to it, which is the rule of righteousness; and he is an enemy to the Gospel, which reveals the righteousness of God from faith to faith, and teaches men to live soberly, righteously, and godly; in short he is an enemy to all righteousness, moral and evangelical. *Wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?* the doctrines and ordinances of Christ, in which he has directed his people to walk; which this man, through his sophistry and wickedness, in which he was industrious and indefatigable, endeavoured to render intricate and obscure, when they were plain, and straight, and easy. *For the ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them*, Hos. xiv. 9. they are right, and 'tis becoming such to walk in them; they are plain to them that have a true knowledge of them, even wayfaring men, though fools shall not err in them; they are entirely consistent with the righteousness and holiness of God, and lead right on to eternal glory and happiness. Christ himself is the true way to eternal life, which is plainly pointed, and clearly directed to in the word of God, and by the ministers of the Gospel, who shew unto men the way of salvation; the path of truth is fully described, and such things said of it as are very inviting to walk in it; and good men cannot but choose and delight to walk in it, when led into it by the spirit of truth: Wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths paths of peace; even all the paths of duty and worship, the ways of righteousness and holiness; but wicked men seek to pervert these ways, to give a false account of them, to set them in a wrong light, and represent them not only as rough and troublesome, but as dangerous, and leading to ruin; and do all they can to hinder persons from entering into them, and to cause those to stumble who are in them; nor will they cease acting this wicked part; they are continually at work to make the ways of Christ odious, to set people against them, to discourage from walking in them by their opposition to them, the false glosses they put upon them, and by their scoffs and jeers at those that walk in them, and by their violent persecutions of them, when it is in heir power.

Ver. 11. *And now behold the hand of the Lord is upon thee*, &c.] That is, the power of God was just ready to be exerted on him in a way of punishment, by striking him with blindness: *and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season*: so blind as not to see the sun, when it shined ever so brightly: this punishment

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[r] De nominibus Hebraicis, fol. 106. H.

[s] T. Hieros. Yebamot, fol. 2. 1. & T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 16. 1. & Juchasin, fol. 14. 1. & 55. 1.

[t] Irenæus adv. Hæres. l. 3. c. 3.

seems to be but for a time; and some say that Elymas repented, and had his sight restored to him; and after that he returned to his sorcery, and again greatly opposed Barnabus in the island of Cyprus: *and immediately there fell on him a mist and darkness*: as soon as ever the apostle had said the above words, a dark mist fell upon his eyes, which began the blindness, and issued in a total one: *and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand*: he groped about the room, if he could find, and lay hold on some person to lead him: for he was quickly stone-blind, so that he could not guide himself, as the men of Sodom were, when smitten with blindness by the angel; wherefore, though they groped about for the door of the house till they were weary, they could not find it, Gen. xix. 11. of which the Jews say, as here, that it was מכה מאת השם. *a stroke from God*[u]. Blind men need one to hold them by the hand, and lead them, as Samson, Judg. xvi. 26. and Saul, Acts ix. 8. The striking this man with blindness is an instance of the power the apostles were endued with, for the punishing of offenders: so Ananias and Sapphira were struck dead for telling a lie: and the incestuous person was delivered to Satan to undergo a corporeal punishment for his incest; as Hymenæus and Alexander were for their blasphemy, Acts v. 5, 10. 1 Cor. v. 5. 1 Tim. i. 20.

Ver. 12. *Then the deputy, when he saw what was done*, &c.] That Elymas was struck with blindness immediately, and that the hand of God was manifestly in it, and there was no juggle nor magic art in the case; it was a plain fact, which was certain and visible: he *believed*: in the Lord Jesus Christ, whom the apostle preached: *being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord*: both at what was contained in it: for there are many astonishing things in the doctrine of faith; as the birth of Christ of a virgin; the union of the two natures, divine and human, in his person; salvation through his crucifixion and death, and the resurrection of the dead, with others: and also at the miracles which attended this doctrine, and confirmed it; though the Alexandrian copy reads the words thus, *being astonished, he believed in the doctrine of the Lord*; which affords a very easy and natural sense, as that being filled with admiration at the striking of Elymas with blindness, he was induced to believe the doctrine of Christ, preached by Paul and Barnabas, and so the Ethiopic version renders it, *he wondered, and believed in our Lord*: and Beza's ancient copy, and others read, *he wondered and believed in God*. This deputy we hear no more of afterwards; there is no reason to believe that he quitted his government of this island; though some pretend to say that he did, and followed the Apostle Paul, and went with him into Spain; and that he was left by him at Narbonne in Languedoc in France, and became bishop of that place; which office he held till his death. And though we read of no more converted at this time in Paphos, yet it is highly probable there were others, and that a foundation of a Gospel church-state was laid in this place, even though Heathenism still continued. The temple of Venus remained in this place in the *second* century; and in the *fourth* century Venus was worshipped here; yet in the beginning of the *fourth* century, in the council of Nice, Cyril, bishop of Paphos, was present; and in the *fifth* century, a bishop of this place was at the synod of Chalcedon: and in the *eighth* century, Michael, bishop of Paphos, was in the Nycene synod[w]. Jerom[x] makes mention of Hilarion, an eminent servant of Christ, who was for some time at Paphos, in the fourth century, and of the many miraculous cures he wrought here; but of the church here, or of any number of believers in Christ, he takes no notice, only of one Hesychius, a disciple; though it is certain there must be a church at this time, as before observed.

Ver. 13. *Now when Paul and his company loosed from Paphos*, &c.] Which was upon the sea-coast: so Jerom[y] says, that Paphos was *urbs maritima*, a city on the sea-coast of the island of Cyprus; it was on the western part of the island, to the west of which lay the sea of Pamphylia, over which the apostle, and his company, sailed to the place next mentioned, which was in Pamphylia; and so Apollonius Tyaneus[z], having got a ship at Seleucia, is said to sail to Paphos in Cyprus; and from hence the apostle, and those that were with him, set sail; and as the Syriac version renders it, *went by sea*, or *through the sea*; that is, of Pamphylia; of which mention is made in Acts xxvii. 5. *They came to Perga in Pamphylia*: which country was before called Mopsopia: see the note on ch. ii. 10, which now, with Cilicia, is called Caramania; and among the cities and towns in it, both Pliny[a] and Ptolomy[b] make mention of Perga; where was a famous temple of Diana, whence she was sometimes called Pergea[c]; and every year a great feast was kept here in honour of her: it was the birth-place of Apollonius, a very famous geometrician, who wrote eight books of conic sections, four of which are now extant[d]; and who, from his native place, is called Apollonius Pergæus[e]. It was situated between two great rivers, Oestros and Catarctes[f]; and since פרג, *Parag*, in the eastern languages, signifies *to delight*, perhaps it might be so called from its delightful situation. Hillerus[g] observes, Pargi (or rather Peruge, as is the word in the Syriac version of Matt. xxiii. 37. Luke ii. 24.) with the Syrians signifies the young of birds, as of hens and doves; and so do Pargiin, Pargiot, and Perigin, with the Jewish Rabbins[h]; which writer seems to suggest, that this place was so called from the multitude of fowls that were about it. *And John departing from them returned to Jerusalem*: that is, John Mark, whom Paul and Barnabas took with them, and who was a minister to them: but what was the reason of

[u] Tzeror Hammor, fol. 29. 3.
[w] Magdeburg. Hist. Eccles. cent. 2. c. 15. p. 196. cent. 4. c. 2. p. 5. c. 15. p. 805. cent. 5. c. 2. p. 6. cent. 8. c. 2. p. 6.
[x] Vita Hilarion. fol. 86. C.
[y] De locis Hebraicis, fol. 96. F.
[z] Philostrat. Vit. Apollon. l. 3. c. 16.
[a] Nat. Hist. l. 5. c. 27.
[b] [G]eograph. l. 5. c. 5.
[c] Pompon. Mela, l. 1. c. 14.
[d] Vid. Fabricii Bibliothec. Græc. l. 3. c. 22. sect. 17, 18, 19.
[e] Vitruvius de Architectura, l. 1. c. 1.
[f] Mela, ut supra.
[g] Onomasticum Sacrum, p. 906.
[h] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 39. 1. & Bava Metzia, fol. 24. 2. Bereshit Rabba, sect. 17. fol. 14. 2. Midrash Echa Rabbati, fol. 43. 1.

his departure, whether for the sake of seeing his mother at Jerusalem; or because he did not like, but grew weary of the travels, labours, and fatigues of the apostle, and his company; or did not choose to go among the Gentiles, is not certain: however, his departure was resented by Paul; and it laid a foundation for a sharp contention between him and Barnabas, who was uncle to this John Mark, Acts xv. 38, 39. from whence it appears that it was not at Paphos in Cyprus, but at Perga in Pamphilia, that he left them, by which the mistake of some interpreters on this text must be corrected.

Ver. 14. *But when they departed from Perga,* &c.] Where they seemed not to make any long stay; nor is there any account of what they did there; though it is certain here was a church of Christ in after-times, and very likely planted by the apostles; for after this Paul and Barnabas preached the word in this place, ch. xiv. 25. and no doubt with success. In the *third* century there were martyrs of this church at Perga, which suffered under the Emperor Decius; and in the *fourth* century, we read of a famous church in this place, over which Jovinian was bishop or pastor; and in the *fifth* century there was a church here, whose bishop is mentioned in the catalogue of bishops who assisted in the first council at Ephesus; and, in the same century, the church of this place was the metropolitan church of Pamphilia; and, in the *sixth* century, one Epiphanius was bishop of Perga; and, in the *seventh* century, it is spoken of as the metropolitan of Pamphilia; and, in the *eighth* century, we read of Sisinnius as bishop of it [i]; so far down can we trace Christianity in this city. *They came to Antioch in Pisidia;* so called to distinguish it from Antioch of Syria, from whence they were sent, ver. 1, 2, 3. and so this place is called Antioch of Pisidia by Ptolomy [k]; and also from another Antioch in Mygdania, before called Nisibis, as Pliny [l] observes, and which is the Antioch in 1 Maccab. vi. 63. 2 Maccab. xiii. 23. concerning which Josephus [m] has these words; Nisibis is the name of the country, and in it formerly the Macedonians built Antioch, which they called Mygdonia. Pisidia was a province of Asia; it had Pamphilia on the north, Lycaonia on the east, and Phrygia Pacatiana on the west; and it is mentioned together with Phrygia, Lycaonia, and Pamphilia by Pliny [n]: and this Antioch in it, is, by the same writer, called Cæsarea [o]: his words are, the Pisidians have their seat upon the top (of the valley) formerly called Solymi, whose colony is Cæsarea, the same with Antioch. This is the Antioch to which Paul and Barnabas came, when they went from Perga, where were many Jews, and who had a synagogue in it: we read before, in ch. ii. 9, 10. of devout Jews that came to Jerusalem, whose native places were Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphilia, to which Pisidia was near: wherefore it follows, *and went into the synagogue on the sabbath-day;* for though the ceremonial law was abrogated by the death of Christ, it still was observed by the Jews, who had their synagogues open on that day for religious service; wherefore Paul and Barnabas took the opportunity of going in when they were assembled together, in order to preach Christ to them, not having a convenient time on other days: and *sat down:* on one of the seats in the synagogue; either as hearers of the law and prophets, which were read every sabbath-day in the synagogues; or else to teach the word, expound the Scriptures, and preach the Gospel of Christ, it being usual to sit when this was done; see the note on Matt. v. 1. and both were true, for they heard a part of the law and prophets read, according to the custom of the Jews; see the following verse, and ch. xv. 21. and they also gave a word of exhortation to the people.

Ver. 15. *And after the reading of the law and the prophets,* &c.] Which was done every sabbath-day, ch. xv. 21. The five books of Moses, which are meant by the law, were divided into sections: Genesis was divided into twelve, Exodus into eleven, Leviticus into ten, Numbers into ten, and Deuteronomy into ten, which in all make fifty-three sections: and so by reading one on each sabbath, and two on one day, they read through the whole law in the course of a year, and which they finished at the close of the feast of tabernacles; and that day was called שמחת תורה, *the rejoicing of the law;* it was a day of rejoicing, that the law was read through. Some make fifty-four sections, and then two of them must be read together, on two sabbath-days, to finish the whole in the year. In some synagogues the section was divided into three parts, and so they finished the law in three years; but this custom was less common [p]. The custom of reading the law, the Jews say, was one hundred and seventy years before the time of Jesus Christ; though some say the division of the law, into sections, was made by Ezra; and others refer it to Moses himself: it is certain it obtained in the times of Christ and his apostles, as did also the reading of the prophets, and which was introduced in this way, and upon this account. When Antiochus Epiphanes burnt the book of the law, and forbad the reading of it, the Jews in the room of it selected some passages out of the prophets, which they thought came nearest in words and sense to the sections of the law, and read them in their stead; and when the law was restored again, they still continued the reading of the prophetic sections; and the section for the day was called הפטרה, *the dismission,* because usually the people were dismissed upon it, unless any one stood up, and preached or expounded the word of God unto the people: hence the following message and address to the apostles, *the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them;* that is, those who were the principal men in the synagogue, the ruler of it, together with the elders; for there was but one ruler in a synagogue; see the note on Matt. ix. 18. though there were more elders; and so the Syriac version here renders it, *the elders of the synagogue;* but it may be asked, why should they send to the apostles? how did they know that they were teachers,

[i] Magdeburg. Hist. Eccles. cent. 3. c. 2. p. 2. cent. 4. c. 2. p. 3. cent. 5. c. 2. p. 3, 418. cent. 6. c. 2. p. 3. cent. 7. p. 3, 112. cent. 8. c. 2. p. 4.
[k] L. 5. c. 4.
[l] Nat. Hist. l. 6. c. 13.
[m] Antiqu. l. 20. c. 3. sect. 3.
[n] Antiqu. l. 5. c. 32. & l. 6. c. 34. & Solin Polyhistor. c. 53. & 57.
[o] Plin. ib. l. 5. c. 27.
[p] Maimon. Hilchot Tephilla, c. 13. sect. 1. Benjamin Itinerar. p. 114, 115.

being strangers? this they might conclude from their outward appearance, their gravity and solidity; for as for habit or dress there was no distinction; or from their sitting down when they came into the synagogue, which was the custom of teachers; or they might have had some knowledge of them, and conversation with them, before they came into the synagogue; for it cannot be reasonably thought that they admitted any one, whether they knew him or not, to teach in their synagogues: *saying, ye men and brethren:* which was the common style of the Jews, they used in addresses, and especially to their own countrymen, as they might perceive Paul and Barnabas were; see Acts ii. 29. and vii. 2. *if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on;* the sense is, if they were prepared to preach, or had any thing upon their minds to say to the people; or if they had, as it is in the original text, *any word of exhortation* or *comfort in* them, as they had indeed a rich treasure in their earthen vessels, they had leave and liberty to speak it to the people. A *word of exhortation* designs any doctrine that might be for instruction and comfort, and this was agreeably to the practice of the Jews. For it is said [q], "on the "sabbath-day, דורשין דרשה, *they preach a sermon,* "or expound to housekeepers (or masters of families), "who are employed in business all the days of the "week; and in the midst of the sermon they teach "them the traditions, concerning what is forbidden, "and what is lawful; and it is better for them to hear "than to read in the Hagiographa;" which books they did not read publicly, as is said in the same place, only the law and the prophets; with the latter of which they dismissed the people, unless a sermon was preached; and which, when done, was chiefly for the sake of the common people, men and women: and it is said [r], that "the women, and the people of the "earth (or the common people), come to hear the "sermon, and the preachers ought to draw out their "hearts;" speak out their whole mind, and deliver all they know that may be instructive and profitable.

Ver. 16. *Then Paul stood up,* &c.] Not so much that he might be heard; or merely out of reverence and respect to the rulers, and the people; but to shew that he accepted the invitation; as also in order to take his proper place in the synagogue, and sit down and teach, as was their custom: *and beckoning with his hand:* to the people to be silent, and attend to what he had to say: *said, men of Israel;* by whom are meant the proper Jews, the natural descendants of Jacob, whose name was Israel; this was accounted a very honourable character, and was a common form of address; see ch. ii. 22. *and ye that fear God;* not as distinguishing some among the Israelites from the rest, as if there were some of them that did not fear God; for by these are meant, not Jews by birth, but proselytes, devout and religious men from among the Gentiles; who were proselyted to the Jewish religion, and attended with them in their synagogues on religious worship; and that there were such in this synagogue, is certain from ver. 43. and we find that sometimes the Jews distinguish the proselytes from the Israelites by this very character [s]: "it is said, Psal. cxxviii. 1. *blessed is every* "*one that feareth the Lord, that walketh in his ways;* "he does not say blessed are the Israelites, blessed "are the priests, blessed are the Levites, but blessed "is every one that feareth the Lord; אלו הגרים, "*these are the proselytes,* for *they fear the Lord*—of "what proselyte is it said *blessed?* of the proselyte "who is a proselyte of righteousness, and not of the "Cuthites, of whom it is written, 2 Kings xvii. 33. "but of a proselyte who fears the Lord, and walks in "his ways;" so Psal. xxii. 23. and cxv. 11. are interpreted by many Jewish writers [t]. Now to both these sort of persons, both to the proper Jews, and to the proselytes of righteousness, the apostle addresses himself, and desires they would *give audience* to what he had to say; which is as follows.

Ver. 17. *The God of this people of Israel chose our fathers,* &c.] Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and their seed after them, to be a peculiar people to himself; wherefore he is often, as here, styled their God, and whom he distinguished and blessed with many blessings, civil and religious, above all people upon the face of the earth. The apostle seems particularly to address himself to the Gentiles, the inhabitants of Antioch, and the proselytes of righteousness, now in the synagogue, ver. 42, 43. and, as it were, with his finger pointed to the native Jews present, the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, a part of the people whose God the Lord was: *and exalted the people when they dwelt as strangers in the land of Egypt;* as they did for many years, and as the Lord foretold to Abraham they should, Gen. xv. 13. This refers either to the great honour and dignity Joseph was advanced unto, and to the favours and privileges bestowed on Jacob and his family at the first of their sojourning in that land; or to the great increase of their posterity towards the close of it, even when they were the most oppressed and afflicted. *And with an high arm he brought them out of it* out of the land of Egypt, and out of their oppression in it; which was owing to, and was a wonderful display of his mighty power, and great strength, here expressed by an *high arm*, for nothing short of that could have wrought deliverance for them.

Ver. 18. *And about the time of forty years,* &c.] From their coming out of Egypt, to their entrance into the land of Canaan: *suffered he their manners in the wilderness;* which were very perverse and provoking; as their murmuring for water, their rebellion against Moses and Aaron, their idolatry and the ill report brought on the good land by their spies; and yet the Lord fed them, and led them, and kept them as the apple of his eye: some think the true reading is ἐτροφοφόρησεν, *he bore,* or *fed them,* as a nurse bears and feeds her children; and so the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions render it, *he nourished them;* rained manna, and gave them quails from heaven, and furnished a table for them in the wilderness: and indeed, though there were instances of God's patience and forbearance with them, yet certain it is, that as he was tempted and proved by them, so he was grieved with them during the forty years in the wilderness; and

[q] Gloss. in T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 115. 1.
[r] Ib. fol. 30. 2.
[s] Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 8. fol. 190. 4.
[t] Midrash Tillim, Jarchi, & Aben Ezra, in loc.

often let fall his vengeance upon them, by cutting off great numbers of them; and even the carcasses of all that generation that came out of Egypt fell in the wilderness; nor did any of them enter into the land of Canaan, but Joshua and Caleb.

Ver. 19. *And when he had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan*, &c.] The Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, Jebusites, and Girgashites; and the name of seven nations is what they are usually called by in Jewish writings; and though they were not utterly destroyed, or every one of them put to death, or driven out, for some remained to be thorns in the sides of the Israelites; yet they were so wasted and conquered, that they could never recover any more: *he divided their land to them*; every tribe had its portion of it assigned, *by lot*; see Josh. xiv. 1, 2, 3.

Ver. 20. *And after that he gave* unto them *judges*, &c.] As Othniel, Ehud, Deborah, Gideon, Abimelech, Tolah, Jair, Jepthah, Ibzan, Elon, Abdon, Sampson, and Eli: *about the space of four hundred and fifty years*: not that from the division of the land of Canaan among the tribes, to Samuel the prophet, was such a space of years; for from the coming of the children of Israel out of Egypt, to the year that Solomon began to build the temple, were but four hundred and fourscore years, 1 Kings vi. 1. and out of these must be taken the forty years the children of Israel were in the wilderness, and seven years in subduing the land of Canaan, before the division of it, which reduce this number to four hundred and thirty and three; and from hence must be deducted the time of Samuel's judging Israel, the reigns of Saul and David, and three years of Solomon's, which reduced the years of the judges to less than four hundred years; and according to some, the years of the judges were three hundred and fifty-seven; and according to others, three hundred and thirty-nine, and both fall short of the space of years here assigned. The Alexandrian copy and the Vulgate Latin version read this clause in connexion with the preceding words, *he divided their land unto them, about the space of four hundred years, and after that he gave* unto them *judges*; agreeably hereunto the Ethiopic version renders it, *and after four hundred and fifty years, he set over them governors*, &c. So that this account respects not the time of the judges, or how long they were, but refers to all that goes before, and measures out the space of time from God's choice of the Jewish fathers, to the division of the land of Canaan: and reckoning from the birth of Isaac, when the choice took place, and in whom Abraham's seed was called, there was much about such a number of years; for from the birth of Isaac to the birth of Jacob, were sixty years; from thence to his going down into Egypt, an hundred and thirty years; and from thence to the Israelites coming out of Egypt, two hundred and ten years; and from thence to their entrance into the land of Canaan, forty years; and from that time to the division of the land, seven years, which in all make four hundred and forty-seven years: so that, according to this account, there were only three years wanting of the sum in the text; hence the apostle might with great propriety say, that it was *about* the space of so many years. It follows, *until Samuel the prophet*: the meaning of which, is not that there was such a space of time as before mentioned, from the distribution of the land of Canaan until the times of Samuel the prophet, during which space judges were given; but that after that term of time was expired, God gave them judges, or raised up one after another, until Samuel the prophet, who was the last of them: of his character as a prophet, see the note on ch. iii. 24. and which is a title frequently given him by Jewish writers [u].

Ver. 21. *And afterward they desired a king*, &c.] 1 Sam. viii. 5. which the Jews [w] say, was in the tenth year of Samuel; that is, of his government over Israel, or of his judging them: *and God gave unto them Saul*; whose name signifies one that is asked; he was *the son of Cis*; so the Septuagint read and pronounce the word *Kish*, the name of Saul's father, 1 Sam. ix. 1. *a man of the tribe of Benjamin*; not of Judah, from whence the sceptre was not to depart till Shiloh came; the business of their asking a king being resented by God, he gives them their first king of another tribe: *by the space of forty years*. The Jews are very much divided about the years of Saul's reign, some allow him but two years [x], and others three, one year that he reigned with Samuel, and two by himself [y], which they conclude from 1 Sam. xiii. 1. but others [z] think this too short a time for the things done by him, the wars he fought with many nations, and his persecution of David from place to place; wherefore others [a] allow him, some seventeen, and others twenty years; but our apostle ascribes forty years to him, which must be understood both of him and Samuel; with which Josephus [b] agrees, who says that he reigned eighteen years, during Samuel's life, and twenty-two years after his death, which make the space of forty years fixed by the apostle; though the clause, *by the space of forty years*, may be read in construction with the latter end of the preceding verse, *until Samuel the prophet*: who, the Jews [c] own, judged so many years: wherefore the apostle is not to be charged with an error, as he is by a Jewish [d] objector; who observes, that from the beginning of Saul's kingdom, or from the time that he was anointed by Samuel the prophet, until the kingdom was renewed to him by all Israel, was one year, and then Saul chose three thousand men out of Israel; after that he reigned two years by the consent of all Israel, until he sinned in the business of the Amalekites, and then he was accounted as a dead man, and the years of his reign were not numbered; at which time David was anointed, who must be about twenty years of age, 1 Sam. xvi. 18. and yet when he came to the kingdom after the death of Saul, he was but thirty

[u] Maimon. Cele Hamikdash, c. 4. sect. 3.
[w] T. Bab. Nazir, fol. 5. 1. & Temura, fol. 14. 2.
[x] Seder Olam Rabba, c. 13. p. 37. Juchasin, fol. 11. 1. Kabbala, R. Abraham, &c.
[y] T. Bab. Temura, fol. 15. 1.
[z] R. Levi ben Gersom & R. Isaiah in 1 Sam. xiii. 1.

[a] Shalsheleth Hakabala, fol. 8. 1.
[b] Antiqu. l. 6. c. 14. sect. 9.
[c] Midrash Tillim apud Broughton's Works, p. 599. Vid. Vicecarsium in Psal. xcix. 6.
[d] R. Isaac Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 67. p. 453, 454.

years of age, 2 Sam. v. 4. from whence he thinks it follows that Saul reigned but ten years: in all which he is guilty of several mistakes, and advances things he cannot prove; it was not after Saul had reigned one year, but after he had reigned two years, that he chose three thousand men out of Israel, as is expressly said, 1 Sam. xiii. 1, 2. and that he had reigned but two years when he sinned in the case of the Amalekites, wants proof; nor is it evident that David was twenty years of age when he was anointed, for it was after his unction that he is said to be a mighty valiant man, and a man of war, 1 Sam. xvi. 18. nor indeed can it be said in what year of Saul's reign he was anointed; so that nothing can be concluded from the age David was at when he began to reign, concerning the years of the reign of Saul his predecessor; and even according to this man's own reckoning, he must reign thirteen years, one before the consent of all Israel, two after, and before his sin about the Amalekites, and ten from the time of David's unction: but that Saul must reign more years than these, and even as many as the apostle assigns to him, may be concluded, not only from his wars with many nations, and his long persecution of David before observed; but from the number of high-priests which were in his time, and who were no less than three, Ahiah, Abimelech, and Abiathar, 1 Sam. xiv. 3. and xxii. 20. and xxiii. 9. and from his being a young man when he began to reign, 1 Sam. ix. 2. and yet at the end of his reign, or at his death, he had a son, Ishbosheth, that was forty years of age, 2 Sam. ii. 10.

Ver. 22. *And when he had removed him,* &c.] Either by death, or rejected him from being king while he was living; see 1 Sam. xv. 23. and xvi. 1. *he raised up unto them David to be their king;* who was of the tribe of Judah, and who was raised from a very mean condition, from keeping of sheep, to sit upon the throne of Israel: *to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David;* a type of the Messiah; he chose him to be king, sent Samuel to anoint him, and at length set him on the throne: the apostle adds, as a further account of him, *the* son *of Jesse;* who lived at Bethlehem, where the Messiah was to be born, and who was a person of no great note and figure in Israel; and this is mentioned as an illustration of the distinguishing goodness of God to David. It follows, *a man after mine own heart:* on whom the heart of God was set, and who had an interest in his heart's love, and to whom he was exceeding grateful and acceptable; God took great delight and pleasure in him, in the general course of his life, and in his principles, aims, and designs; he was as he would have him to be: *which shall fulfil all my will;* in governing the people, subduing their enemies, settling the order of divine worship and service, and preparing things for the building of the temple; and who also had a regard to all the commandments of God, and walked in them, though he was not without his sins and infirmities: now these words are not to be found together in any one passage, as they might be thought to be from the manner in which they are produced, they being cited as a testimony delivered by the Lord, saying these concerning David; but where? the first part of them, *I have found David,* is expressed in Psal. lxxxix. 20. and yet the passage there seems to have respect to David's antitype; and to be understood not literally of David, but mystically and typically of Christ, David's son, with whom the whole psalm agrees; rather therefore this is implied in 1 Sam. xiii. 14. where also the next words, *a man after mine own heart,* are to be met with; where it is thus expressed, though not by the Lord, but by Samuel; *the Lord hath sought him a man after his own heart;* and as he sought one, so he found one, which was his servant David; but then what follows, is not recorded there nor any where else, in express terms, concerning David, *which shall fulfil all my will;* what comes nearest to them, are the words of the Lord to Cyrus, Isa. xliv. 28. *and shall perform all my pleasure;* and Cocceius is of opinion, that the above words are taken from hence by the apostle, and applied to David, because of his concern in the building of the temple; his heart was set upon it, and he made great preparations for it according to the will of God, and did fulfil all it was the pleasure of God he should, respecting this affair; upon the whole, the apostle seems not to have any reference to any one particular passage of Scripture, bearing a testimony to David's character, but to what is to be collected from them in general, as a divine testimony in favour of him.

Ver. 23. *Of this man's seed hath God, according to his promise,* &c.] In 2 Sam. vii. 12. Psal. cxxxii. 11, 17. Jer. xxiii. 5, 6. *raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus;* even Jesus of Nazareth, whose name signifies a Saviour, who is the son of David, according to the flesh; the word *Jesus* is left out in some copies, and so it is in the Syriac and Ethiopic versions, which only read, *salvation* or *redemption;* the Alexandrian copy, and the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions, read, *he hath brought forth unto Israel,* &c. the sense is, that as God had promised that the Messiah should spring out of David's loins, so in the fulness of time he had sent him, or caused him to come by the assumption of human nature, or by taking flesh of a virgin, who was of the house and lineage of David; and who was sent, and came first to the people of Israel, though they for the most part slighted and rejected him; however, he was raised up for the mystical Israel of God, all the elect, whether Jews or Gentiles; and that to be the Saviour of them, from sin, Satan, and the law, and every enemy, with a spiritual and eternal salvation, and that both of body and soul; and a very able, willing, and suitable Saviour he is, as well as a perfect and complete one. This Saviour, Jehovah, in his infinite wisdom, found, and in his purposes appointed him to be his salvation, and in his covenant provided and settled him as such; and in the prophecies of the Old Testament spoke of him as the Saviour and Redeemer of his people; and in the fulness of time sent him, and raised him up of David's seed, according to his promise to him. The first promise of a Saviour was made to our first parents, under the character of the seed of the woman; he was next promised to Abraham, that he should be of his seed; and then to Judah, that he should be of his tribe; and after that to David, that he should be of his family; and all this has been fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth, the true Messiah, who is sometimes called David and David's son. Now it was for the sake of this, that the apostle begins

with the choice of the Jewish fathers, and relates so many favours bestowed upon the people of Israel; his view was to lead on to observe this special mercy promised them, and now fulfilled, on which he intended to enlarge in his discourse, as follows.

Ver. 24. *When John had first preached before his coming*, &c.] Or *before the face of his entrance:* that is, on his public ministry; for John did not preach before the coming of Christ in the flesh, being born but half a year before him; but before he came forth and was manifest to Israel; before he entered upon his work and office, as a prophet and teacher of the people: and this points out the business of John the Baptist, who was the forerunner of Christ, and went before his face to prepare his way, who gave notice of his coming, and bore testimony to him; and whose testimony the apostle here produces, as being what the Jews could not well reject and deny, he being of so much probity and integrity, and so great a prophet, as he was accounted by all the people; and whom he prepared for the reception of the Messiah, by first preaching; *the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel:* he not only administered the ordinance of baptism, but he preached the doctrine of it, opened the nature and design of it, and required repentance and fruits meet for it, in those who came to have it administered to them: for which reason it is called the baptism of repentance; and this he did publicly before all the people, when the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, came unto him; see Mark i. 4. Matt. iii. 2, 3, 5, 7, 8.

Ver. 25. *And as John fulfilled his course*, &c.] Or race, the work of the ministry he was called to; as he was preaching and baptizing, which were the race set before him to run, and in which he ran well; he made full proof of his ministry. The life of every Christian is a race, and especially of a minister of the Gospel, and which requires strength, courage, agility, patience, and perseverance; this world is the place in which they run; and this is only the running time; in heaven they will sit down on the throne with Christ; the way in which they run, is the way of their duty, the way of God's commandments; the mark they have in view, which they keep their eye on, and to which they direct their course, is Christ; and glory is the incorruptible crown they run for, and which, when they have finished their course, will be given them by the chief shepherd and righteous judge; see 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8. and this is to be understood, not of the end of John's race, or ministry, but rather of the beginning of it; for it was then, *he said, whom think ye that I am? I am not* he; that is the Messiah. The apostle seems to refer to John i. 19, 20. when the Jews asked him who he was, and he freely declared he was not the Christ; there the question is put by them to him, here by him to them; doubtless the questions were put by both; however the sense is the same, that he was not the Messiah, but he bore testimony to him that was: *but behold there cometh one after me;* meaning Jesus, who was the Messiah, and who when John spoke these words, was coming after him from Galilee to Jordan to be baptized by him, and who in a little while after that came forth in the public ministry of the word: John was to come forth first, and then Jesus after him, because he was the harbinger of the Messiah, whose coming he was to proclaim and prepare men for, and whose person he was to point out; for though he is said to be after him, he was not in any sense inferior to him: John was born into the world before Christ, as man, was born, yet he as the eternal son of God was before John, was from the beginning, even from eternity; John entered on the office of his ministry before him, but Christ was not below him; as not in the dignity of his person, so neither in the nature and excellency of his office; and John takes care to secure the honour and glory of Christ, and to prevent any low opinion that might be entertained of him from what he had said, by adding, *whose shoes of his feet I am not worthy to loose;* suggesting hereby, that he was unworthy to be his servant, to perform the meanest part of service for him that could be thought of; so far was he from assuming any preference to him on account of his being before him, as his forerunner; see Matt. iii. 11. John i. 27. and the notes there.

Ver. 26. *Men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham*, &c.] This address is made to them in the synagogue, who were Jews by birth, and in a form very grateful and pleasing; he calls them *men*, perhaps not only from the common nature of mankind in them, but because they took this name peculiarly to themselves, and denied it to the nations of the world; and which they gather from Ezek. xxxiv. 31. and he styles them *brethren*, because they were his countrymen; *and children of the stock of Abraham*, with respect to their lineage and descent, and of which they gloried: *and whosoever among you feareth God:* these were the proselytes among them; see the note on ver. 16. *to you is the word of this salvation sent;* meaning either the Lord Jesus Christ himself, the essential and eternal *Logos*, or word of God, and whom the Syriac and Ethiopic versions here style, *the word of life*, as in 1 John i. 1. who is the author of salvation, and who was in the first place sent unto the Jews; or rather the Gospel, which gives an account of the author of spiritual and eternal salvation, of his person, and of his manner of obtaining it, and of the nature of salvation, and who the persons are to whom it belongs. The Gospel is not a proposal of terms, by complying with which men may be saved, as faith, repentance, and good works, which are not terms of salvation, but either blessings, parts or fruits of it; but it is a declaration of salvation itself, as being a thing done by Christ; it declares him to be the alone able, willing, and all-sufficient Saviour, and the salvation he has wrought out to be a great one, complete, spiritual, and everlasting; and that those that believe in him shall be saved with it. It is the word preaching salvation by him, shewing, that he has wrought out an everlasting righteousness for the justification of his people; hence it is sometimes called the word of righteousness; and that he has made peace and reconciliation by the blood of his cross, for which reason it is styled the word of reconciliation; and that eternal life is in him, and by him, and therefore it is called the word of life: for the salvation it publishes includes all the blessings of grace, and everlasting glory, and happiness; it is the means of applying the

salvation it declares; the spirit of God comes by it, who, whilst it is preaching, falls upon, and conveys himself into the hearts of men: regeneration is ascribed to the word of truth; faith comes by hearing; and sanctification is promoted and increased by it, as an instrument; and after men believe in it, they are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise: all which shews what a wonderful blessing the Gospel is: and this was now sent not to the Jews only, though to them in the first place, but to the Gentiles also; the Alexandrian copy, in the two last clauses, instead of *you*, reads *us*.

Ver. 27. *For they that dwelt at Jerusalem, and their rulers*, &c.] The inhabitants of that city, and the great sanhedrim which sat there: *because they knew him not;* that is, either Jesus the Saviour, whom God had raised of the seed of David, and to whom John bore witness: and which must be understood, not of all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and members of the sanhedrim; for though some were ignorant, yet there were others that knew that Jesus was the Messiah, and notwithstanding rejected him; but the apostle chooses to take no notice of these, because he would not irritate and provoke, but rather of others, that were really ignorant of Christ: or else this may be understood of the Gospel, the word of salvation, that the Jews knew not *that;* and so the Syriac version renders it; and to which agrees the Ethiopic version, which reads thus, *they knew not this word of the prophets*, joining the word of salvation, and what follows, together: *nor yet the voices of the prophets:* or *the writings of the prophets*, as the Syriac version, and some copies read; their prophecies concerning the Messiah, particularly in Psal. xxii. Isa. liii. Dan. ix. *which are read every sabbath-day;* see the note on ver. 15. *they have fulfilled* them; the words of the prophets: *in condemning* him; Jesus Christ, for these prophets testified, in the places referred to, of the sufferings and death of Christ, to which he was adjudged by them.

Ver. 28. *And though they found no cause of death* in him, &c.] That is, no crime that deserved death; they sought for such, but could find none; they suborned false witnesses, who brought charges against him, but could not support them; wherefore Pilate, his judge, several times declared his innocence, and would have discharged him: *yet desired they Pilate that he should be slain;* they were urgent and importunate with him, that he would order him to be put to death; the power of life and death being then in the hands of the Romans; the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions read, *that they might slay him;* and the Arabic version, *that he might slay him;* and the Ethiopic version renders the whole quite contrary to the sense, *and they gave power to Pilate to hang him;* whereas the power of putting him to death was in Pilate, and not in them: and therefore they were pressing upon him, that he would order his execution, notwithstanding his innocence.

Ver. 29. *And when they had fulfilled all that was written of him*, &c.] When they had vilified and reproached him in the most opprobrious manner; buffeted and scourged him, and pierced his hands and his feet, by nailing him to the cross; when they had crucified him between two thieves, and parted his raiment and cast lots on his vesture; when they had pierced his side, and it was sufficiently evident that his life was taken from the earth; all which were written of him in the Psalms and Prophets: *they took him down from the tree;* the cross, on which he was crucified: it may be rendered impersonally, *he was taken down from the tree;* for not the same persons that desired he might be slain, and fulfilled all that was written of him, took him down, but others; though they were some of the rulers, as Joseph of Arimathea, and Nicodemus, yet such as did not consent to his death: *and laid him in a sepulchre;* in a new one, in which never man lay; a sepulchre which Joseph had hewed out of a rock for himself, and which was both sealed and guarded.

Ver. 30. *But God raised him from the dead.*] Though his life was taken away by man, and it was a clear case that he was certainly dead, and he was taken down from the cross as such, and buried; yet he could not be held with the cords of death, but God the father raised him from the dead by his power. The Vulgate Latin version adds, *the third day.*

Ver. 31. *And he was seen many days*, &c.] Forty days, at certain times, *of them which came up with him from Galilee;* which though true of several women who followed him from Galilee, and to whom he appeared after his resurrection, as Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joses, and Salome the mother of Zebedee's children, and others; yet is chiefly to be understood of the apostles of Christ, who were Galileans, and came with Christ from that country to Jerusalem, when he came thither to suffer and die: *who are his witnesses unto the people;* not only of his resurrection, though of that chiefly, but of all that he did and suffered in Galilee and Judea.

Ver. 32. *And we declare unto you glad tidings*, &c.] The whole of the Gospel, concerning the incarnation, obedience, sufferings, death, and resurrection of Christ, and the benefits arising from thence, as peace, pardon, righteousness, life, and salvation; all which are good news and glad tidings to sensible sinners; and which are declared and published by the ministers of the Gospel, according to the commission given them, as here by Paul and Barnabas: *how that the promise which was made unto the fathers;* not barely and solely that which respects the resurrection of Christ, but the mission of him, the exhibition of him in human nature, his incarnation, his work and business he was to do, namely, to obtain salvation for his people; it chiefly regards the promise of his coming into the world to do the will of God, which promise was made to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Judah, Gen. xxii. 18. and xxvi. 4. and xxviii. 14. and xlix. 10.

Ver. 33. *God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children*, &c.] The natural descendants of them, as Paul and Barnabas, and the Jews in the synagogue, were: *in that he hath raised up Jesus again:* which may not be understood of his resurrection from the dead, since the promise made, and now fulfilled, has not a single respect to that; but of his being raised up, and sent forth into the world, to be a Saviour and Redeemer, and to sit upon the throne of David, as in ch. ii. 30. and iii. 26. and xiii. 23. of which raising of him up to regal dignity, mention is made in Psal. ii. 6, 7. which is produced as a testimony of it; and the rather this seems to be the sense, since the article of the re-

surrection of the dead is spoken of in the next verse, as distinct from this; and other passages of Scripture are produced, as speaking of it; though admitting that Christ's resurrection from the dead is here intended, as the Alexandrian copy reads, what follows is very applicable to it, without any detriment to the doctrine of Christ's eternal generation and sonship, as will be hereafter made to appear: *as it is written in the second psalm*: Beza's most ancient copy, and other very ancient copies, read, *in the first psalm*: for the first and second psalms seem to have been reckoned by the ancient Jews but one psalm, or one section; for so they say [d], "*blessed is the man*, &c. and *why do the* "*Heathen rage*, &c. חדא פרשה היא, are one *parasha*, "or section:" and they further observe [e], that "every "section that was dear to David, he began it with "*blessed*, and ended it with *blessed*; he began with "*blessed*, as it is written, (Psal. i. 1.) *blessed is the* "*man*, &c. and he ended it with *blessed*, as it is writ-"ten, (Psal. ii. 12.) *blessed are all they that put their* "*trust in him*:" though it is elsewhere said [f], "*blessed* "*is the man*, &c. (Psal. i.) *and why do the Heathen* "*rage*, &c. (Psal. ii.) are two sections; and *to the chief* "*musician on Muth Labben*, (Psal. ix.) *and why standest* "*thou afar off*, &c. (Psal x.) are two sections." And Kimchi calls [g] this psalm, as the generality of copies here do, saying, "this psalm is המזמור השני, *the second* "*psalm*." And that this psalm belongs to the Messiah, is evident from the mention made of him in ver. 2, from the mad counsel, and vain attempts of the kings of the earth against him, ver. 1, 2, 3. from God's decree and resolution to make and declare him King of Zion, notwithstanding all their efforts upon him, ver. 4, 5, 6. from his asking and having the Gentiles, and uttermost parts of the earth for his inheritance, which is true of no other, ver. 8, 9. and especially from that reverence, worship, and adoration, which are to be given to him, and that trust and confidence to be placed in him, ver. 10, 11, 12. which can by no means agree with David, nor with any mere creature whatever; and as for ver. 7, which is here cited, what is said in that is inapplicable even to angels, Heb. i. 5. and much more to David, or any mere man. The whole psalm was, by the ancient Jews, interpreted of the Messiah, as is confessed by some of their later doctors. R. David Kimchi says [h], "there are that in-"terpret it of Gog and Magog, and the Messiah, he "is the King Messiah; and so the Rabbins of blessed "memory interpret it." And Jarchi confesses the same, and is somewhat more open in giving his reason for interpreting it otherwise. "Our Rabbins (says he) "expound this affair concerning the King Messiah; "but according to its literal sense, and for an answer "to the heretics (or Christians), it is right to explain "it concerning David himself." The clause, *and for an answer to the heretics*, is left out in later editions, but was in the more ancient ones; it being so open and barefaced, that the Jews did not choose to let it stand. Aben Ezra is in a doubt whether to interpret the psalm of David, or of the Messiah; though he thinks the former is best; and particularly this seventh verse is, by several of their ancient writers, applied to the Messiah; in one of their writings, esteemed very ancient, are these words [i]; "from thence shall "come forth, in that day, the Messiah of David; and "this is the mystery of, *I will declare the decree, the* "*Lord said unto me, thou art my son*, &c." And this is the sense of R. Ame [k], a famous ancient doctor of theirs: upon mention of those words in Jer. xxxi. 22. *the Lord hath created a new thing*, &c. "says R. Hone, "in the name of R. Ame, this is the King Messiah, "as it is said, Psal. ii. 7. *this day have I begotten thee*." And in like manner in the Talmud [l], it is understood of the Messiah, where are these expressions; "the "Rabbins teach, that Messiah, the son of David, who "shall be revealed in haste in our days, the holy "blessed God said unto him, ask any thing of me, "and I will give it thee, as it is said, Psal. ii. 7. *I will* "*declare the decree*, &c. *this day have I begotten thee*." And that this was the sense of the Jews in the times of the apostle, need not be doubted, since the apostle cites these words before a Jewish assembly, in one of their synagogues, and applies them to the Messiah, without any hesitation, or any further reasoning upon it, as being a thing generally agreed on, and out of doubt; wherefore the Jew [m] has no reason to charge the apostle with an error in citing a passage in this psalm, and applying it to Christ, since their ancient doctors have allowed, that it belongs to him, and even the very passage which the apostle produces; which passage Maimonides [n] himself applies to the Messiah. This objector would have it, that David spoke the whole psalm by the Holy Spirit concerning himself, and that he calls himself the Lord's anointed; and that being anointed by the will of the Lord, what was against his kingdom, was against the Lord himself; and that he is called the son of God, because he attended to the worship of God; and that the begetting of him refers to the time of his unction by Samuel; and that it can by no means agree with Jesus of Nazareth, who never ruled in any place, but others ruled over him, when they adjudged him to death as the meanest of the people; and who himself says, that he came not to be ministered unto, Matt. xx. 28. especially he thinks those words, *ask of me, and I will give the Heathen*, &c. greatly militate against the application of the psalm to Jesus; for if he is God, what need has he to ask of another? But since the Jewish doctors themselves have applied this psalm to the Messiah, the apostle ought not to be blamed for making such an application; and there are many things which cannot be applied to David himself; for whatever may be said of his anointing, begetting, and sonship, the uttermost parts of the earth were never given for his possession; and much less can he be the son the kings of the earth are called upon to kiss and worship, or he be the object of trust and confidence; and though Jesus in the days of his humiliation was not ministered unto,

[d] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 9. 2.
[e] Ib. fol. 10. 1.
[f] Piske Tosephot in T. Bab. Megilla, art. 34.
[g] In Psal. ii. 7.
[h] In Psal. ii. 12. Vid. T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 3. 2.

[i] Zohar in Numb. fol. 82. 2.
[k] In Abarbinel. Mashmia Jeshua, fol. 37. 2.
[l] T. Bab. Succa, fol. 52. 1.
[m] R. Isaac, Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 64. p. 434, &c.
[n] In Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 11. sect. 1.

but ministered to others, and ruled not over others, but submitted to the death of the cross; he has since been made and declared Lord of all, and his kingdom has taken place in the nations of the world, and ere long all the kingdoms of it will become his; and though he is God, it is no ways inconsistent with him, as man and Mediator, to ask any thing of his father, and especially what has been agreed between them shall be given: the words cited by the apostle are, *thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee:* in Beza's ancient copy, the verse following these words is added, *ask of me*, &c. The words are to be understood of the eternal filiation of Christ, and are produced, to set forth the greatness and dignity of his person; whom God had raised and sent forth in human nature, to be the Saviour and Redeemer of his people: though should they be applied to the resurrection of Christ from the dead, it will no ways prejudice the doctrine of Christ's proper and natural sonship, as being the only-begotten of the father; since the resurrection of Christ is not the cause of his sonship, or the reason why he is called the son of God, but a manifestation of it; Christ was the son of God, before his resurrection from the dead; he was declared to be so by a voice from heaven, was believed on by his disciples as such, and confessed by others, both men and devils: besides, if his resurrection was the cause of his sonship, he must beget himself, which is absurd, for he was himself concerned in his resurrection from the dead; moreover, his sonship would not be proper, but figurative and metaphorical, whereas he is God's own, or proper son; besides, on this account he could not be called God's only-begotten son, because there are others that have been, and millions that will be raised from the dead besides him: but the reason why these words are applied to the resurrection of Christ, allowing them to be so, is not because he was then begotten as the son of God, but because he was then manifested to be the eternally-begotten son of God; things are said to be, when they are only manifested to be; so Christ is said to be that day begotten, because he was *declared to be the son of God with power, by the resurrection from the dead*, Rom. i. 4. Hence these words are applicable to any time or thing wherein Christ is manifested to be the only-begotten son of God, and accordingly are applied to different times and things; see Heb. i. 3, 4, 5. and v. 5.

Ver. 34. *And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead*, &c.] This, as it is differently expressed from the raising him up, spoken of in the preceding verse, so seems to be a distinct article from it, and is supported by other passages of Scripture: the apostle having shewn that God had fulfilled his promise to the fathers, concerning the raising up, or sending the Messiah into the world, who is no other than the eternal son of God, proceeds to prove his resurrection from the dead, as man, which was in such sort, as now *no more to return to corruption;* so as not to die any more, and be laid in the grave, and there corrupted; as was the case of those who were raised from the dead by the prophets, under the Old Testament, or by Christ himself, before his death and resurrection; for these were raised to a mortal life, and died again, and were buried, and saw corruption; but Christ was raised up from the dead, never to die more, but to live for ever, having in his hands the keys of hell and death, and being the triumphant conqueror over death and the grave; in proof of which some passages are produced out of the Old Testament, as follow: *he said on this wise;* that is, God said so, or after this manner, Isa. lv. 3. *I will give you the sure mercies of David;* that is, of the Messiah; by which are meant the blessings of the sure and well-ordered covenant of grace, which the Messiah by his sufferings and death was to ratify and secure for all his people; now had he only died, and not been raised from the dead, these blessings had not been ratified and made sure unto them; therefore, when God promises his people, that he will give them the sure mercies of David, or the Messiah, he promises that the Messiah shall not only die to procure mercies and blessings for them, but that he shall rise again from the dead, to make them sure unto them; so that these words are pertinently produced in proof of Christ's resurrection. David is a name frequently given to the Messiah, as in Jer. xxx. 9. Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 24. and xxxvii. 24, 25. Hos. iii. 5. David being an eminent type of Christ, and the Messiah being a son of his; and who must be meant here; and which is owned by several Jewish commentators* of the best note; and which appears from his being called a witness to the people, a leader and a commander of them, in the next verse: the blessings of the covenant are fitly called *mercies*, because they spring from the grace and mercy of God, and wonderfully display it, and are in mercy to his people; and these are the mercies of David, or of Christ, because the covenant being made with him, these blessings were put into his hands for them, and come through his blood to them; and hence they are said to be *sure* ones; they are in safe hands; Christ, who is intrusted with them, faithfully distributes them: but then, as by his death he has made way for the communication of them, consistent with the justice of God; so he must rise again, and live for ever, to distribute them, or see that there is an application of them made to the persons for whom they are designed: besides, it is one of the sure mercies promised to David, to the Messiah himself, that though he died, and was laid in the grave, he should not continue there, but rise again, as the next testimony most clearly shews.

Ver. 35. *Wherefore he saith also in another psalm*, &c.] Psal. xvi. 10. or *in another place*, as the Syriac version supplies; or *in another section*, as the Arabic version; or *elsewhere*, as Beza's most ancient copy, the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions, read: *thou shalt not suffer thine holy One to see corruption;* which cannot be understood of David: the term *holy one*, is not so applicable to him, who was a man subject to infirmities: at least not in such sense as to Christ, who was holy in his nature, and without sin in his life and conversation; besides, David was laid in his grave, and saw corruption, as the apostle afterwards proves: the former part of this passage is not cited, *thou wilt not leave my soul in hell;* which was not absolutely neces-

* Aben Ezra & Kimchi in Isa. lv. 3. Abarbinel. Mashmia Jeshua, fol. 26. 1.

sary to be mentioned, it being clearly implied in what is produced; for if he should not be suffered to see corruption, then he could not be left in the grave: moreover, the apostle cites that which he intended to reason upon, as he afterwards does, and by it makes it manifestly appear that the words do not belong to David, but the Messiah, and are a clear and pertinent proof of his resurrection from the dead. The Jew [p] objects to the apostle's version of these words, rendering שחת, by *corruption*, whereas he says it signifies a *pit*; but it ought to be observed, that the word in its first proper, and literal sense, signifies *corruption*; and a pit or grave is only called by this name, because dead bodies, or carcasses, are therein corrupted; and instances may be given, wherein the word cannot be understood in another sense than in that of corruption, as in Lev. xxii. 25. Psal. lv. 23. see the note on ch. ii. 27.

Ver. 36. *For David, after he had served his own generation*, &c.] Or the men of that age and generation in which he lived, the subjects of his kingdom; by governing them with wholesome laws, protecting them in their rights and properties, defending them against their enemies, and regulating and promoting the worship of God among them: *by the will of God;* this clause may be read in connection with the preceding words, as it is in the Syriac version thus, *after he had in his own age served the will of God*; acted according to it, fulfilled it, and did what the Lord declared to him, or he knew to be the will of God; or with the following words, as in the Vulgate Latin version, *by the will of God fell on sleep*, or died; and then the sense is, that after he had done the work of his generation, which was appointed and cut out for him, he died by the decree and counsel of God, which has set bounds to man's life, and has fixed the time of his death; no man dies before, or lives longer than the time it is the will of God he should. David lived according to the will of God's command, and he died by the will of his decree. Death is expressed by falling asleep; a way of speaking very common with the eastern nations, and which represents it in an easy and familiar manner: it is not an annihilation of men; the dead are only fallen asleep, and will wake again in the resurrection; till which time the grave is their resting-place, and out of which the saints will rise fresh and cheerful; and yet, as a time of sleep is a time of inactivity, so no work is done in the grave; and therefore whatever we find to do, should be done in life. It is a long sleep; David has been many hundred years, even thousands, in it; and there will be no awaking out of it till Christ comes again: but this is to be understood of the body only, which only is capable of sleeping the sleep of death, and not of the soul, which dies not with the body, nor continues with it in the grave in a state of insensibility and inactivity, but immediately returns to God; and being happy, is employed in the vision of God, and Christ, in the fellowship of saints and angels, and in the work of praise and thanksgiving: thus, though David is fallen asleep in his body, he is present in spirit with the Lord; and that sweet psalmist of Israel is singing the songs of God in a much better manner than when here on earth. Blessed are they that sleep in Jesus, for they not only sleep quietly and safely, but shall surely rise again, for God will bring them with him; Christ is the first-fruits of them, and they shall awake in his likeness. It is further said of David, *and was laid unto his fathers*, or was buried; his sepulchre is said to be in Mount Zion [q], where the kings of the house of David were buried; and his sepulchre Peter says in ch. ii. 29. remained till his time. *And saw corruption:* his body putrefied in the grave, became the repast of worms, and was reduced to rottenness and dust; and therefore the words could not be spoken of him cited from Psal. xvi. 10.

Ver. 37. *But he whom God raised again*, &c.] The Vulgate Latin version adds, *from the dead:* meaning the Lord Jesus Christ, who was raised from the dead by God the father: and *saw no corruption:* he did not lie so long in the grave as to corrupt and putrefy, but was raised from the dead the third day; wherefore the passage, before cited, is very applicable to him, and is a clear proof that the Messiah was to rise from the dead, as Jesus did.

Ver. 38. *Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren*, &c.] The apostle having discoursed concerning the incarnation of Christ, his death and resurrection, proceeds to take notice of some particular benefits and blessings of grace arising from thence, which are published and made known to the sons of men in the everlasting Gospel, as were now to the Jews by Paul and Barnabas; such as forgiveness of sins through the blood of Christ, and justification by his righteousness; the former of them is mentioned in this verse, the latter in the next: *that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins;* forgiveness of sins, which is sometimes expressed by a non-imputation of them, a non-remembrance of them, a covering and putting them away, and a blotting them out, is an act of free grace and mercy, and yet is through the blood of Christ; through that believers have it; Christ is exalted as a Prince and a Saviour to give it, having by his blood procured it; and this is a principal doctrine of the Gospel, which is published in his name, and which the light of nature and law of Moses know nothing of, and cannot ascertain; the prophets bear testimony to this truth, that every one that believes in Christ shall receive the remission of sins, of all his sins. That there is a God is known by the light of nature, and that sin is an offence unto him; but by it is not known in what way offended Deity is appeased; nor does it, nor can it assure any that God will forgive sin on any account whatever; not on account of mercy in him, nor on account of good works, or of repentance in them; God, as the God of nature, does not forgive sin, but as the God of grace: and though the law of Moses declares what is good, and gives knowledge of evil, yet admits not of repentance as a satisfaction for sin committed; nor does it represent God as merciful, but as just, and so accuses, condemns, and kills: the doctrine of forgiveness is a pure doctrine of the Gospel; and when it is preached aright, it is preached through Christ, not through the works of the law, not through repentance, nor through faith, nor through the absolute mercy of God, but through Christ, through the blood

[p] R. Isaac, Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 69. p. 456.

[q] Cippi Hebr. p. 24.

of Christ, which was shed to obtain it in a way consistent with the justice of God; and through his hands it is given. When Christ is called a *man*, it must not be thought that he is a mere man; he is God as well as man; had he been a mere man, forgiveness of sin could not have been by his blood, or through his name, or for his sake; it is because he is God, truly and properly God, that there is a virtue in his blood to take away sin, and cleanse from it; see 1 John i. 7. Besides, the word *man* is not in the original text, it is only *through this is preached to you*: that is, through this glorious and divine person, who, though he died as man, and was buried, yet saw no corruption, and is now raised from the dead, and is at the right hand of God. Some copies read *διὰ τοῦτο*, *because of this*, or for this reason; seeing he is raised from the dead, therefore the doctrine of the remission of sins is preached; for if he had died, and had not risen again, there could have been no pardon by his blood, nor justification by his righteousness; see Rom. iv. 25.

Ver. 39. *And by him all that believe are justified from all things*, &c.] Christ, as God, is not only the justifier of his people, who pronounces them righteous in the sight of God; but his righteousness imputed to them is the matter of their justification, or that by which they are justified; and not the works of the law, or obedience to the Gospel, or internal holiness, either in whole or in part, or the grace of faith, but the object of it, Christ, and his righteousness: and justification by this is complete and perfect; it is from all sin, original and actual, secret and open, greater or lesser sins; sins of presumption and ignorance, of omission or commission; from all things the law can charge with, as breaches of it; from all things which the justice of God can demand satisfaction for; and from all things that Satan, or a man's own conscience, can justly accuse him of. And those that believe in Christ with the heart unto righteousness, are openly and manifestatively justified in their own consciences, and can claim their interest in it, and have the comfort of it, as well as they were before secretly justified in the mind of God, and in their head and representative Jesus Christ. And from all sin these are justified *of God*, as Beza's ancient copy reads, for *it is God that justifies*, Rom. viii. 33. against whom men have sinned, and whose law they have violated, and whose justice they have affronted, by reason of which they are liable to condemnation; but God justifies them, by imputing the righteousness of his son to them, in which he views them as without fault, unblamable and irreprovable; and though all men are not justified, yet many are; even all the seed of Israel, all the elect of God, every one that believes in Christ, as all do who are ordained to eternal life; Christ's righteousness is imputed and applied to all these, and therefore they shall never enter into condemnation, but shall be acquitted and discharged from all things, *from which*, 'tis added, *ye could not be justified by the law of Moses*: that is, by the works of the law, or by obedience to it, because such obedience is imperfect; and therefore the law can't justify, discharge, and acquit upon it, but instead thereof, must curse and condemn; as it does every one, that does not do all things commanded in the law, and in the manner that requires; besides, if righteousness was hereby, the grace of God in justification would be frustrated, the death of Christ would be rendered null and void, and boasting would not be excluded; all which are contrary to the scheme of the Gospel. It may be observed, that pardon of sin and justification are two distinct blessings, or the apostle must be guilty of a great tautology; since having spoken of forgiveness of sin in the preceding verse, he speaks of justification in this, as another blessing enjoyed by and through Christ, and published in the Gospel, styled therefore the word and ministration of righteousness. And indeed they are distinct; in pardon the man is considered as a sinner, in justification as a righteous man; pardon takes away his sin, justification gives him a righteousness; pardon frees from punishment, but justification besides that gives him a title to eternal life; to pardon, the blood of Christ is sufficient; but to justification are required the holiness of Christ's nature, the perfect obedience of his life, as well as his suffering of death; moreover, justification passed on Christ as the head and representative of his people, but not pardon; he may be said to be justified, but not pardoned: these two blessings make a considerable figure in the ministry of the word.

Ver. 40. *Beware therefore*, &c.] Of rejecting the Gospel, and those excellent truths of it; since forgiveness of sin and a justifying righteousness are said to be had in no other way, but in and through Christ; take heed therefore, *lest that come upon you, which is spoken of in the Prophets*: some think that the apostle refers to two places in the Prophets, which he puts together, and therefore uses the plural number; the one in Isa. xxviii. 14. from whence the character of the persons is taken, *ye despisers*, or scornful men, who are addressed; and the other in Hab. i. 5. where is to be found what is said to them; but rather the latter place is what is only referred to, and is said to be, *in the Prophets*, that is, in one of the prophets; see the note on John vi. 45. or in the book of the Prophets, the lesser prophets, which were together in one book, among which Habakuk stands; the Ethiopic version reads in the singular number, *lest should come upon you the word of the prophet, saying*, as follows.

Ver. 41. *Behold, ye despisers*, &c.] In Hab. i. 5. from whence these words are taken: we render it with others, *behold ye among the Heathen*: as if the word בגוים, was compounded of ב, *in*, and גוים, *nations* or *Heathens*; and so reads the Chaldee paraphrase, *look among the people*: but the Septuagint version renders it, *behold, ye despisers*: which the apostle is thought to follow: wherefore some have imagined a different reading, and that the Septuagint, instead of בגוים, reads בוגדים, the singular of which is used in Hab. ii. 5. and there rendered a *despiser* in the same version: but it should be observed, that the Septuagint is not the only version that so renders the word; for the Syriac version renders it, *behold, ye impudent*; and the Arabic version, *behold, ye negligent*; and Dr. Pocock[*] has shewn that this word comes from the root בגא, which though not to be found in the Bible, yet in the

[*] Not. Misc. in Porta Mosis, c. 3. p. 31, 32. &c.

Arabic language, among other things, signifies to behave proudly, or insolently, and so is very properly rendered *despisers*, without supposing any different reading or corruption in the text: and as in Habakkuk the proud and haughty Jews are there spoke to, who neglected and despised the law; this is accommodated by the apostle to the Jews in his time, who were very much disposed to despise the Gospel, as they generally did. It follows, *and wonder, and perish;* or disappear, or change countenance, through shame for their sins, and amazement at the judgments of God upon them: *for I work a work in your days, which you shall in no wise believe though a man declare it unto you;* which, in Habakkuk, refers to the destruction of the city and temple of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans; and here it is suggested, by the citation and application of it, that in a short time a like work would be done in their days; the city and temple of Jerusalem would be destroyed by the Romans, which when told to the Jews in foreign parts, as here in Pisidia, would not be believed by them, though it should be told them by men of probity and credit.

Ver. 42. *And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue,* &c.] The time of worship there being over; or being offended at the apostle's discourse concerning Jesus: the words will bear to be rendered, *when they were gone out of the synagogue of the Jews;* and the sense be, when Paul and Barnabas were come out from thence, Paul having finished his discourse: the word *Jews*, and the phrase, *out of the synagogue*, are left out in Beza's ancient copy, and in the Alexandrian copy, and in the Vulgate Latin, and Syriac versions; and so may be interpreted either of the Jews, or of Paul and Barnabas; the Ethiopic version leaves out the whole clause: *the Gentiles besought that these words might be spoken unto them the next sabbath;* that is, the proselytes from among the Gentiles, who attended on the synagogue of the Jews, and who staid behind when the Jews were gone out, being exceedingly delighted with the apostle's doctrine, most earnestly entreated that the same subject might be insisted upon the next sabbath: or, as Dr. Lightfoot observes, the words may be rendered, *they besought the Gentiles;* that is, the apostles, when they saw the Jews go out, being offended, addressed the Gentiles, and entreated them to come the next sabbath-day, and patiently hear these doctrines: though in the above copies and versions there is no mention made of the Gentiles, any more than of the Jews; so that this may be understood either of the rulers of the synagogue, who first invited them to speak a word of exhortation to the people, or of the whole body, Jews and proselytes, who, when they were departing, entreated they might hear them again the next sabbath; about which *next sabbath*, there is some difficulty: the words may be rendered, *between the sabbath*, and so may regard what we call week-days, or working-days; and which the Jews call ימים שבנתים, *the intermediate days*, or the days between one sabbath and another[s]; and on some one of these days it was desired that the apostles would give them another discourse on the same subject; and it may be particularly, that either Monday or Thursday, the second or fifth day of the week, might be pitched upon; since on these days the Jews met together in the synagogue, and read the law, according to the order of Ezra, that they might not be three days without the law[t]; and these were the days on which they fasted, Luke xviii. 12. Others choose to render the words, *on the sabbath-day after;* and so the Syriac version renders it, *on the other sabbath;* and the Ethiopic version, *the sabbath following;* and so the Vulgate Latin, with which ours, and others agree; and to this reading and sense, ver. 44. greatly inclines; though they might meet together on one of the days between, when being so delighted with what they heard, and of which they so much talked, that the next sabbath almost the whole city came together to hear: but what pleases me best, and which, I think, has never been observed by any, is, that there was one sabbath in the year which was called שבת בנתים; which may be rendered by τὸ μεταξὺ σαββάτον, *the sabbath between*, or the intermediate sabbath; and this sabbath was on one of the ten days before the day of atonement; and was so called, because it was between the first of Tisri, which answers to part of our September, and was the beginning of the year, and the tenth of the same month, which was the day of atonement; and was a sabbath very much taken notice of by the Jews[u]: and now this might be the sabbath following, and so all agrees; and a reason may be given for the different phrases in this verse, and ver. 44. and if so, this also points out the time of the year that Paul and Barnabas were at Antioch in Pisidia, and when that remarkable period began, that the apostles turned from the Jews, and preached to the Gentiles.

Ver. 43. *Now when the congregation was broken up,* &c.] Or *the synagogue;* not the place, but the people that met in it; when they were *dismissed*, as the Vulgate Latin and Arabic versions render it; either in a disorderly manner, through the offence the Jews took at Paul's preaching; or if in an orderly way, this was done by התורגמן, *the interpreter;* so it is said[w], that "R. Hotzpith the interpreter dismissed the people." *Many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas;* who were converted by this sermon, and believed in Christ, and cordially embraced the doctrines of the Gospel, that had been preached. Piscator thinks that the word *religious* does not belong to the text, but some way or other crept into it, since it supposes some proselytes not to be religious; whereas, though all religious persons were not proselytes, at least proselytes of righteousness, yet all proselytes were religious persons; but it is retained in all copies and versions: *who speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God;* meaning, not that the Jews and proselytes spoke to Paul and Barnabas, and entreated and persuaded them to persevere in preaching the doctrine of the grace of God, notwithstanding the offence some might take at it, and the ill usage they might meet with on account of it; but that Paul and Barnabas took notice of them, and by their following them, and by the conversation they had with them, found that the word had reached their hearts, and that

[s] T. Hieros. Gittin, fol. 49. 1. & Bab. Ceritot, fol. 16. 1, 2. & 17. 1.
[t] T. Hieros. Megilla, fol. 75. 1. & Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 82. 1.
[u] Tzeror Hammor, fol. 85. 4. & 86. 1, 2.
[w] T. Hieros. Taaniot, fol. 67. 4.

they had embraced the doctrine of the Gospel; wherefore they spoke a word of exhortation to them, beseeching them to continue in it, it springing from the grace of God, and being a declaration of it; and particularly in those special doctrines of grace, which had been insisted on, namely, remission of sins, and free justification by the blood of Christ; for it is more likely, and was more necessary, that these should be exhorted by the apostles, and not the apostles by them.

Ver. 44. *And the next sabbath-day*, &c.] The same which is before called *the sabbath between*, which was between the first and tenth of Tisri, or between the beginning of the year, and the day of atonement: *came almost the whole city together*. The Syriac and Ethiopic versions leave out the word *almost*, and read, the whole city came together; some out of curiosity, having heard much said of these men and their doctrines, others to cavil and quarrel, and others from a true affection to the Gospel, and an earnest desire of knowing more of it, and of receiving more advantage from it: though the end in all was, *to hear the word of God*; or *of the Lord*, as the Alexandrian copy; that is, the doctrine of the Gospel, which comes from God, and concerns the Lord Jesus Christ, his person, offices, grace, and righteousness.

Ver. 45. *But when the Jews saw the multitudes*, &c.] The vast number of people, the inhabitants of the city, the Gentiles, that were assembled together to hear the word. This must be understood of the unbelieving Jews, who came with no good design: *they were filled with envy*; at the Gentiles, that they should have the word equally preached to them, as to themselves, to whom the oracles of God were committed; or at the popularity of the apostles, that such numbers should follow them; and they might fear many converts might be made by them, from among them: *and spoke against those things which were spoken by Paul*; concerning Jesus of Nazareth being the Messiah, which they denied; and concerning free justification by his righteousness, which they affirmed to be by the works of the law: and they went on *contradicting and blaspheming*; publicly opposing him, and speaking evil of him, and of his doctrines; and not only so, but belching out their blasphemies against the Lord Jesus Christ. The Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, leave out the word *contradicting*, as redundant, it having been before said, that *they spoke against*, or *contradicted* what Paul delivered; though it may not be superfluous, but express their continuance in their contradiction and opposition; and which was attended with, and issued in blasphemy: such a spirit of reproach and blasphemy is with the Jews a sign of the Messiah's coming; "says R. Jannai[x], when "you see generation after generation reproaching and "blaspheming, look for the feet of the Messiah, ac"cording to Psal. lxxxix. 51." This they have been doing one age after another, even for many ages; and therefore, according to one of their own signs, the Messiah must be come.

Ver. 46. *Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold*, &c.] They were not at all daunted at the opposition they met with, but rather grew more courageous, and used great liberty of speech, and spoke out freely, plainly, and openly: *and said, it was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you*: as it was by Christ and his apostles, whilst he was on earth; and though, after his resurrection, the commission to his apostles ran, to preach the Gospel to all nations, yet they were ordered to begin at Jerusalem, and preach to the Jews first; and this they hitherto strictly observed: *but seeing ye put it from you*; with loathing, indignation, and contempt: *and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life*; no man is worthy of everlasting life, on account of any thing done by him, for it is the free gift of God; and all who are sensible of themselves, and of the just demerit of sin, conclude themselves unworthy to inherit eternal life; but this was not the case of these Jews, nor is it the sense here; but the meaning is, that the Jews, by this act of theirs in rejecting the Gospel, did as it were pass sentence upon themselves, and determine against themselves that they ought not to be saved, since they despised the means of salvation; or that they were not worthy to have the Gospel preached to them any more, which may be called eternal life, because it is brought to light by it, and revealed in it; and because it points out the way unto it, as well as gives some account of it: *lo, we turn to the Gentiles*; to preach the Gospel to them only, or chiefly; now the words of Christ began to be fulfilled, Matt. xxi. 43.

Ver. 47. *For so hath the Lord commanded us*, &c.] For though Christ in his first commission restrained his disciples from going into the Gentiles, and preaching to them, yet when he enlarged their commission after his resurrection, he bid them go into all nations, and preach the Gospel to every creature; and told them, that they should be his witnesses to the uttermost part of the earth; see Matt. xxviii. 19. Mark xvi. 15. Acts i. 8. unless this should rather be thought to refer to what follows: *saying*; or *as it is written*, as the Syriac version supplies; or *because so saith the Scripture*, as the Ethiopic version, namely in Isa. xlix. 6. *I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles*; to enlighten the Gentiles that sit in darkness, by the preaching of the Gospel to them, and the spirit of God attending it: this supposes the Gentiles to have been in darkness; as they were about divine things, before the times of the Gospel: they had no true knowledge of God himself; for though they knew there was a God, they did not know, at least but few of them, that there was but one God; and none of them knew any thing of him as in Christ; they had not a revelation of his will, they were without the written law, and were strangers to the true manner of worshipping the divine Being; they knew nothing at all of the Messiah, and of his righteousness and salvation by him; nor of the spirit of God, and the operations of his grace, nor of the resurrection of the dead, and were very ignorant of a future state: it was therefore an unspeakable mercy to them, that Christ was appointed to be a light to them; not in a way of nature, as he is that light which lightens every man that comes into the world; but in a way of grace, through the ministration of the Gospel, and by the special illuminations of the divine Spirit; whereby

[x] Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 11. 4.

they see there is a righteous judge, and that there will be a righteous judgment; and that sin is exceeding sinful, and can't be atoned for by them, and therefore they are in themselves miserable and undone; and they further see, that pardon and righteousness are only by Christ, and that salvation is alone in him. The words are spoken by God the father to his son, and express the eternal decree of God, and the designation of Christ to be the light of his people; the mission of him in time as the light of the world, and the exhibition of him in the Gospel, for the illumination of men by his spirit and grace. In the Hebrew text it is, *I will give thee*, &c. for all this springs from the free grace of God; Christ in all respects is the gift of God, as he is the head of the church, and the Saviour of the body, so as he is the light of men; and it is necessary that he should be light, in order to be salvation, as follows; for though men may go to hell in the dark, yet not to heaven; the way of the wicked is darkness, but the path of the just is shining light: those whom God saves, he enlightens with the light of life: *that thou shouldst be for salvation to the ends of the earth*: impetratively as the author of it, and applicatively by means of the Gospel, which publishes salvation by Christ; and is the power of God unto salvation, to Gentiles as well as Jews, even to all that believe, in what part of the world soever they live: thus what was decreed and resolved on by God the father, and was declared by him to his son, is applied to his ministers and ambassadors, who personated him; so that what they did, he may be said to do; and who by them was to go, and did go to the Gentiles, and enlighten them with the light of the Gospel, and became salvation to them; so that this prophecy is produced by the apostles, to vindicate their conduct, as well as to shew the agreement between the command of Jesus Christ to his disciples, and the decree of God the father; as also to illustrate and confirm the particular order, which the Apostle Paul had, to go to the Gentiles, and to which he may have a regard here; see Acts xxvi. 17. In the Hebrew text it is, *my salvation*; provided, promised, and sent by God, the Saviour of his people.

Ver. 48. *And when the Gentiles heard this*, &c.] That it was the will of God, and the command of Christ, that the Gospel should be preached to them; by whom are to be understood the Pisidians, the inhabitants of Antioch, who had never been proselytes to the Jewish religion: *they were glad*: not that the Jews were likely to have the Gospel taken away from them, and be utterly deprived of it, but that it was to be preached to them: *and glorified the word of the Lord*: not the Lord Jesus Christ, the essential word of the Lord, whom they might not as yet have such a distinct knowledge of; but rather God himself, for his word, particularly his word of command, ver. 47. as the Syriac and Ethiopic versions read; or the sense is, they spake well of the Gospel, and gave glory to God, or the Lord, who had sent it among them: Beza's most ancient copy reads, they *received the word of the Lord*, which seems to be a more agreeable reading; to glorify the word of the Lord, is an unusual phrase: *and as many as were ordained unto eternal life believed*: faith is not the cause, or condition of the decree of eternal life, but a means fixed in it, and is a fruit and effect of it, and what certainly follows upon it, as in these persons: some would have the words rendered, *as many as were disposed unto eternal life believed*; which is not countenanced by the ancient versions. The Arabic renders it as we do, and the Syriac thus, *as many as were put, or appointed unto eternal life*; and the Vulgate Latin version, *as many as were pre-ordained*. Moreover, the phrase of being *disposed unto*, or *for eternal life*, is a very unusual, if not a very improper, and an inaccurate one; men are said to be disposed to an habit, or to an act, as to vice or virtue, but not to reward or punishment, as to heaven or hell; nor does it appear that these Gentiles had any good dispositions to eternal life, antecedent to their believing; for though they are said, ver. 42. to entreat the apostles to preach the same things to them the next sabbath, yet the words as there observed, according to their natural order, may be rendered *they*, *i. e.* the apostles, *besought the Gentiles*; and in some copies and versions, the *Gentiles* are not mentioned at all; and as for their being *glad*, and *glorifying the word of the Lord*, it is not evident that this was before their believing; and if it was, such things have been found in persons, who have had no true, real, and inward dispositions to spiritual things, as in many of our Lord's hearers; besides, admitting that there are, in some, good dispositions to eternal life, previous to faith, and that desiring eternal life, and seeking after it, be accounted such, yet these may be where faith does not follow; as in the young rich ruler, that came to Christ with such an inquiry, and went away sorrowful; as many therefore as are so disposed, do not always believe, faith does not always follow such dispositions; and after all, one would have thought that the Jews themselves, who were externally religious, and were looking for the Messiah, and especially the devout and honourable women, were more disposed unto eternal life, than the ignorant and idolatrous Gentiles; and yet the latter believed, and the former did not: it follows then, that their faith did not arise from previous dispositions to eternal life, but was the fruit and effect of divine ordination unto it; and the word here used, in various places in this book, signifies determination and appointment, and not disposition of mind; see ch. xv. 2. and xxii. 10. and xxviii. 23. The phrase is the same with that used by the Jews, דאתמנו לחיי עלם, *who are ordained to eternal life* [t]; and כל הכתיב לחיי עלמא, *every one that is written to eternal life* [u]; *i. e.* in the book of life; and designs no other than predestination or election, which is God's act, and is an eternal one; is sovereign, irrespective, and unconditional; relates to particular persons, and is sure and certain in its effect: it is an ordination, not to an office, nor to the means of grace, but to grace and glory itself; to a life of grace which is eternal, and to a life of glory which is for ever; and which is a pure gift of God, is in the hands of Christ, and to which his righteousness gives a title; and ordination to it shews it to be a blessing of an early date; and the great love of God to the persons ordained to it; and the certainty of enjoying it.

Ver. 49. *And the word of the Lord was published*

[t] Zohar in Exod. fol. 43. 4.

[u] Targum in Isa. iv. 3. Vid. Abkath Rocel, p. 5.

throughout all the region.] That is, of Pisidia, in which Antioch was; not by the Apostles Paul and Barnabas, who seem to go directly to Iconium, after they were expelled the city and suburbs of Antioch; but by some of those who were converted under their ministry, and had gifts bestowed on them, qualifying them to preach the Gospel to others, which they did with success. There were no doubt several churches planted in this country, and particularly there was one at Antioch, of which these new converts were the beginning, and which continued: in the *fourth* century, this church was a partriarchate, for it is said, under Valentinian and Theodosius, Optimus obtained the partriarchate of Antioch in Pisidia; in the *fifth* century, it was the metropolitan of Pisidia; in this age, mention is made of several bishops of this place; Candidianus, bishop of Antioch in Pisidia, was present at two synods, one at Constantinople against Eutyches, and another at Ephesus; Dionysius, bishop of the same place, assisted in the synod at Chalcedon, and Pergamius at that which was at Constantinople, under the Emperor Theodosius, and at another at Chalcedon, under the Emperor Marcianus: there were also in this century, bishops of other churches in Pisidia; as Severus, bishop of Sozopolis in Pisidia, who was present in the council at Ephesus, against Nestorius; and Olympius, bishop of Mount Hem in Pisidia, who was at the Chalcedon council; and Paulinus bishop of Apamea, Eortius bishop of Nicopolis, and Alexander bishop of Seleucia, and Longinus bishop of Talbondana, all in Pisidia: in the *sixth* century, there were churches in Pisidia embracing the truth of Christ; Bacchus was bishop of Antioch, and John of another place, who both were in the fifth synod at Constantinople: in the *seventh* century, we read of the church at Antioch, as the metropolitan of Pisidia, and of a bishop of it in the sixth council at Constantinople: in the *eighth* century, Gregory, bishop of this place, condemned in a synod the worship of images, but afterwards recanted; and in the same century, this city was taken by the Turks, and spoiled[a]; and after this, we read no more of its church-state.

Ver. 50. *But the Jews stirred up the devout and honourable women,* &c.] These seem not to be Jewish women; could they be thought to be such, they might easily be concluded to be of the sect of the Pharisees, which was the strictest and most devout sect among the Jews; for there were women Pharisees, as well as men; so we read of אשה פרושה, *a woman Pharisee*[b]; but these were Gentile women, proselyted to the Jewish religion, and were in their way very religious and devout, and were also *honourable*: the word used signifies, not only that they were of a comely form, of a decent habit, and of good manners, as it is by some interpreted; but that they were persons of figure and distinction, of good families; the Syriac version renders it *rich*, whose husbands were the principal men of the city; wherefore the Jews applied to these women, and stirred up them to work upon their husbands, who seem to be those next mentioned: *and the chief men of the city*: the magistrates and officers in it: *and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas*; raised the mob, and set them upon them: *and expelled them out of their coasts*; drove them out of their city and suburbs.

Ver. 51. *But they shook off the dust of their feet against them,* &c.] As Christ directed his apostles to do; see the note on Matt. x. 14. *And came unto Iconium,* a city in Lycaonia; here it is placed both by Ptolomy[c] and Strabo[d]; Pliny says[e], that "there was "a tetrarchy granted out of Lycaonia, on that part "which borders on Galatia, consisting of fourteen "cities, the most celebrated city being Iconium." It was called by the Syrians היק ענא, *Ik-ona*, which signifies *the bosom of sheep*; the country round about it being famous for feeding great numbers of sheep; and here afterwards was a church of Christ, a bosom for his sheep; it is now in the hands of the Turks, and is called *Conia*, or *Cogne*.

Ver. 52. *And the disciples were filled with joy,* &c.] Meaning either *the apostles*, as the Ethiopic version renders it, Paul and Barnabas; who rejoiced, both at the success they had met with, and because they were counted worthy to suffer reproach and persecution for the sake of Christ and his Gospel: or rather the disciples at Antioch, and other parts of Pisidia, the new converts; who were filled with joy at the Gospel being preached unto them, and at the constancy and courage of the apostles in suffering for it: *and with the Holy Ghost*; which, with the former, designs the same thing as spiritual joy, or joy in the Holy Ghost; or else the gifts and graces of the spirit, which they had both for their own comfort, and the advantage of others.

CHAP. XIV.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to pass in Iconium,* &c.] When the apostles were got thither, and as soon as they were there; at least the first opportunity they had: *that they went both together into the synagogue of the Jews*; which was in Iconium; hither Paul and Barnabas went together, in like manner as they had done at Antioch: *and so spoke*; such words, and doctrines of grace, with so much power, authority, and demonstration of the spirit, with so much plainness, clearness, and evidence, as well as with so much boldness and courage: *that a great multitude, both of the Jews, and also of the Greeks, believed*; the doctrines they preached, and in Christ the sum and substance of them; and these were not a few, but a great multitude; and not of one sort, of the Jews only, who expected the Messiah, but of the Greeks, or Gentiles also, who never heard of any; for by Greeks here are meant, not Jews born in Greece, speaking the Greek tongue, and using

[a] Magdeburg. Hist. Eccles. cent. 4. c. 2. p. 3. cent. 5. c. 7. p. 418. & c. 10. p. 588. cent. 6. c. 2. p. 4. cent. 7. c. 2. p. 3. cent. 8. c. 10. p. 566. & c. 16. p. 515.
[b] Misn. Sota, c. 3. sect. 4.
[c] Geograph. l. 5. c. 6.
[d] Ib. l. 12.
[e] Nat. Hist. l. 5. c. 27.

the Greek Bible, for these were called Hellenists, and not Greeks, but Heathens. These converts laid the foundation of a Gospel church-state in this place; for that there was a church here, is certain from ver. 21, 22, 23. In the *first* century, Sosipater is said to be bishop, or pastor of this church, and also Tertius, who are both reckoned among the *seventy* disciples of Christ; see the note on Luke x. 1. In the *third* century, Celsus was bishop of this church; and in the same century, several synods were held here, about the error of Novatus; and in the same century, Nicomes bishop of this place, assisted at the council at Antioch, which condemned the heresy of Samosatenus[f]: in the *fourth* century there was a church in this place, and Amphilochius was bishop of it, of whom Jerom[g] makes mention; and who read to him a book, concerning the deity and worship of the holy Spirit: in the *fifth* century, it was the metropolitan church of Lycaonia, and Valerianus and Onesiphorus presided over it: in the *sixth* century, a bishop of this church was present at the fifth Roman council under Symmachus: in the *seventh* century, it bore the character of metropolitan, and a bishop of it assisted at the sixth council at Constantinople, whose name was Paul: in the *eighth* century, Leo was bishop of it, who was present at the synod of Nice[h]; and after this we hear no more of it, the place falling into the hands of the Turks, who are now possessed of it: here, according to the Roman martyrology, Tryphena and Tryphosa, mentioned in Rom. xvi. 12. heard the Apostle Paul preach; and here the famous virgin and martyr, Thecla, was converted.

Ver. 2. *But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles*, &c.] That part of the Jews, which continued in unbelief, and rejected the doctrine of the apostles, concerning Jesus of Nazareth being the Messiah; these stirred up the Gentiles, who had no knowledge of, nor faith in this matter: *and made their minds evil-affected against the brethren;* either in general against all those that embraced the Gospel of Christ; who being of the same faith and family, having the same God to be their father, and equally related to, and interested in Christ Jesus, are called brethren; or in particular against the Apostles Paul and Barnabas, by representing them as seditious persons, and of bad designs.

Ver. 3. *Long time therefore abode they*, &c.] At Iconium, undaunted and not discouraged, at the treatment they met with: but continued, *speaking boldly in the Lord;* using great freedom of speech, and shewing great courage and intrepidity of mind; speaking out, without fear, the doctrines of the Gospel, in the name of the Lord, and depending upon strength, assistance, and support, from him: *which gave testimony unto the word of his grace;* the Gospel, so called, because it is a publication of the grace and favour of God to the sons of men; in the choice of some of them to everlasting life, in the mission of his son to redeem them, in the justification of them by his righteousness, and in the forgiveness of them through his blood, in the regeneration of them by his spirit, in adopting them into his family, and making them heirs of eternal life; and because it is a means of implanting his grace in their souls; to this he bore witness, by giving it success, notwithstanding the opposition made against it, and by miracles wrought in confirmation of it, as follows: *and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands;* such as healing the sick, curing the lame, casting out devils, and the like, whereby a testimony was given to the truth of the doctrine they preached: and it may be observed, that these miraculous works were not wrought by the power of the apostles, but by the power of God; they were only instruments by whom they were done; it was owing to a grant from the Lord, and to his power, that they were performed.

Ver. 4. *But the multitude of the city was divided*, &c.] In their sentiments, about the apostles, their doctrines, and miracles; some approving them, others condemning their doctrines as false, and their miracles as delusions: *and part held with the Jews;* that did not believe, but rejected the apostles, despised their doctrines, and disparaged their miracles: *and part with the apostles;* these were the Jews and Greeks, that believed; which divisions in families, towns, and cities, though the common consequence of the preaching of the Gospel, are not owing to any fault in that, but to the depravity and corruption of human nature; and are what our Lord declared was, and foretold would be the case, Luke xii. 51.

Ver. 5. *And when there was an assault made*, &c.] Or a strong bias and inclination were in the minds, *both of the Gentiles, and also of the Jews, with their rulers;* who encouraged them in it: *to use* them *despitefully, and to stone them;* not only to give them reproachful language, but to smite, buffet, and scourge them, and to stone them for blasphemy, which was a punishment among the Jews for such causes.

Ver. 6. *They were ware of it*, &c.] They understood it, were apprised of it, and well weighed it, and considered it in their minds, and what was best to be done at this juncture: *and fled unto Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia;* according to the orders and command of Christ, Matt. x. 23. not so much to save their lives, as to spread the Gospel in other parts. Lycaonia was a province in the lesser Asia, near Phrygia, separated from it by the mountains; on the east it bordered on Galatia, and had on the west Pamphylia and Pisidia, and on the south Cilicia, unto Mount Taurus. Some say it had its name from Lycaon, the son of Pelasgus; others, seeing it was not a Greek colony, chose to fetch the name of the country from the Syrians, who used to call their neighbour's country Leikonia, or in the Greek pronunciation Lycaonia; that is, the country of Iconium, which city was the metropolis of Lycaonia[i]: Lystra is by Ptolomy[k] placed in Isauria, and so Derbe is said by Strabo[l] to be upon the coast of Isauria; wherefore the words may be read thus, as they are in the Syriac and Ethiopic versions, *and they fled to the cities of Lycaonia,*

[f] Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. 6. c. 19. & l. 7. c. 28, 30.
[g] Catalog. Script. Eccles. fol. 102. H.
[h] Magdeburg. Hist. Eccles. cent. 5. c. 7. p. 418. c. 10. p. 596. cent. 6. c. 2. p. 4. cent. 7. c. 2. p. 2. c. 7. p. 112. c. 10. p. 254. cent. 8. c. 2. p. 4.
[i] Vid. Hiller. Onomasticum Sacrum, p. 870.
[k] Geograph. l. 5. c. 4.
[l] Ib. l. 12.

and to Lystra, and to Derbe: by which reading, they are not necessarily made the cities of Lycaonia: according to Jerom [m], they were both cities of Lycaonia. Lystra is the same with לעשתרה, *Lehesthera*; which, in the Hebrew and Syriac languages, signifies *a flock of sheep*, or *a city of flocks*; it being a place that abounded with sheep, as the country of Lycaonia in general did [n]. Derbe was sometimes called *Delbia*, which, in the language of the Lycaonians, signifies a *juniper-tree*: and *Delub*, and *Dulbe*, with the Targumist [o] and Talmudists [p], signify a *chesnut-tree*; and with the Arabians, *Dulb* is a plane-tree, or poplar; it seems as if it had its name from one or other of those trees, which might grow in large quantities near it: *and unto the region that lieth round about*; the said cities.

Ver. 7. *And there they preached the Gospel.*] They did not sit still, nor hide themselves in these places; but, as in others, they preached the Gospel, the good news and glad tidings of the incarnation of Christ, of redemption, peace, and pardon, through his blood, justification by his righteousness, and spiritual and eternal salvation through him: in Beza's most ancient copy, and in one of Stephens's, these words are added, and which Bede also says were in the Greek copies in his time, *and the whole multitude were moved at their doctrines, and Paul and Barnabas continued at Lystra*; which agrees with what follows. It is very likely that many were converted in each of these cities, and in the adjacent country, and that churches were raised in these places; this seems manifest, from ver. 20, 21, 22, 23. and ch. xvi. 1, 2. Artemas, of whom mention is made in Tit. iii. 12. and is said to be one of the seventy disciples, is reported to be bishop of Lystra; see the note on Luke x. 1. though we meet with nothing in ecclesiastical history, concerning the churches in either of these places, until the *sixth* century; when in the fifth Roman synod under Symmachus, there were present the bishops of Lystra and Derbe, as also of Iconium and Larandas, which were likewise cities in Lycaonia [q].

Ver. 8. *And there sat a certain man at Lystra*, &c.] Where the apostle was preaching; and perhaps he sat there to beg, where there was a great concourse of people, and which might be in the open street: this man was *impotent in his feet*; so weak, as not to be able to walk, and even to stand on them, and therefore is said to sit: *being a cripple from his mother's womb*; he was born lame, as was the man cured by Peter, ch. iii. 2. *who never had walked*: these circumstances are mentioned, to shew that his case was incurable by any human art, and to illustrate the following miracle.

Ver. 9. *The same heard Paul speak*, &c.] That is, preach the Gospel; he was one of his hearers, and faith came to him by hearing: the Arabic version adds, *he cried unto him*: that is, to Paul, whom he heard: *who stedfastly beholding him*: not the lame man beholding Paul, but Paul beholding the lame man, as the Syriac and Ethiopic versions both express it, as also Beza's ancient copy and others; so Peter looked on the man he cured, ch. iii. 4. *And perceiving that he had faith to be healed*: as he might by his looks, his gestures, his attention in hearing, and it may be by somewhat that he said, as well as by revelation, or a spirit of discerning, which he had.

Ver. 10. *Said with a loud voice*, &c.] Not only that the man, but that all might hear and attend to the miracle about to be wrought: *stand upright on thy feet*; in five of Beza's manuscripts, and in other copies, and in the Complutensian edition, and in the Syriac version, this clause is introduced with these words, *I say unto thee, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ*; which is much such a form that Peter used, ch. iii. 6. whereby the virtue of the miracle is ascribed to Christ, and not assumed by the apostle: *and he leaped and walked*; he sprung up directly from his seat, and leaped about for joy, and walked as well as any other man could.

Ver. 11. *And when the people saw what Paul had done*, &c.] In curing the lame man in so marvellous a manner, and concluding it to be a divine work, and what a mere creature could never perform: *they lift up their voices*; not in indignation and wrath, but as persons astonished: *saying in the speech of Lycaonia*; by which it should seem that Lystra was a city of Lycaonia, since the Lycaonian language was spoken in it; the Arabic version reads, *in their own tongue*; and the Syriac version, *in the dialect of the country*; very likely a dialect of the Greek tongue; *the gods are come down to us in the likeness of men*; they had a notion of deity, though a very wrong one; they thought there were more gods than one, and they imagined heaven to be the habitation of the gods; and that they sometimes descended on earth in human shape, as they supposed they now did.

Ver. 12. *And they called Barnabas Jupiter*, &c.] The supreme God; it may be because that Barnabas was the oldest man, of the tallest stature, and largest bulk, and made the best figure; whereas Paul was younger, of a low stature, and mean appearance: *and Paul Mercurius, because he was the chief speaker*: Mercury was the god of eloquence, and the messenger of the gods, and the interpreter of their will [r]; Paul being chiefly concerned in preaching and speaking to the people, they called him by the name of this God: the Jews had a doctor in their schools, whom they called ראש המדברים, *the chief of the speakers* [s].

Ver. 13. *Then the priest of Jupiter, which was before their city*, &c.] Not that the priest was before the city, but Jupiter; and the phrase denotes either his presidence over the city, and so the Arabic version renders it, *who was the chief god of their city*; or the place where his image stood, which was out of the city, and so may be said to be before it; accordingly the Syriac version renders it, *who was without the city*; he who officiated as priest to him: *brought oxen and garlands unto the gates*; either *of the city*, as the Arabic and Ethiopic versions add, where was the statue of Jupiter; or else, and which is most likely, he brought

[m] De locis Hebraicis, fol. 96. A. D.
[n] Vid. Hiller. ib. p. 870, 871.
[o] Targum Onkelos in Gen. xxx. 37.
[p] T. Hieros. Cetubot, fol. 31. 4. T. Bab. Roshhashana, fol. 23. 1. & Succa, fol. 32. 2.
[q] Magdeburg. Hist. Eccles. cent. 6. c. 2. p. 4.
[r] Vid. Macrob. Saturnal. l. 1. c. 17, 19.
[s] Juchasin, fol. 45. 2. & 46. 1.

them to the gates of the house, where Paul and Barnabas were; and to this sense the Syriac version renders it, *to the door of the dwelling-place where they abode*: what the oxen were brought for is easy to conceive, had it not been expressed; but for what should garlands or crowns be brought? These were used in sacrifices, for different purposes; sometimes they crowned the gods[t], to whom they sacrificed, and these might be brought to be put upon the heads of Paul and Barnabas; and sometimes the priests wore them[u], and which seems to be in imitation of the mitre, wore by the high-priest among the Jews; and sometimes even those who came to sacrifice, and implore the assistance of their deities, wore them[w]; likewise the altars on which they offered sacrifice were crowned with these garlands[x]; and the sacrifices themselves, and which last seems to be the case here: the garlands were brought to be put upon the oxen; and these were for the most part made of cypress; sometimes of the pine-tree, and sometimes of other leaves and flowers, such as were peculiar to the gods[y]: and there was something like this among the Jews, at the offerings of their first-fruits, which were done in this manner[z]; "they that were nearest (to Jerusalem) brought green figs and grapes; and they "that were more remote brought dried figs and "raisins; and *an ox* went before them, whose horns "were covered with gold, ועטרת של זית, *and a crown of "olives* on his head; a pipe sounded before them, till "they came near to Jerusalem, and then they sent "some before them, who *crowned* their first-fruits." *And would have done sacrifice with the people*; that is, the priest and the people with him, would have offered sacrifice to Paul and Barnabas, as to two deities; and the Syriac and Ethiopic versions add, *to them*; to both the apostles, with which agrees the Arabic version.

Ver. 14. Which *when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard* of, &c.] As they quickly did, such a multitude being about the doors of the house, where they were: it may be observed, that Barnabas is here called an apostle, as in ver. 4. and is placed before Paul, not as being greater than he, but because of the opinion these Heathens had of him: *they rent their clothes*; as the Jews did, and were obliged to do, when they heard any blasphemy; see the note on Matt. xxvi. 65. *And ran in among the people*; in great haste, shewing great concern of mind, and much indignation and resentment, at what they were about to do: *crying out*; aloud, and with great vehemence, that all might hear, and to express the greater dislike of the action.

Ver. 15. *And saying, Sirs, why do ye these things?* &c.] That is, bring these oxen and garlands, and attempt to offer sacrifice; this they said, not as arguing with them calmly and mildly, but with a mixture of indignation, heat, and zeal, as displeased with, and detesting and abhorring what they were about to do: *we also are men of like passions with you*; men, and not gods; of the same human nature, and that as corrupted, alike sinful men, and need a sacrifice better than these; frail mortal men, subject to frailty, imperfection, afflictions, troubles, diseases, and death itself; and so very improper objects of worship: *and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities*; from these deities, Jupiter and Mercury, and the rest of them; which were vain, useless, and unprofitable, and could do their votaries no manner of service; and from the worshipping of them, which were so many acts of vanity, folly, and weakness, yea, of sin and wickedness: the apostles were so far from being these gods, that their business was to shew men the sin and folly of adhering to them; and to persuade them to relinquish the worship of them, and turn *to the living God*; who has life in himself, and is the fountain of life to others; whereas these deities were dead men, and the lifeless images of them; who neither lived themselves, nor could give life to others, or do them any service of any kind: but the living God is he, *which hath made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein*; which comprehends all created beings, the whole universe, and all that is in it, angels, men, beasts, fowls, fish, and whatever exists; and therefore is only deserving of religious worship.

Ver. 16. *Who in times past*, &c.] For many hundred years past; even ever since God chose and separated the people of Israel from the rest of the nations, to be a peculiar people to himself: from that time he *suffered all nations to walk in their own ways*; of ignorance, superstition, and idolatry; which they devised, and chose, and delighted in: not that he gave them any licence to walk in these ways, without being chargeable with sin, or with impunity; but he left them to themselves, to the dim light and law of nature, and gave them no written law, nor any external revelation of his mind and will; nor did he send any prophets or ministers of his unto them, to shew them the evil of their ways, and turn them from them, and direct them to the true God, and the right way of worshipping him; but left them to take their own methods, and pursue the imagination of their own hearts: but the apostle suggests, that the case was now altered, and God had sent them and other ministers of his, among all nations of the world, to protest against their superstition and idolatry; and to reclaim them from their evil ways, and to direct them to the true and living God, and his worship, and to preach salvation by his son Jesus Christ.

Ver. 17. *Nevertheless, he left not himself without witness*, &c.] Of his kindness and goodness to them, during this long interval and period of time; for though they had not the written law, yet they were not destitute of the law of nature; and had, besides, many instances of providential goodness, by which they might have known God: and should have been thankful to him, and glorified him as God, andnot have worshipped the idols of their own hands; the goodness of God should have led them to repentance, and not have been abused to so many wicked purposes as it had been: *in that he did good*; in a providential way, to persons very undeserving of it, of which some parti-

[t] Baruch vi. 9. Justin. Apolog. 2. p. 57. Tertull. de Corona, c. 10. Alex. ab Alex. Gen. dier. l. 4. c. 17.
[u] Tertull. de Idolatria, c. 18. Alex. ab. Alex. ib. Paschalius de Corona. l. 4. c. 13.
[w] Paschal. ib.
[x] Ovid de Tristibus, l. 3. eleg. 13.
[y] Paschal. ib. c. 16.
[z] Misn. Biccurim, c. 3. sect. 3.

cular instances follow: *and gave us rain from heaven*, which none of the gods of the Gentiles could do, Jer. xiv. 22. So מפתח גשמים, *the key of rains*, is by the Jews [a] said to be one of the keys which God has in his own hands, and which he does not commit to any other: and a wonderful blessing is this to mankind, and which God gives to the just and to the unjust, and did give to the ignorant and idolatrous Gentiles. Beza's most ancient copy, and four other ancient copies of his, and some others, read *you*, instead of *us*; which reading seems most agreeable: *and fruitful seasons*; spring, summer, harvest, and autumn, at which several times, different fruits of the earth appear: *filling our hearts with food and gladness*; giving a sufficiency of food, and even an abundance of it, and that for pleasure and delight, as well as for support and refreshment: the Syriac version reads, *their hearts*; some copies read, *your hearts*.

Ver. 18. *And with these sayings*, &c.] Concerning themselves, and concerning the living God, his creation of all things, and his providential goodness: *scarce restrained they the people, that they had not done sacrifice unto them*; so resolute were they upon it, that it was with great difficulty that they persuaded them from it: in four of Beza's manuscripts, and in some other copies, 'tis added, *but every one went to his own house*, &c.

Ver. 19. *And there came thither certain Jews*, &c.] Either just at the same time, or however whilst the apostles were in this city: in four manuscripts of Beza's, and in some other copies, 'tis read, *as they abode there, and taught, there came*, &c. These Jews were inveterate enemies of the apostles, and seemed to have followed them from place to place, on purpose to oppose them, and to stir up the people against them, and to hinder the success of their ministry all they could: for these came *from* Antioch; not Antioch in Syria, but in Pisidia: where they had contradicted and blasphemed the word of God, and was the reason why the apostles turned to the Gentiles, ch. xiii. 45, 46. *And Iconium*; where also the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles against the apostles, and both of them made an assault upon them, to use them ill, ver. 2, 5. *who persuaded the people*; in the above manuscripts of Beza's, and in some other copies, are these words, "and they disputing confidently, persuaded the people "to depart from them, saying, that they said nothing "true, but in all things lied;" which though they may not be considered as the text, are a good gloss upon it: they persuaded the people not to hearken to them, told them that they were deceivers and jugglers, and instead of having honours conferred upon them, they ought to be severely punished; and to these Jews they hearkened, as appears by what follows: *and having stoned Paul*; even the same persons that just before were for sacrificing to him as a god; which shews the fickleness and inconstancy of the populace, and how little they are to be depended on; for they were the Gentiles that stoned Paul, at the instigation of the Jews; though the latter might probably join with them in it: a like instance we have in the conduct of the Jews towards Christ, who cried *Hosanna* to him one day, and on another, very quickly after, with great importunity say, Crucify him, Crucify him: of this stoning, the apostle makes mention, 2 Cor. xi. 25. see also 2 Tim. iii. 11. When they had stoned him, they *drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead*; which is an addition to their barbarity and inhumanity; for they not only stoned him until he was dead, as they supposed, but they dragged his body through the streets of their city, in contempt of him, and indignation against him, and cast him out of it, where they left him as unworthy of a burial.

Ver. 20. *Howbeit as the disciples stood round about him*, &c.] Weeping over him, and lamenting for him, and it may be praying to God, that he would restore him to life: however, they got about him, in order to take care of him, and provide for his interment: these were the young converts at Lystra, who, under the ministry of the apostles, were now brought to the faith of Christ; unless it can be thought, that they were such who followed them from other places, and attended them in their travels; but the former seems most probable, and which shews their affection to their spiritual father, and their constancy in the faith of Christ, notwithstanding this ill-treatment of his servant: *he rose up and came into the city*; which was no less than a miracle, and was no doubt the effect of the mighty power of God, put forth upon him; for though he was not really dead, yet he was left as such, and thought to be so by both friends and foes: and when it is considered what wounds and bruises he must receive by stoning, and his being dragged through the streets of the city, and left in such a miserable condition without it, that he should at once rise up in the midst of the disciples, and walk into the city as one in perfect health and strength, has something extraordinary and miraculous in it; and it shews great resolution, courage, and strength of mind, to go into the same city again, where he had been so ill used; though he did not choose to continue there, nor were the inhabitants worthy of such a favour: *and the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe*; where they had been before, and had preached the Gospel, and whither they fled from Iconium, when in great danger, ver. 6, 7.

Ver. 21. *And when they had preached the Gospel to that city*, &c.] To the inhabitants of it, as they did in every place where they came, even the pure Gospel of Christ, the good news, and glad tidings of life and salvation by him: *and had taught many*; or made them disciples, their ministry being blessed to bring many to the faith of Christ: *they returned again to Lystra*; where Paul had been stoned: *and to Iconium*; where both Jews and Gentiles, and the magistrates of the city, had attempted to use them ill, and to stone them: *and Antioch*; that is, in Pisidia, as before; where a persecution was raised against them, and from the coasts of which place they were expelled; so fearless were they of danger, and so zealous to promote the interest of Christ, and the good of souls.

Ver. 22. *Confirming the souls of the disciples*, &c.] Not wicked men in their wickedness, nor self-righteous persons in an opinion of their own righteousness, as sufficient for justification, both being contrary to

[a] Targum Jerus. in Gen. xxx. 22. & Jon. in Deut. xxviii. 12.

the nature and tendency of the ministry of the word; the Gospel being a doctrine according to godliness, and a revelation of the righteousness of Christ; but the disciples and followers of Jesus, whom they had already made in those places, these they confirmed in the doctrines of the Gospel, and fortified them against the contradictions and blasphemies of the Jews, and the reproaches, afflictions, and persecutions they met with, by which they might be staggered: they did not confirm the bodies of these disciples, and the health of them, which is the business of the physician to confirm; nor their estates and civil property, to secure and defend which belongs to the civil magistrate; but their souls, their more noble and valuable part, their hearts, which are apt to be unstable; the frames of their hearts, which are precarious, and so as not to be too much depressed when disagreeable, or be too much elated when agreeable, placing too much trust and confidence in them; and also the graces of the spirit in their hearts, as to act and exercise, as faith, hope, and love; and likewise their judgments and understandings in the truths of the Gospel, in what relates to the love of God, the covenant of grace, the person of Christ, and their interest in them: *and exhorting them to continue in the faith:* in the exercise of the grace of faith, and in the doctrine of faith, and in the profession of both, whatever they might meet with on the account thereof, and which they were to expect: *and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God* either into a Gospel church-state, which is sometimes so called, there being much trouble often attending an entrance into it, both from within, from the corruption and unbelief of the heart, and from without, from the temptations of Satan, and from the revilings and insults of men, and even from friends and relations; or into the heavenly glory, the way to that lying through many tribulations; and which, though a rough, is a right way: so it *must* be, there is a necessity of it, partly on account of the decrees of God, who has appointed afflictions for his people, and them to afflictions; and partly on account of the predictions of Christ, who foretold his disciples, that in the world they should have tribulation; as also, that there might be a conformity to him, that as he the head must, and did suffer many things, and enter into his glory, so must they his members: as well as likewise for the trial and exercise of the several graces of the spirit, and to make the saints meet for heaven, and to make that the sweeter to them.

Ver. 23. *And when they had ordained them elders in every church,* &c.] As soon as ever any number of disciples were made, or souls were converted to Christ in any place, they were at once formed, by the apostles, into a church-state; and as the gifts, as well as the grace of the Holy Ghost, attended the ministry of the word, so among those that were converted, there were some that were honoured with ministerial gifts, qualifying them to preach the Gospel, and take upon them the care of the churches: these the apostles directed the churches to look out from among themselves, as in the case of deacons, an inferior office, who by joint suffrages declared their choice of them by the stretching out, or lifting up of their hands, as the word here used signifies, and not the imposition of them; and the apostles presiding in this affair, they were installed into the office of bishops, elders, or pastors over them; which expresses the great regard the apostles had to the order, as well as to the doctrine of the Gospel, and the concern they had for the welfare of souls converted under their ministry, by making a provision for them when they were gone. *And had prayed with fasting:* for the elders ordained, that they might have a larger measure of gifts, and might be kept faithful to the trust committed to them, and be succeeded in their ministry; and for the members of the church, that they might abide by the truths of the Gospel, and the ordinances of it, and walk worthy of it in their conversations, and behave aright in their church-state, both to their elders, and to one another, and that they might persevere to the end: *they commended them to the Lord;* both the elders and the churches, to be blessed by him with fresh supplies of grace, to be kept by his power, and to be preserved by him safe to his kingdom and glory. The Lord Jesus Christ seems to be intended by *the Lord*, to whom the apostles commended them; and who is every way qualified, and fully able to answer such a commendation; see ch. xx. 32. *on whom they believed;* meaning Christ, whom they received by faith, in whom they trusted, and on whom they believed with the heart for righteousness, life, and salvation: this was true, both of the apostles, who commended the elders and churches to the Lord, and was the reason why they commended them to him, because they believed on him themselves; and of the churches and elders commended, who could be commended to none better than to him, on whom they had believed.

Ver. 24. *And after they had passed throughout Pisidia,* &c.] The country where Antioch, the last place mentioned, was; see ch. xiii. 14. *they came to Pamphilia:* see the note on ch. xiii. 13. and ii. 10.

Ver. 25. *And when they had preached the word in Perga,* &c.] A city in Pamphilia, ch. xiii. 13. The Alexandrian copy, and others, and three manuscripts of Beza's, read, *the word of the Lord;* as do the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions: *they went down into Attalia;* not Italia or Italy, as some Latin copies, read; but as the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read; but a city in Pamphilia, bordering on the sea, as Ptolomy writes [b]; as this place did, as appears by what follows. So Jerom says [c], that Attalia is a city of Pamphilia, on the sea-coast; it was formerly the metropolis of it: it is now in the hands of the Turks, and is called Sattalia; near it is a bay, called Golfo di Sattalia, where there is a considerable mart for the whole country: it is famous for tapestry, which is made in it: it had its name from Attalus, king of Pergamus, the first founder of it. Beza's ancient copy here adds, *preaching the Gospel to them;* to the inhabitants of Attalia, and doubtless with success, though no mention is made of it here, nor elsewhere, nor of any church in this place; nor do we read of any in ecclesiastical history until the *sixth* century, when Dionysius, bishop of Attalia, is said to

[b] Geograph. l. 5. c. 5.

[c] De locis Hebraicis. fol. 95. K.

be present in the fifth synod at Rome[d]; unless Attalia, called a city of Lycia, can be thought to be the same with this, of which another Dionysius was bishop in the *fifth* century; and assisted at the council of Chalcedon[e].

Ver. 26. *And thence sailed to Antioch*, &c.] In Syria, *from whence they had been recommended to the grace of God;* by the prophets: from this place they first set out on their travels; here they were separated by the order of the Holy Ghost to the work of the ministry, and by them they were sent forth, after they had in prayer commended them to God, and to his grace to assist them, and succeed them, as well as to fit them *for the work which they fulfilled;* that is, for the work of the ministry, for the preaching of the Gospel in several places; and which they had now gone through, and finished with great integrity and faithfulness, and with much success, though through many afflictions and persecutions.

Ver. 27. *And when they were come*, &c.] To Antioch: *and had gathered the church together:* which was in that place, and who came together at their request; for as they were sent out by them, they judged it proper to call them together; and give them an account of the issue of their work they were recommended by them to the grace of God to fulfil: and being come together at their usual place of meeting, *they rehearsed all that God had done with them:* and by them, as instruments; what grace and strength he had given them to preach the Gospel; what numbers of souls were everywhere converted by it; what miracles were wrought by them for the confirmation of it; and what persecutions and sufferings they had endured for the sake of it; and what deliverances were vouchsafed unto them: *and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles:* the phrase, *the door of faith*, seems to be Jewish; it is to be met with in Jewish writings: it is said[f], "there are two women found in the world, that "express the praise of God, so as all the men of the "world have not; and who are they? Deborah and "Hannah: Hannah, according to 1 Sam. ii. 2. *there is* "*none holy as the Lord, for there is none beside thee;* "and all proclaim that she פתחת פתחא דמהימנותא "לעלמא, *opens the door of faith to the world*, as ver. 8. "*he raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up* "*the beggar from the dunghill*, lo, *the door of faith;* "*to set them among princes*, lo, the faith that is above." The sense here seems to be, that God had given an opportunity to the apostles to preach the doctrine of faith unto the Gentiles, and the Gentiles had had an opportunity of hearing and embracing it; God had opened the mouths of his ministers to preach to them, and he had opened their hearts to attend unto it, and receive it; for it may be understood of his giving of them the grace of faith, by which they received Christ, and his Gospel, into their hearts: so a like phrase is used by the Targumist on Jer. xxxiii. 6. who paraphrases the words thus; "behold, I will bring unto "them healing and redemption, and I will heal them, "and I will reveal, or *open to them*, תרע תיובא, *the* "*door of repentance:*" that is, I will give them repentance: so here, when God is said to open the door of faith to the Gentiles, the sense is, that he had given the grace of faith to them, which came by hearing the word of the Gospel, which he sent them; and gave them encouragement to believe in Christ; so the phrase a door of hope is used in Hos. ii. 15.

Ver. 28. *And there they abode long time with the disciples.*] That is, Paul and Barnabas continued a considerable time at Antioch with the believers there, before they set out on another journey; and what might detain them the longer, might be the disputes they had with some *judaizing* Christians, concerning the observation of the law; of which, and the issue of them, an account is given in the next chapter.

CHAP. XV.

Ver. 1. *AND certain men which came down from Judea*, &c.] To Antioch; they were not sent by the apostles, they came down of *themselves:* who they were, is not certain; that they were *judaizing* Christians, and teachers among them, is plain from the following account: according to Epiphanius[g] they were Cerinthus, and some of his followers: these *taught the brethren;* the Gentile converts at Antioch, who are styled *brethren*, though they were Gentiles, because they were regenerated by the grace of God, and were of the same faith with the believing Jews, and in the same church-state with them at Antioch: and said, *except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses;* or custom of Moses, which had been used from the time of Abraham, and was revived and reinforced by Moses; wherefore the Syriac version renders it, *the law of Moses;* see the note on John vii. 19. *ye cannot be saved;* these men were not only for retaining circumcision, which was now abolished, but they made it necessary to salvation; which was carrying the matter further than even the unbelieving Jews themselves did, at least some of them: for though indeed it is a notion with them, that no circumcised persons go to hell, but are all saved; and some of them say, that God rejects uncircumcised persons, and brings them down to hell[h]; yet others of them speak of the godly among the nations of the world, and of the proselytes of the gate, who keep the seven precepts of Noah, as persons that shall be saved; so Ananias the Jew, preceptor to King Izates, when he signified his great desire to be circumcised, in order to put him off of it, told him, that if he was determined to follow

[d] Magdeburg. Hist. Eccles. cent. 6. c. 2. p. 4.
[e] Ib. cent. 5. c. 10. p. 589.
[f] Zohar in Lev. fol. 8. 3. & in Deut. fol. 109. 4. Vid. ib. in Gen. fol. 60. 2. & 68. 2. Vid. Raziel, fol. 39. 2.
[g] Contra Hæres. l. 1. Hæres. 28.
[h] Shemot Rabba, sect. 19. fol. 104. 4.

the customs of the Jews, he might worship God without circumcision, which was more peculiar to the Jews than to be circumcised [i].

Ver. 2. *When therefore Paul and Barnabas,* &c.] Who were the ministers of the uncircumcision, and were just returned from preaching the Gospel among the Gentiles, with success, and were advocates for them, being witnesses of the grace that was bestowed on them, and therefore opposed the sentiments of these men: and *had no small dissension and disputation with them;* which was attended with much heat and sharpness, and continued some time, and occasioned much disturbance and uneasiness; nor could the affair be decided and issued: wherefore *they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them;* that is, the members of the church at Antioch, taking this matter into consideration, and finding that the difference could not be composed, for the peace of the church, wisely came to a resolution, and made an order, that Paul and Barnabas, with others, as Titus, who went with Paul at this time, as appears from Gal. ii. 1. and some others of the brethren, and it may be also certain, on the other side of the question; that these *should go up to Jerusalem, unto the apostles and elders, about this question;* concerning circumcision, and the necessity of it to salvation, that they might have the sense of James, and Peter, and John, who particularly were at Jerusalem at this time, as appears from ver. 7, 13. and Gal. ii. 9. and other apostles that might be there; and also of other ministers of the word, who are called elders. And the church of Jerusalem being the most ancient church, and several of the apostles residing here, who had seen Christ in the flesh, and had received their mission and commission from him, and had been extraordinarily endowed with the Holy Ghost; and here being many other preachers of the Gospel, and there being in a multitude of counsellors safety, the church at Antioch judged it advisable to send to them for counsel and direction; and it becomes churches to assist each other in this way.

Ver. 3. *And being brought on their way by the church,* &c.] That is, either being accompanied by some of the brethren of the church some part of the way, out of respect unto them, or being provided by them with things necessary for their journey; see Tit. iii. 13. *they passed through Phenice and Samaria;* which both lay between Syria and Judea; in the former of which places those that were scattered upon the death of Stephen had preached, and a great number were converted and believed in Christ who were Jews, ch. xi. 19. and in the latter Philip the evangelist had preached with much success, ch. viii. 5, 12. as therefore their way to Jerusalem lay through these places, they called upon the brethren as they passed; *declaring the conversion of the Gentiles;* in the several places where they had been, as in Syria, Pisidia, Pamphilia, and Lycaonia, how by their ministry they were turned from darkness to light, from Satan unto God, from their superstition and idolatry to the worship of the true God, and to faith in Christ Jesus: *and they caused great joy unto all the brethren;* the believing Jews in those parts, who being truly believers in Christ, rejoiced at the spread of his Gospel, and the increase of his interest, even among the Gentiles; for if angels rejoice, much more should saints rejoice at the conversion of sinners, let them be who or where they will; and where there is true grace, there will be joy when this is the case. There were churches in each of these places, of which *the brethren* here mentioned were members, and which continued for many ages afterwards: the foundation of the churches in Phenice was first laid by the converts made by them, who were scattered abroad through the persecution at the death of Stephen, ch. xi. 19. Quartus, mentioned in Rom. xvi. 23. is said to be bishop of Berytus in this country. In the *second* century there were churches at Tyre and Ptolemais, two cities in Phœnicia; Cassius was bishop of the one, and Clarus of the other [k]: in the *third* century several Phœnician bishops suffered martyrdom, as Tyrannio, bishop of the church of Tyre, Zenobius, presbyter of that at Sidon, and Sylvanus, bishop of Emisa [l]: in the *fourth* century, at the beginning of it, there were present, at the council of Nice, the bishops of Ptolemais, Damascus, Tripolis, Paneas, and Emisa; as they were also at a synod held at Jerusalem in the same century, on account of the Arians, and at another at Antioch on the same account: in the fifth century there were churches in Phœnicia reformed by Chrysostom, by whose means also the temples of the idols were destroyed, and many were converted in these countries; and in this age lived several persons of note here, as Antiochus bishop of Ptolemais, Eustathius bishop of Berytus, Paulus bishop of Emisa, Pompeianus and Uranius of the same place, and Damianus bishop of Sidon, and other Phœnician bishops, who assisted at the council of Chalcedon; as Olympius bishop of Atrapolis, Theodorus bishop of Tripolis, Joseph bishop of Heliopolis, Valerius bishop of Laodicea, Thomas bishop of Euroma, and Theonas bishop of Enria or Enaria, all in Phœnicia: in the sixth century, mention is made of the bishops of Ptolemais, Tyre, Sidon, and Berytus, in the acts of the synod at Rome and Constantinople; and though Phœnicia was seized upon, and wasted by the Arabians and Persians, in the seventh century; yet we read, in the eighth century, of Adeodatus, a bishop of Berytus, who baptized many converted Jews [m]. As for Samaria, our Lord himself preached and converted many persons there; and after his resurrection he gave his apostles a commission and directions to go there; and here Philip preached with great success. Nicolaus, the deacon, is said to be the first bishop of Samaria; and though in after-ages Heathenism very much prevailed in those parts; yet there were Christians and churches, more or less, for several centuries; even in the sixth century there was a bishop of Neapolis in Samaria, killed with the sword, and some presbyters who were taken and fried in a pan, with the remains of some martyrs, by the Samaritan Jews [n].

Ver. 4. *And when they were come to Jerusalem,* &c.]

[i] Joseph. Antiqu. l. 20. c. 2. sect. 5.
[k] Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. 5. c. 25.
[l] Ib. l. 8. c. 13.

[m] Madgeburg. Hist. Eccles. cent. 4. c. 2. p. 2. c. 9. p. 350, 390, 414. cent. 5. c. 2. p. 3, 12, 13. c. 10. p. 350, 351. cent. 6. c. 2. p. 3. cent. 7. c. 3. p. 17. c. 16. p. 365. cent. 8. c. 2. p. 3.
[n] Ib. cent. 6. c. 3. p. 22.

Paul and Barnabas, and the rest that came from Antioch with them: *they were received of the church*; that is, that was at Jerusalem, in a very kind and respectful manner; they were received into their houses, and accommodated with every thing convenient for them: *and of the apostles*; particularly James, and Cephas, and John, who gave to Paul and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, in token of their approbation of them, affection for them, and agreement with them: *and elders*; the other ministers of the Gospel who preached in that place: *and they declared all things that God had done with them*; just as they did to the church at Antioch, when they returned from their travels, ch. xiv. 27. see the note there: the Arabic version here adds, as there, *and that God had opened to the Gentiles the door of faith.*

Ver. 5. *But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees*, &c.] Which was the strictest sect of religion among the Jews: *which believed*; that Jesus was the Messiah, and professed their faith in him, and were members of the church, though they still retained many of their pharisaical tenets, and are therefore said to be of that sect: these rose up in opposition to Paul and Barnabas, as they were relating their success among the Gentiles, and giving an account of the difference that had happened at Antioch, and their own sense of that matter: *saying, that it was needful to circumcise them*; the Gentiles that believed: and *to command them to keep the law of Moses*; both moral and ceremonial, the observance of which they reckoned was absolutely necessary to salvation. Some think these are not the words of Luke, relating what happened at Jerusalem, when Paul and Barnabas gave in their account of things to the apostles and elders; but that they are a continuation of their account, how that in the controversy raised at Antioch, certain Pharisees that came thither from Judea, rose up and asserted the necessity of the Gentiles being circumcised, and of their keeping the law of Moses in order to their being saved; which is favoured by the Syriac version, especially by the Latin interpreter of it, who supplies the words thus, *but say they* (i. e. Paul and Barnabas) *there arose men*, &c.

Ver. 6. *And the apostles and elders came together*, &c.] And also the brethren, or private members of the church, even the whole church, as appears from ver. 22, 23. Whether all the apostles were here present, is not certain; Peter, James, and John were; but who else, cannot be said: these met together *for to consider of this matter*; to hear what was to be said on both sides of the question, and then to judge what advice was proper to be given to the Gentiles.

Ver. 7. *And when there had been much disputing*, &c.] Pro and con upon this subject; many had spoken, and much had been said, and a great deal of time had been taken up about the thing in controversy: *Peter rose up*; not only out of respect to this venerable assembly, but to signify that he had something to say; and he stood up that he might be the better heard. Beza's ancient copy reads, *rose up in spirit; and said unto them, men and brethren*; an usual form of address with the Jews: see ch. vii. 2. *ye know how that a good while ago*; or *from ancient days*; or *from the beginning*, as the Ethiopic version renders it; from the beginning of the preaching of the Gospel, after the ascension of Christ; quickly after the effusion of the spirit on the day of Pentecost: it is thought, by some, to be ten or eleven, and, by others, to be twenty years ago, or thereabout: *God made choice among us*; the apostles; the Alexandrian copy reads, *among you*; the sense is the same, for Peter must be supposed as directing his discourse chiefly to the apostles: *that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the Gospel, and believe*; referring to the case of Cornelius, and his family: and his sense is, that some years ago it pleased God, in his providence, to single him out from the rest of the apostles, and in a very extraordinary manner to call him to go to Cæsarea, and preach the gospel to Cornelius, and those that were in his house, that hearing they might believe in Christ.

Ver. 8. *And God which knoweth the hearts*, &c.] Of all men; he being omniscient, the searcher of the hearts, and the trier of the reins of the children of men, knew with what sincerity Cornelius sent for Peter; and with what vehement desire and longing expectation he and his family and friends waited for his coming; and with what earnestness, diligence, and affection they attended to what he said: *bore them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as* he did *unto us*; God bore a testimony, and shewed his well-pleasedness in the whole of this affair, by bestowing upon them not only the regenerating and sanctifying grace of the spirit; but his extraordinary gifts, such as speaking with divers tongues, even in like manner as these were bestowed on the apostles themselves, on the day of Pentecost, though they were uncircumcised persons; for the drift of Peter's oration is to shew, that circumcision was not necessary to salvation.

Ver. 9. *And put no difference between us and them*, &c.] Neither in the extraordinary gifts, nor special grace of the spirit; giving them the same graces of faith, hope, and love, admitting to the same privileges and immunities of the house of God, and giving them a right and title to the same inheritance of the saints in light, though the one were circumcised, and the other were not. God puts no difference as to matters of religion under the Gospel dispensation between Jews and Gentiles, neither on account of Abraham's seed, or of circumcision, or of the ceremonial law, or of national adoption; nor would he have any made with respect to conversation, civil or religious; all which Peter knew full well: nor has he made any difference in his eternal choice of persons to eternal salvation, on any of the above accounts, having ordained Gentiles to eternal life as Jews, who in consequence of it believe in Christ; nor in redemption, Christ having redeemed by his blood men out of every kindred, tongue, people, and nation; nor in effectual vocation, for they that were called in the first times of the Gospel, were not of the Jews only, but of the Gentiles also, to whom the Gospel was alike sent, and made effectual to saving purposes: these shared in the same blessings of pardon, justification, and adoption; their sins were forgiven through the same blood, their persons were justified by the same righteousness, and they were taken into the same family, and were no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens of the saints, and of the household of God; having the same access to God,

being built on the same foundation, enjoying the same privileges, and having the same hope of eternal glory. *Purifying their hearts by faith:* which was done by implanting faith in them, and leading that faith to the blood of Christ, which cleanses from all sin, original and actual, with which men are defiled; for faith has not this efficacy in itself, but as it has to do with the blood of Jesus: and this spiritual purification being what answered to circumcision, made that unnecessary; for this is the circumcision of the heart, of which the other was only typical. The hearts of men are filthy, and need purifying; they are originally polluted with sin; this is the case of all men; and this defilement reaches to all the members of the body, and the faculties of the soul; and especially the heart is the seat of this impurity, which God only can cleanse: he promises to do it, and does do it; and he only can do it, men cannot; for though they are exhorted to it, in order to make them sensible of their pollution, and their need of cleansing, that they may apply where it is to be had, yet it is not in their power to effect it; to make a clean heart is a creation-work, which is peculiar to God: the heart cannot be purified, neither by ceremonial ablutions, nor by works of moral righteousness, nor by humiliations and tears, nor by submission to Gospel ordinances, as water-baptism, but only by the grace of God, and the blood of Christ; which the spirit of God sprinkles upon the heart, and which faith looks to and deals with, and so it is freed from an evil conscience; and this blessing the believing Gentiles enjoyed in common with the believing Jews.

Ver. 10. *Now therefore why tempt ye God,* &c.] By hesitating about this matter, by disputing upon this point, and by seeking for further proof and evidence of the will of God in this affair; when it is so plain a case, that it has been his will that the Gospel should be preached to Gentiles, without obliging them to circumcision; that he has given his spirit both in his extraordinary gifts, and special grace, to uncircumcised persons; particularly he has bestowed faith in Christ upon them, whereby they have been led to the blood of Christ, typified in circumcision, and are thereby purged from all their filth and pollution, and so are the true circumcision: wherefore it is no other than tempting God, a manifest opposition to him, and what must give him offence, to debate about a point so clear; and especially to attempt *to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear.* It is common with the Jews to call the law a yoke; frequent mention is made of ניר פקדיא, and עול מצות, *the yoke of the commandments*[*], and עול התורה, *the yoke of the law*[y]: and by it here is meant, not circumcision only and barely, for that the Jewish fathers had been able to bear, and had bore it; nor the whole ceremonial law only, which consisted of a multitude of commands and ordinances very heavy and hard; but even the whole moral law, which circumcision obliged those who submitted to it to keep it perfectly: see Gal. v. 3. which neither the apostles, nor their fathers, were ever able to do, nor any mere man whatever; and therefore this yoke was intolerable and insupportable, and not to be put upon the necks of the Gentile believers; who here are called disciples, being taught the doctrine of the Gospel, and the way of salvation: which was not by circumcision, nor by any works of the law, but by the grace of Christ, as in the following verse.

Ver. 11. *But we believe,* &c.] Who are circumcised; the Arabic version adds, *and are sure:* for what follows is a sure and certain article of faith: *that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ:* not through circumcision, or by any works of the law, moral or ceremonial; but through the grace of Christ undertaking for them, assuming their nature, and dying in their room and stead; through his redeeming, justifying, and pardoning grace: salvation is by Christ: Jehovah the father appointed him to be his salvation; he sent him, and he came to save sinners; and he has obtained salvation for them; and it is in him, and in no other: and this salvation is by *the grace* of Christ; it was grace moved him to engage in this work before the world began; it was good will to men that caused him to come down from heaven, and appear on earth in the form of a servant; it was pure love that influenced him to lay down his life for them; through the grace in his heart he did all this for them; and it is the fulness of grace in his hands, out of which they receive abundance, whereby they are entitled to, and are made meet for eternal glory: *we shall be saved, even as they:* either as the disciples, the Gentile converts, who without circumcision, and the works of the law, were saved by the pure grace and love of Christ, in dying for them, and on which they alone depended for salvation; or else as the Jewish fathers were, for they were justified, pardoned, accepted, and saved in the same way, as the saints under the New Testament are: they could not keep the law perfectly, nor was there then, nor now, salvation by it, only by the grace of Christ; and in that way, and that only, Old and New Testament believers, Jews and Gentiles, whether circumcised or uncircumcised, are saved. The Gentiles were not saved by the light of nature, nor the Jews by the law of Moses; the one were not lost for want of circumcision, nor the other saved by it; the only way of salvation to both, and under all dispensations, is the Lord Jesus Christ; through whose sacrifice sin is atoned for, through whose blood it is pardoned, through whose righteousness men are justified before God, and are accepted with him; and through whom saints have communion with God; and by whom, and whose grace, and not by their own works, they shall be saved with an everlasting salvation, from sin, law, death, hell, and damnation: and the salvation of one, and of another, even of all that are saved, Jews or Gentiles, is by grace; no one is deserving of it; they have all sinned, and come short of the glory of God; have done that which is abominable, and they themselves are abominable in the sight of God; they have destroyed, and cannot help themselves; nor have they any one good thing but what they have received from the Lord, and therefore ought to ascribe all to his grace; it is by that they are what they are, have what

[*] Targum in Cant. i. 10. & in Lam. iii. 27. Misn. Beracot, c. 2. sect. 2.

[y] Echa Rabbati, fol. 56. 2. Pirke Abot, c. 3. sect. 5. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 39. 3.

they have, and do what they do. Salvation, in all its parts and branches, is owing to grace; and so it is with respect to all persons that are saved; some are not saved by their works, and others by the grace of Christ, but they are all saved by grace: and none have any room to boast of themselves against others.

Ver. 12. *Then all the multitude kept silence,* &c.] Upon this oration of Peter's, there was a profound silence in the whole assembly, among all the brethren of the church, who were come together on this occasion; they were all satisfied with, and by their silence acquiesced in, what Peter said; and waited to hear what might be further said about this matter, by other persons in the assembly; and even those who were on the other side of the question, were confounded and nonplussed, and knew not what to say, and the more so, when they perceived that the rest of the apostles and elders were of the same mind; for Beza's most ancient copy introduces this clause thus; *then the elders agreeing to the things that were said by Peter, the whole multitude was silent:* and this gave Paul and Barnabas an opportunity of being heard; who, perhaps, could not so well be heard before, for the clamour of the people against them, who might not have so good an opinion of them, and of their practices: *and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul;* Barnabas is mentioned first, he being most known to the Jews, and of whom they might have the better opinion; and who probably gave the account of their proceedings and success among the Gentiles: *declaring what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them;* what wonders of grace were wrought in the conversion of multitudes of them, wherever they came; and what miracles in nature were wrought for the confirmation of the Gospel, such as the striking blind Elymas the sorcerer, at Paphos in Cyprus, and curing the cripple at Lystra; and which they ascribe not to themselves but to God, whose instruments they only were.

Ver. 13. *And after they had held their peace,* &c.] Meaning not the multitude, but Paul and Barnabas; when they had finished their account, and had done speaking: *James answered;* or rose up, as the Syriac version reads, he stood up and began to speak. This was James the son of Alpheus, one of the twelve apostles, sometimes called the brother of the Lord; for the other James, the son of Zebedee and brother of John, was dead, being killed by Herod, ch. xii. 2. but this was the brother of Jude, and the same that wrote the epistle that bears his name: whether he was now bishop or pastor of the church at Jerusalem, is not certain; nor whether he was president in this council; the speeches made in it don't appear to be directed to him: he began his oration thus, *saying, men and brethren, hearken to me;* the titles he uses, and the manner of desiring audience, were what were common with the Jews; see ch. ii. 14, 22, 29. and vii. 2.

Ver. 14. *Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles,* &c.] James begins with taking notice of Peter's speech, and agrees to it, and confirms it; for by Simeon is not meant, as some have thought, the Simeon that took Christ in his arms, Luke ii. 25. who had been dead long ago; but Simon Peter, who had spoken before. Simon and Simeon are one and the same name; the former is only a contraction of the latter in the Syriac language; Simeon was his pure Hebrew name, and James speaking to an assembly of Hebrews, uses it; and observes, that he had given a very clear and distinct narrative, how God at the first preaching of the Gospel, quickly after the day of Pentecost, was pleased to look upon the Gentiles, and shew favour to them, and visit them in a way of grace and mercy, by sending the Gospel to them, and his spirit to make it effectual: this was a gracious visit; he came and looked upon them, quickened them, and spoke comfortably to them, and bestowed special favours upon them; the set time for such a visit being come: the Arabic version renders it, *how God first promised;* referring to the promises concerning the calling of the Gentiles, which James afterwards confirms by citing a passage out of the prophets to the same purpose: the Syriac version, *how God began to choose out of the Gentiles;* that is, by calling them by his grace; and the Ethiopic version, *how God first had mercy on the Gentiles;* who before had not obtained mercy: *to take out of them a people for his name;* for himself, for his own glory, to call upon his name, and to be called by his name, to bear his name, and support his Gospel, cause and interest: the distinguishing grace of God may be seen herein; it was grace to visit them, to look upon them, when for many hundreds of years he had overlooked them, he had taken no notice of them; and it was distinguishing grace to take some out of them, to be a special and peculiar people to himself; to separate them from the rest by his powerful and efficacious grace, and form them into a church-state, that they might shew forth his praise and glorify him.

Ver. 15. *And to this agree the words of the prophets,* &c.] In several of the prophecies of the Old Testament, which plainly speak of the calling of the Gentiles; though James thought it sufficient to produce only one instead of many: *as it is written;* in Amos ix. 11, 12. and this is agreeably to the Jewish way of citing Scriptures, as Surenhusius observes; so it is said[a], in twenty-four places the priests are called Levites, and this is one of them, Ezek. xliv. 15. where only one place is mentioned, instead of the twenty-four.

Ver. 16. *After this I will return,* &c.] That is, after the Lord had destroyed the sinful kingdom from off the face of the earth, and had sifted the house of Israel among all nations, and the sinners of his people were slain with the sword; after all this he promises to return and shew favour to them: this is the sense of the prophet which James gives; for these words are not at length in Amos; there it is only said, *in that day;* upon which Jarchi's note is, "*after* all these things shall "have come upon them, that day shall come which is "appointed for redemption;" which well agrees with James here, and the manner in which he introduces this passage: *and will build again the tabernacle of David, that is fallen down;* that is, as the Jewish[b] writers themselves interpret it, the kingdom of the house of David, though in a temporal sense, which was now in a most ruinous condition; the sceptre was departed from Judah; all power and authority were

[a] T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 86. 2. & Beracot, fol. 4. 1, 2.

[b] Targum, Jarchi & Kimchi in loc.

falling off apace from the Jews, into the hands of the Romans; David's family were quite sunk, and almost gone, and had no share at all in the civil government; Jesus, who was descended from him, and was of the blood royal, and right heir to his throne, was born of a poor virgin; and his supposed father was a carpenter; and he himself the King of the Jews, was crucified by them; yet notwithstanding all this, David's tabernacle was to be rebuilt, and his kingdom to be restored by the Messiah, but in a spiritual way; for the tabernacle of David designs the spiritual kingdom or church of Christ, who is here called David, as in Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 24. and xxxvii. 24, 25. Hos. iii. 5. and of whom David was an eminent type; and the church may be called a tabernacle, being in the present state of things, as to its place, uncertain and moveable, though ere long it will be a tabernacle that will not be taken down, Isa. xxxiii. 20. and Christ's tabernacle, being of his building, and where he dwells and keeps his court, as King of saints; see Isa. xvi. 5. and which was in a fallen ruinous condition when he came on earth, through the corrupt principles of the Pharisees and Sadducees, the bigotry and superstition of the one, and the deism of the other; and through the great decay of spiritual worship and powerful godliness, and the bad lives of professors, and the small number of truly godly persons: the Jews[s] themselves refer this prophecy to the times of the Messiah, yea, one of the names by which they call the Messiah is taken from hence[t]: it is asked, "who is "Bar Naphli? it is replied, the Messiah; the Messiah "is called Bar Naphli (the son fallen, or of the fallen); "is it not written, *in that day I will raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen down?*" one of their own commentators[u] on this text, has this note, "if we "interpret this of the Messiah, the matter is clear:" but then this must be understood in a spiritual sense, for Christ's kingdom is not a worldly one; the raising up and rebuilding of this tabernacle, must design the reviving of true religion, the doctrine and practice of it, the enlargement of the church of God, by the conversion both of Jews and Gentiles: *and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up:* which has been done by breaking down the middle wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles, and letting in the latter into the Gospel church with the former, whereby it grows up to be an holy temple in the Lord; see Isa. liv. 2, 3. and lxi. 4, 5. and ii. 2. and to this sense the Jews themselves[w] interpret it; "the holy blessed God "will raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, "as it is said, Amos ix. 11. *in that day I will raise up "the tabernacle of David:* for all the world shall be "אגודה אחת, *one bundle;* as it is said, Zeph. iii. 9."

Ver. 17. *That the residue of men might seek after the Lord,* &c.] The rebuilder and proprietor of this tabernacle, and who dwells in it; that is, attend his worship, pray unto him, and seek unto him for life and salvation: in Amos these are called, *the remnant of Edom:* and design the remnant according to the election of grace among the Gentiles; the Jews generally call all other nations, and especially the Roman empire, Edom: *and all the Gentiles upon whom my name is called;* for God is the God of the whole earth, of the Gentiles as well as of the Jews; and his Gospel was now spread among them, and many of them were converted and called Christians, and the children and people of God: the Jews[x] understand this of the people of Israel, who are called by the name of the Lord, or on whom his name is called; and some think the words are to be transposed[y] thus, "that Israel on whom my name is "called might possess the remnant of Edom, and all "the people;" and is true of their possessing or enjoying them in a Gospel church-state: *saith the Lord, who doth all these things;* raises up the tabernacle of David, revives the interest of religion, re-settles the church, and increases it, calls and converts the Gentiles, causes them to seek after the Lord, and unites them in one church-state with the Jews; the word *all* is left out in the Alexandrian copy, and in the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions, and is not in Amos.

Ver. 18. *Known unto God are all his works,* &c.] These are the words of James, and not of Amos; all the things which God does in the church and in the world, they were all foreknown and pre-determined by him: *from the beginning of the world:* or from eternity; even all his works of creation, providence and grace: the Alexandrian copy, and Beza's most ancient copy, and the Vulgate Latin version, read in the singular number, *his work;* the work of the conversion of the Gentiles; this was fixed and resolved on by God in eternity; he knew it would be, because he had determined it should be; and accordingly he foretold it, and spoke of it in various periods of time before it came to pass; and therefore it should not be looked upon as some new and strange thing, that was never known, spoken or heard of: and this holds true of every other work of God, and agrees with what the Jews sometimes say[z], that "every work which is renewed "in the world, the holy blessed God has commanded "(or ordered) it from the day the world was created."

Ver. 19. *Wherefore my sentence is,* &c.] Opinion or judgment in this case, or what he reckoned most advisable to be done; for he did not impose his sense upon the whole body, but proposed it to them: *that we trouble not them:* by obliging them to be circumcised, which would have been very afflicting and disturbing to them; not only because of the corporeal pain produced by circumcision, but because of the bondage their minds would be brought into, and they become subject to the whole law, and all its burdensome rites and ceremonies: *which from among the Gentiles are turned to God:* the one true and living God, Father, Son, and Spirit, and from idols, and the worshipping of them.

Ver. 20. *But that we write unto them,* &c.] Or send an epistle to them, to this effect, concerning the following things: *that they abstain from pollutions of idols:* that is, from eating things offered to idols; see ver. 29. for not idolatry, or the wor-

[s] Zohar in Gen. fol. 53. 2. & in Exod. fol. 4. 2. & 95. 2.
[t] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 96. 2.
[u] Aben Ezra in Amos ix. 11.
[w] Bereshit Rabba, sect. 88, fol. 76. 4.

[x] Targum in Amos ix. 12.
[y] Kimchi & Aben Ezra in ib.
[z] Zohar in Exod. fol. 78. 2. Vid. ib. in Lev. fol. 25, 4.

shipping of idols itself, is here spoken of; for that was no indifferent thing; and besides, these converted Gentiles were turned from that, and there was no danger of their returning to it; but eating things sacrificed to idols was an indifferent thing; but yet inasmuch as it had a tendency to lead to idolatry, and gave offence to the Jewish believers in the churches, and was a stumbling-block to weak minds, who by the example of stronger Christians, were led to eat them as sacrificed to an idol, and so their weak consciences were defiled, therefore it was very proper to abstain from them; *and* from *fornication;* not spiritual fornication or idolatry, but fornication taken in a literal sense, for the carnal copulation of one single person with another, and which is commonly called simple fornication: the reason why this is put among things indifferent is, not that it was so in itself, but because it was not thought to be criminal by the Gentiles, and was commonly used by them, and which must be offensive to the believing Jews, who were better acquainted with the will of God; this is omitted in the Ethiopic version: *and* from *things strangled;* that is, from eating them, and design such as die of themselves, or are torn with beasts, or are not killed in a proper way, by letting out their blood; but their blood is stagnated or congealed in the veins: the Jews might not kill with a reaper's sickle, nor with a saw, nor with the teeth, or nail; because these החנקין, *strangled* [a]: and what was not slain as it should be, was reckoned all one as what dies of itself; and whoever ate of either of these was to be beaten [b]; the law respecting these things was of the ceremonial kind, and peculiar to the Jews, and was not binding upon the Gentiles; for that which died of itself might be given to a stranger, and he might eat it, or it might be sold to an alien, Deut. xiv. 21. this has been wanting in many copies, and it was not read by several of the ancient fathers: *and* from *blood;* which is not to be understood of the blood of men and shedding of that, which is of a moral nature; but of the blood of beasts, and of eating of that. There were several laws about eating of blood, and which are different, and ought to be carefully distinguished. The first is in Gen. ix. 4. *but flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall you not eat;* which forbids the eating of flesh with the blood; but not the eating of flesh separately, nor the eating of blood separately, provided they were properly prepared and dressed, but the eating of them together without any preparation. As this was the first hint to man that we know of, that he might eat flesh, it was proper that the manner in which he should eat it, should be suggested to him; that he should not take the creature alive and eat it, or tear off any of its members and eat it whilst alive, or eat raw flesh; but should prepare it by roasting or boiling, or some way, in which it might become proper food: and it is the constant sense of the Jewish synagogue [c], that this law is to be understood of the member of a living creature, torn from it, and eaten whilst alive; six commands, the Jews say, were given to the first man Adam, the first five forbid idolatry, blasphemy, shedding of blood, uncleanness, and theft, or robbery, and the sixth required judgment against offenders; to these were added, for the sons of Noah, a seventh, which forbid the eating of the member of a living creature, as it is said, Gen ix. 4 [d]. So that this law has nothing to do with eating of blood, simply considered, and no more forbids eating of it separately, than it does eating of flesh separately: in like manner is the law in Deut. xii. 23. to be understood, and is so interpreted by the Jewish writers [e]: another law is in Lev. xix. 26. *ye shall not eat* any thing *with the blood;* which according to our version, seems to be the same law with the former, but is not; for it is not said here, as before, ב, *in,* or *with,* but על, *upon, over,* or *by* the blood. This is differently understood: some think the sense is, that no one should eat of the sacrifices, before the sprinkling of the blood upon the altar [f]; or until it stands or is congealed in the basons [g]: others, that it is a caution to judges, that they don't eat until they have finished judgment; for whoever judges or passes sentence after he has eat and drank, is as if he was guilty of blood [h]: another observes [i], that next to this clause, 'tis said, *neither shall ye use enchantment;* meaning that they should not use enchantment by eating, in the way that murderers do, who eat bread over the slain, that the avengers of the slain may not take vengeance on them; this author smells something superstitious or diabolical in this matter; and indeed this is the case; the truth of the matter is, it refers to a practice among the Heathens, who fancied that blood was the food of the demons, to whom they sacrificed; and therefore when they sacrificed to them, they took the blood of the beast and put it into a vessel, and sat down by it, and round about it, and ate the flesh; imagining that whilst they ate the flesh, the demons eat the blood, and by this means friendship and familiarity were contracted between them; so that they hoped to receive some advantage from them, and be informed of things to come [k]. Hence, this law is placed with others against enchantments and observing times, to which may be added, Ezek. xxxiii. 25. *ye eat with the blood,* or *over* it, or *by* it; *and lift up your eyes to your idols;* which is to be understood in the same light, and with these compare 1 Sam. xiv. 32. and Lev. xvii. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. But besides these, there was a third law, which is frequently repeated, Lev. iii. 17. and vii. 26, 27. and xvii. 10, 11, 12, which absolutely forbids the eating of blood, as well as fat; the Jews except the blood of fishes, and locusts, and of creeping things, and the blood of men, and the blood that is in eggs, and that which is squeezed out of flesh, or drops from it, which a man may eat and not be guilty of the breach of this law [l]: the reason of this law

[a] Misn. Cholin, c. 1. sect. 2.
[b] Maimon. Hilchot Maacolot Assurot, c. 4. sect. 1.
[c] Targum Jon. Jarchi, Aben Ezra & Abendana not. in Sol. ben Melec in loc.
[d] Maimon. Hilchot Melacim, c. 9. sect. 1.
[e] Jarchi and Baal Hatturim in loc. T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 56. 2. & 59. 1. & Cholin, fol. 102. 2. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 95. 4.
[f] Jarchi & Aben Ezra in loc.
[g] Targum Jon. in loc.
[h] Zohar in Exod. fol. 50. 3. Vid. Maimon. Hilchot Sanhedrin, c. 13. sect. 4.
[i] Baal Hatturim in Lev. xix. 26.
[k] Maimon. Moreh Nevochim, par. 3. c. 46. Kimchi in 1 Sam. xiv. 32. & in Ezek. xxxiii. 25.
[l] Misn. Ceritot, c. 5. sect. 1. Maimon. Maacolot Asurot, c. 6. sect. 1. Jarchi in Lev. xvii. 10. Moses Kotsensis Mitzvot Tora, pr. pag. 137.

was, because the blood, which is the life, was given in sacrifice for the life of men, to be an atonement for them; wherefore, to keep up a just reverence of the sacrifice, and to direct to the blood of the great sacrifice of the Messiah, blood was forbidden to be eaten, till that sacrifice was offered up; and then that blood itself was to be spiritually eaten by faith: and now if eating of blood in general was morally evil in itself, it would be a monstrous shocking thing in the Christian religion, that the blood of Christ is to be drank; though it be to be understood in a spiritual sense: the law against eating blood was very strictly enjoined the Jews, and severely punished; whoever ate of blood, but the quantity of an olive, if he ate it wilfully, was guilty of cutting off; if ignorantly, he was to bring a sin-offering[m]: James knew that the breach of this law would give great offence to the Jews, and therefore for the peace of the church, he moves that the Gentiles might be wrote to, to abstain from blood; and which was agreed to and done: and this was attended to with much strictness by the primitive Christians, who seemed to have observed this advice in the form of a law, and thought it criminal to eat blood; but in process of time it was neglected; and in Austin's time abstinence from blood was derided, as a ridiculous notion; and it is at least now high time that this, and every thing else of a ceremonial kind, was dropped by Christians; though where the peace of the brethren is in danger, this, and every thing of an indifferent nature should be abstained from: Beza's ancient copy adds, *and whatsoever they would not have done to themselves, do not unto others*; and so two of Stephens's; the Ethiopic version is, *whatsoever they hate should be done to themselves, let them not do to their brethren.*

Ver. 21. *For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him*, &c.] That is, for many years past, even from the times of Ezra, the law of Moses has been publicly expounded by them, whom the Jews call Derashim, preachers, or expounders, in every city where there was a synagogue; and every city belonging to the Jews, were obliged to build a synagogue, yea, they were obliged to do it where there were but ten Israelites[n]: this is given by James as a reason why the Gentiles should be wrote unto concerning the above things; because that they hearing the law read and expounded every week, would be ready to conclude that they were obliged to submit unto it, as to circumcision, and other things; unless they were told that they were free from it; only in order to maintain peace with their brethren the Jews, it would be necessary for them to abstain from the above things: and it may also carry in it a reason, why the Jews need not be wrote unto, and why they had no reason to complain for thus writing to the Gentiles; since they had the law read and explained to them every week, and there would be no attempt to make any alteration in that form of service: *being read in the synagogues every sabbath-day*; see the note on ch. xiii. 15.

Ver. 22. *Then pleased it the apostles and elders, with the whole church*, &c.] The opinion, judgment, and advice of James, being approved of by the whole body of the apostles, ministers, and brethren of the church assembled together on this occasion; they unanimously agreed, *to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch, with Paul and Barnabas*: that is, they thought fit to choose some persons from among themselves, out of that assembly, or who were members of the church at Jerusalem; and send them to Antioch, where the difference began, along with Paul and Barnabas, to give an account of the sense of the apostles, elders, and brethren, about the affair in controversy, and what was their advice upon the whole: and the rather they took this step, to prevent all suspicion of Paul and Barnabas giving a partial account, or putting a wrong turn upon the sentiments of this assembly, they being parties concerned on one side, wherefore they thought fit to send some indifferent persons along with them, to confirm their narrative, and to compose differences among them, and to bring back an account of the state of the church: namely, *Judas surnamed Barsabas*: see the note on ch. i. 23. *and Silas*, the same with Sylvanus: *chief men among the brethren*, leading men among them, who went before them, were guides to them, in doctrine and discipline; for these were prophets or preachers, as appears from ver. 32. and these they pitched upon, partly out of respect to Paul and Barnabas, as being suitable companions for them, and partly out of respect to the church at Antioch, and chiefly because of their ability, and capacity, for such service they were sent upon.

Ver. 23. *And wrote letters by them after this manner*, &c.] Not that they made use of them as their amanuenses, to write their letters for them; but being written they put them into their hands, and sent them by them, and they were written in the following form: *the apostles, and elders, and brethren*; which belonged to, or were members of the church at Jerusalem; they are severally set in their proper place and order: the apostles, Peter, and James, and John, and it may be some others first; for these God had set in the first place in the church; then the elders, or preachers of the Gospel, such as were Judas and Silas: and then the brethren, or private members of the church; who are called so, because they are of one family, and have one father, and are partakers of the same grace and privileges: these, *send greeting*: or their Christian salutation, wishing all peace and prosperity, both for soul and body, temporal, spiritual and eternal: *unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch, and Syria and Cilicia*: the brethren or members of the several churches in these parts, who were Gentiles, are particularly sent to; and not the brethren who were Jews; because they were especially concerned, and to them is the advice directed: Antioch is first mentioned, that being the place where the controversy began; but there being other churches in Syria, besides Antioch, in which were many Gentiles, and also in Cilicia, and particularly at Tarsus, Paul's native place, and where he had preached, ch. ix. 30. and Gal. i. 21. they are therefore mentioned, and being countries near to one another, it is very likely that the controversy had spread itself among them.

Ver. 24. *Forasmuch as we have heard*, &c.] By the

[m] Maimon. Maacolot Asurot, c. 6. sect. 1.

[n] Maimon. Tephilla, c. 11. sect. 1.

report of Paul and Barnabas, who were sent by the church at Antioch to Jerusalem, to acquaint them with the state of their case: *that certain which went out from us*: see ver. 1. *have troubled you with words*, or doctrines: *subverting your souls*; removing them from the doctrine of grace to another Gospel, and which deserved not the name of a Gospel; and was very destructive to their souls, at least to the peace and comfort of them: this shews what an opinion the apostles, and elders, and members of the church at Jerusalem had of these *judaizing* preachers, and their tenets; they looked upon them as troublers of God's Israel, and upon their doctrines as subversive of spiritual joy and comfort. *Saying*, ye must *be circumcised and keep the law*; the ceremonial law; the Alexandrian copy, and the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions leave out this clause; see the notes on ver. 1, 5. *to whom we gave no* such *commandment*: it looks as if these *judaizing* preachers not only pretended to be sent out by the apostles, to preach; but that they had particularly this in their instructions from them, that they should insist upon it, that the Gentiles that were received into the churches, should be circumcised, and be obliged to keep the other parts of the ceremonial law, when they had no such orders from them.

Ver. 25. *It seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord*, &c.] Or together; in one place, as the Vulgate Latin and Arabic versions render it; see ch. ii. 1. though certain it is, that as they were in one place, so they were in one mind; and their unanimity was proper to be mentioned, in order to engage a regard to their advice: *to send men chosen unto you*; men chosen for this purpose; namely, Judas and Silas: *with our beloved Barnabas* and *Paul*; who are commended thus, partly to express their affection to them; and partly to observe the wisdom of the church at Antioch, in sending two such agreeable persons; and chiefly to testify their approbation of the doctrine and conduct of these two men.

Ver. 26. *Men that have hazarded their lives*, &c.] As at Antioch, in Pisidia, where a persecution was raised against them, and they were expelled out of the coasts of that place; and at Lystra, where Paul was stoned, and left for dead, ch. xiii. 50. and xiv. 19. and this they did, not for any sinister and selfish ends, for any worldly gain, or vain glory, and popular applause, but *for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ*: for the sake of his Gospel, and the enlargement of his interest, and kingdom in the world; and therefore were worthy of esteem, and ought to be regarded and attended to, and greatly to be preferred to false teachers; who only sought themselves, their worldly honour, and ease, and would sacrifice nothing, nor hazard any thing, for the sake of Christ.

Ver. 27. *We have sent therefore Judas and Silas*, &c.] The chosen men before mentioned, *who shall also tell you the same things by mouth*; as are written in these letters; which would both confirm and explain things unto them.

Ver. 28. *For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us*, &c.] By various things they had reason doubtless to conclude, that they were under the influence and direction of the Holy Ghost in this affair; as by the spirit of prayer that was among them; by that power and energy with which many of them spoke on this occasion, and that so agreeable to the word of God; and by that unanimity with which they came into the advice given. With respect to the form here used, compare 1 Chron. xiii. 2. and the Targum on it, which renders the words thus; "if it be beautiful "before you, and acceptable before the Lord, let us "send, *&c.*" It follows here, *to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things*: not that they were necessary to salvation, but necessary to secure the peace of the churches, and at least were necessary, at that present time; and therefore since it appeared to be necessary to enjoin them for the present, they hoped they would not refuse to bear them; and especially, since, though they must own they were burdens, and a part of the yoke of bondage, yet they were not many, nor very heavy, and for the future they should lay no other, nor more upon them; and what they did, was to prevent any other or greater burden to be laid; and so the Syriac version renders it, *lest any more*, or *greater burden should be laid upon you*.

Ver. 29. *That ye abstain from meats offered to idols*, &c.] Which explains what is meant by pollutions of idols, ver. 20. *and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication*: see the note on ver. 20. In Beza's most ancient copy, and in three other manuscripts, and in the Complutensian edition, it follows, *and whatsoever ye would not have done to yourselves, that do ye not to another*: in like manner the Ethiopic version also reads, as in ver. 20. *from which if ye keep yourselves ye shall do well*: it will be doing a good thing, and make for the peace of the churches; in Beza's most ancient copy it is added, *born*, or *moved by the Holy Ghost*: being influenced and assisted by him in this, and every good work: *fare ye well*; the Syriac version adds, *in our Lord*.

Ver. 30. *So when they were dismissed*, &c.] That is, Paul and Barnabas, with Judas and Silas, by the apostles, elders, and church at Jerusalem: *they came to Antioch*; or *came down to Antioch*, as the Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin, and Ethiopic versions read, agreeably to ver. 1. *and when they had gathered the multitude together*: the whole church, which consisted of many members; the company, or congregation of the faithful, as the Arabic version renders it: and as Paul and Barnabas were sent by the church at Antioch; and as the letter, which they, with Judas and Silas, brought from Jerusalem, was directed and sent to the brethren at Antioch, it was highly reasonable, and necessary, that they should be called together, and an account of the business they were sent upon be given them, and the letter be delivered to them, as it accordingly was: *they delivered the epistle*: sent by the apostles, elders, and brethren at Jerusalem to them; this they put into the hands of some one or other of the brethren of the church, in order to be read.

Ver. 31. *Which when they had read*, &c.] That is, when the brethren of the church at Antioch had read the letter delivered to them; for not Paul and Barnabas, or Judas and Silas, who were sent with it, read it; but the brethren to whom it was sent, as was proper. *They rejoiced for the consolation*, or *exhortation*, as the word may be rendered, which was given them in the

letter, to abstain from the above things, without being burdened with any other; and they rejoiced that there was such an agreement among the apostles, elders, and brethren at Jerusalem; and that their sentiments, and those of Paul and Barnabas, and other faithful ministers and saints at Antioch, were alike, and were opposed to the judaizing preachers and professors; and above all, they rejoiced that they were freed from the burdensome yoke of the law, and that the controversy which had been raised among them, was likely to be ended, and to issue so well.

Ver. 32. *And Judas and Silas being also prophets themselves*, &c.] As well as Paul and Barnabas, and others, that were at Antioch; see ch. xiii. 1. and by prophets are meant, not only such who had the gift of foretelling things to come; though such there were, and these might have that gift; but such who were able to explain the prophecies of the Old Testament, give the true sense of the Scriptures, and open them to the edification of others; wherefore having such gifts, they made use of them; Beza's ancient copy adds, *full of the Holy Ghost: and exhorted the brethren with many words:* which does not so much design the prolixity of their discourses, and the frequency of their ministrations, though they might preach both long and often; as the richness of the matter of them, as the Syriac version suggests, rendering it, *with a rich word:* with copiousness, fulness, and abundance of Gospel truths, with which they comforted the brethren, giving them many useful instructions and exhortations: *and confirmed* them; in the doctrines of the Gospel, and particularly in their Christian liberty, and freedom from the law of Moses, in which the false teachers had endeavoured to stagger them.

Ver. 33. *And after they had tarried* there a *space*, &c.] How long is not certain; the Arabic version renders it *a year;* and it is probable enough, they might stay there so long, till things were thoroughly settled, which were thrown into great disorder and confusion, by the pleaders for circumcision: *they were let go in peace;* that is, they were dismissed, and went away with the leave and consent of the church; who returned them thanks for the service and good offices they had done them, and wished them all peace, prosperity, and happiness, both in soul and body, and great success in their ministrations wherever they went: and as they were dismissed in peace, they left the church in perfect peace; an end being put to the controversy about circumcision, which was raised among them; and the members of the church being agreed in their sentiments, and heartily united in their affections to one another: and thus Judas and Silas were honourably dismissed *from the brethren*, at Antioch, *to the Apostles*, at Jerusalem; the Alexandrian copy, and Beza's ancient copy, the Vulgate Latin, and Ethiopic versions, read, *to them that sent them:* and so include, with the apostles, the elders, and brethren at Jerusalem, who wrote the letter to the church at Antioch, and sent it by them; and it was proper that they should return to them, and give them an account of the success of it, how it was received, and what good it had done.

Ver. 34. *Notwithstanding it pleased Silas to abide there still*, &c.] Though he had leave to go, and was actually dismissed with Judas; and doubtless intended to have gone with him, but for some reason or another he changed his mind, and thought fit to continue at Antioch some time longer: and the design of Providence in it seems to have been this, that he might be a companion with the Apostle Paul in his travels among the Gentiles, as he afterwards was, and was very useful to him. This verse is wanting in the Alexandrian copy, and in the Syriac and Arabic versions; the Ethiopic version reads, *and Paul proposed*, or *determined to abide*, as he did some little time longer, as appears from the following verse: the Vulgate Latin version here adds, and *Judas went alone to Jerusalem;* and so it is read in one of Beza's copies, and in one of Stephens's.

Ver. 35. *Paul also and Barnabas continued in Antioch*, &c.] As well as Silas: *teaching and preaching the word of the Lord;* the Gospel of Christ; not the word of men, but the word of the Lord, of which he is both the author and subject: this they preached in season, and out of season, with power, purity, plainness, and faithfulness. *And many others also:* who either came along with them from Jerusalem, when they brought the letter from thence, or were here before; who came hither upon the persecution raised at the death of Stephen, ch. xi. 19, 20. or they were the prophets which afterwards came from Jerusalem thither, ver. 27. such as Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, ch. xiii. 1.

Ver. 36. *And some days after*, &c.] That Judas was gone to Jerusalem, and which they had spent in teaching and preaching the word of the Lord at Antioch: *Paul said to Barnabas, let us go again and visit our brethren in every city, where we have preached the word of the Lord*, and see *how they do:* by the *brethren in every city*, the apostle means the believers in Syria, Pamphilia, Pisidia, and Lycaonia; where he and Barnabas had preached the Gospel with success; where churches were planted and elders were ordained; of which an account is given in the two preceding chapters: and it may be observed, what an affection the apostle had for the young converts, and members of these churches; he calls them *brethren*, they being partakers of the same grace, and of the same faith and family with himself, though they were not in the same office, nor had the same gifts; as also what care he took of them, and of those new-planted churches: and which shews, that such are to be visited and looked after, and their cases inspected into; and inquiries should be made of them, how they do, how they go on; whether they continue in the faith, and grow in grace and in the knowledge of Christ; and whether they are lively in the exercise of the graces of faith, hope, love, humility, *&c.* and diligent and fervent in the discharge of duty: and this is a work becoming the ministers of the Gospel: and the example of the apostle is worthy of imitation.

Ver. 37. *And Barnabas determined*, &c.] Or consulted, and contrived in his own mind, and purposed within himself; the Alexandrian copy, and two of Beza's, the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions read, *he would*, or was willing; he had a mind, a very great desire, *to take with them John, whose surname was Mark;* of whom see ch. xii. 12. he being

his sister's son, Col. iv. 10. him they brought with them to Antioch, when they returned from Jerusalem thither, where they had been sent by the church at Antioch, with money for the relief of the poor saints; see ch. xi. 29, 30. and xii. 25. and who seems to have come with them from Jerusalem again; for thither he went, when he parted from them at Pamphilia, ch. xiii. 13.

Ver. 38. *But Paul thought not good to take him with them*, &c.] He did not think him worthy, or a fit and proper person to go with them, as the word used seems to signify, and therefore he refused to take him: the Syriac version renders it, *but Paul would not take him with them*: and the Ethiopic version is very express, though it renders it in softer language, *Paul prayed*, or *entreated Barnabas that he would leave Mark*; that is, behind them at Antioch: his reasons were as follow: *who departed from them from Pamphilia*, ch. xiii. 13. see the note there; either through the fatigue of the journey, or fear of danger, or weariness in his work, or affection to his mother; or be it what it will, it seems in the apostle's opinion of the matter, he was very blameworthy, and on account of it very undeserving, at least at present, of being a companion of theirs in their travels: *and went not with them to the work*; the Arabic version adds, *of preaching*; that is, the Gospel, in the several places whither they went, and to which the Holy Ghost had called them, and for which the church at Antioch had separated, and sent them forth; but in the midst of this John deserted them; and which the apostle resented, he having, as yet, not given any evidence of his sense of his evil, and of his repentance for it, to his satisfaction; though it seems as if he afterwards did, since in Col. iv. 10, 11. he speaks of him with great respect, as one of his fellow-workers, and who had been a comfort to him.

Ver. 39. *And the contention was so sharp between them*, &c.] About this matter; Barnabas insisting on it, that John Mark should go with them, he being a relation of his; and in whose favour it might be urged, that his mother Mary was an excellent good woman, who had received the saints into her house, in a time of persecution; and that it should be considered, that this her son was but a young man, and could not be thought to have that courage, resolution, constancy, and solidity, as older professors and ministers; and that his crime was not very heinous, and should be overlooked. Paul, on the other hand, opposing his going with them, as a very unworthy person, because he had behaved so cowardly, and had shewn such a coldness and indifference to the work of the ministry, and had so shamefully left them; and thus they disputed the point till there was a paroxysm between them, as is the word used: they were irritated and provoked by one another, and were so warmed and heated on both sides, *that they departed asunder one from another*; thus as soon almost as peace was made in the church, a difference arises among the ministers of the word, who are men of like passions with others; and though it is not easy to say which was to blame most in this contention; perhaps there were faults on both sides, for the best men are not without their failings; yet this affair was overruled by the providence of God, for the spread of his Gospel, and the enlargement of his interest; for when these two great and good men parted from one another, they went to different places, preaching the word of God: *and so Barnabas took Mark and sailed unto Cyprus*; see the note on ch. xiii. 4.

Ver. 40. *And Paul chose Silas*, &c.] To be his companion and assistant; this being the design of the Holy Ghost in influencing his mind to stay longer at Antioch, after he, with Judas, was dismissed by the church to go to Jerusalem, ver. 33, 34. *and departed*; that is, from Antioch: *being recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God*; see the note on ch. xiii. 26. The apostle having such a recommendation by the brethren of the church at Antioch, when he departed from them, and nothing of this kind being said with respect to Barnabas, have induced some to think, that the church took the part of the apostle against Barnabas, in the dispute between them; since the one went away saluted by them, and the other not.

Ver. 41. *And he went through Syria and Cilicia*, &c.] Antioch was the metropolis of the former, and Tarsus, the apostle's native place, was in the latter; and in both these countries he had been before, and had been the instrument of converting many souls, and of planting churches, which he now visited, as he proposed to Barnabas to do: for it follows, *confirming the churches*; in the Gospel, and the truths and ordinances of it, he had before instructed them in: of the church at Antioch, see the note on ch. xi. 26. And that there were also churches in Cilicia, is very manifest; and particularly there was one at Tarsus, the chief city in it. Herodian, of whom we read in Rom. xvi. 11. and Jason, in Acts xvii. 5. who are reckoned among the seventy disciples, are said to be bishops or pastors of this church; see the note on Luke x. 1. In the *second* century there was a church in that city, to which Ignatius wrote an epistle, still extant[o], in which he makes mention of Philo their deacon: in the *third* century Helenus presided over this church, and was present at a synod at Antioch, when Paulus Samosatenus was condemned for heresy[p]: in the *fourth* century mention is made of several churches in Cilicia, and the bishops of them; there was a church at Apsis in Cilicia, Amphion was bishop of Epiphania, Theodorus of Mopsuestia, Cyriacus of Adanan, and Sylvanus of Tarsus, the metropolis; in which last place, in the beginning of this century, several martyrs suffered under Dioclesian, particularly Tharatus, Probus, and Andronicus: here the orthodox, in the times of Valens, would have convened a synod against the Arians, but were hindered by him; and in this century Diodorus, bishop of Tarsus, had the care of all the churches in Cilicia committed to him; in this age also we read of Antoninus, a presbyter of this church, afterwards made bishop of it: in the *fifth* century mention is made of the bishops of several churches in Cilicia, as of Mopsuesta, Irenopolis, Epiphania, Tarsus, Anazarbus, Sebaste, and others who were present at several councils held at different places in this century; in the *sixth* century, out of the cities of Cilicia, Jotapa, Pisidia,

[o] Ignat. Epist. p. 73, 81.

[p] Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. 7. c. 28.

Pompeiopolis, Tarsus, Coricus, Anemurius, bishops are said to come to the synod at Rome and Constantinople: in the *seventh* century, Tarsus was the metropolitan church of Cilicia; and mention is made of the bishops of that and of other cities in this country, who assisted at the sixth council at Constantinople: in the *eighth* century, notice is taken of a church at Sida in Cilicia [q]; so long the Christian name was in those parts. Beza's ancient copy adds, *delivering the commandments of the elders;* and the Vulgate Latin version, *bidding* them *to keep the commandments of the apostles and elders;* see ch. xvi. 4. namely, the decrees of the assembly at Jerusalem; which seems very agreeable, since the letters were directed and sent to the brethren of the Gentiles in Syria and Cilicia, as well as in Antioch; see ver. 23.

CHAP. XVI.

Ver. 1. *THEN came he to Derbe and Lystra*, &c.] Which were cities of Lycaonia, ch. xiv. 6. after Paul had gone through Syria and Cilicia; in the last of these places, he had been stoned, and yet goes thither again; none of these things moved him from the preaching of the Gospel, and from the care of the churches, such zeal, courage, and intrepidity was he possessed of: *and behold a certain disciple was there;* a converted person, a believer in Christ, one that had learned to know and deny himself, and understood the way of salvation by Christ, and was a follower of him; whether the apostle was an instrument of his conversion, when he was before in these parts, is not certain, though probable, since he often calls him his son; nor is it so evident whether he was at Derbe or at Lystra, though the latter seems most likely, since a report was given of him by the brethren there, and at Iconium, when no mention is made of Derbe, in the following verse: *named Timotheus;* or Timothy, the same person to whom afterwards the apostle wrote two epistles: it is a name much used among the Greeks, and his father was a Greek; one of this name, who was an historian among the Greeks, is frequently mentioned by Laertius [r]; and there was another of this name, the son of Conon, an Athenian general [s]; and another that was a captain or general of Antiochus, 1 Maccab. v. 6. 2 Maccab. x. 24. the name signifies one that honoured God, or was honoured by God; both were true in this disciple of Christ: *the son of a certain woman which was a Jewess, and believed;* his mother was a Jewish woman, but a believer in Christ, her name was Eunice, 2 Tim. i. 5. *but his father was a Greek;* a Gentile, an uncircumcised one, and so he seems to have remained, by his sons not being circumcised.

Ver. 2. *Which was well reported of*, &c.] Not the father of Timothy, but Timothy himself; to whose piety, virtue, and good conversation witness was borne, *by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium;* the members of the churches which were in these places, and which were not far from one another; and as it is necessary that ministers of the Gospel should have a good report of them that are without, so likewise of them that are within; and the testimony of the latter is preferable to that of the former.

Ver. 3. *Him would Paul have to go forth with him*, &c.] Perceiving that he was a young man, that not only had the grace of God, but very considerable gifts, and abilities for ministerial service; and having a good testimony of his agreeable life and conversation, the apostle was very desirous he should go along with him, and be his companion in his travels, and be an assistant to him in the work of the ministry; and accordingly he was, and is often spoken of in his epistles, as his fellow-labourer, and one that served with him in the Gospel of Christ, and who was very dear unto him: *and took and circumcised him;* which may seem strange, when there had been so lately a controversy in the church at Antioch about circumcision, from whence the apostle was just come; and when this matter had been debated and determined by the apostles and elders at Jerusalem, where he was present, and he was now carrying about their decrees: but it is to be observed, that the apostle used circumcision not as a duty of the law, as what that required, and in obedience to it, which he knew was abrogated; much less as necessary to salvation, which the judaizing preachers urged; but as an indifferent thing, and in order to gain a point, and secure some valuable end, as follows: *because of the Jews which were in those quarters;* not the believing ones, for he brought along with him the decrees of the apostles and elders to satisfy them, that circumcision was not necessary; but the unbelieving ones, who he knew would not suffer an uncircumcised person to teach in their synagogues, nor would they hear him out of them; wherefore having a mind to take Timothy with him to be assisting to him in the preaching of the Gospel, in point of prudence he thought it proper to circumcise him, that he might be received by them, and be the more acceptable to them; who would otherwise have taken such an offence at him, as not to have heard him: thus the apostle to the Jews became a Jew, that he might gain and save some, 1 Cor. ix. 20. *for they knew all that his father was a Greek;* and that therefore he was not circumcised: for a woman might not circumcise, because she was not a fit subject of circumcision herself [t]; though in case of necessity circumcision by women was allowed of [u].

Ver. 4. *And as they went through the cities*, &c.] Of Derbe, Lystra, and Iconium, and others in Lycaonia,

[q] Madgeburg. Hist. Eccl. cent. 4. c. 2. p. 2, 3. c. 3. p. 18. 22. 74. c. 7. p. 289. c. 9. p. 405, 481 c. 10. p. 570. cent. 5. c. 2. p. 3. c. 10. p. 585, 586. cent. 6. c. 2. p. 3. cent. 7. c. 2. p. 3. c. 7. p. 112. cent. 8. c. 2. p. 4.

[r] De Vit. Philosoph. l. 3. in Vit. Platon. & l. 4. Vit. Speusippi, & l. 5. Vit. Aristotel.

[s] Ælian. Hist. Var. l. 2. c. 10, 18. & l. 3. c. 16, 47.

[t] T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 27. 1.

[u] Maimon. Hilchot. Mila, c. 2. sect. 1.

and in Phrygia and Galatia; the Arabic version reads, *they both;* that is, Paul and Barnabas: *they delivered them the decrees for to keep;* they gave the churches, in these cities, the sentiments, and determinations to be observed and followed by them: *that were ordained of the apostles which were at Jerusalem;* concerning the abstinence of the Gentiles from things offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication, ch. xv. 20, 29.

Ver. 5. *And so were the churches established in the faith,* &c.] Of Christ, both in the grace and doctrine of faith; and that both by the preaching of the Gospel by the apostle and his companions, and by the decrees of the elders delivered by him: and *increased in number daily;* as well as in gifts and grace.

Ver. 6. *Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia,* &c.] See the note on ch. ii. 10. To which may be added, that this country had its name either from the river Phryx, as Pliny [w] observes, or from the word Phrygios, which signifies *dry;* this being a very dry and sandy country: it was famous for marble stone; hence we read [x] of Phrygian stone or marble, of which pillars and statues were made: according to Josephus [y], the original of the Phrygians was Togarmah the son of Gomer, and grandson of Japheth, Gen. x. 3. whom he calls Thygrammes, and his people from him, Thygrammeans, and who, adds he, as it seems by the Greeks, are called Phrygians. Herodotus [z] reports, that the Phrygians (as the Macedonians say) were called Briges or Brygians, so long as they were Europeans, and dwelt with the Macedonians: but when they went into Asia, together with the country, they changed their names into Phrygians: of one Philip a Phrygian, whom Antiochus left governor at Jerusalem, mention is made in 2 Maccab. v. 22. here dwelt Jews, as appears from ch. ii. 10. and here the apostle preached and made converts. *And the region of Galatia;* in Asia Minor: it had Cappadocia on the east, Bithynia on the west, Pamphilia on the south, and the Euxine sea on the north. The inhabitants of this country were originally Gauls, who under Brennus their captain, came out of some parts of France, and invaded Italy, and came to Rome, and took it all but the capitol; from whence being sallied out upon by the Romans at an unawares, they were obliged to retire; and from thence they sailed into Greece, and went into Asia, into this part of it where they settled, which was first called after them Gallo Græcia, and in process of time Galatia; though some say the Grecians called them Galatians from Gala, which signifies *milk*, because of their milky colour: of the Galatians, mention is made in 2 Maccab. iii. 20. here the Gospel was preached, and many believed; for we afterwards read of disciples both in this country and in Phrygia, ch. xviii. 23. and here were churches formed, and to whom the apostles preached, and delivered the decrees of the apostles and elders. *And were forbidden of the Holy Ghost;* not by an articulate voice, but by a secret and powerful impulse upon their minds; *to preach the word in Asia;* that is, in that country which was properly called Asia, or pro-consular Asia, otherwise Phrygia, and Galatia, were provinces in Asia Minor. Beza's most ancient copy, and the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions read, *the word of God:* the reasons why it was prohibited to be preached here, at this time, cannot be said, and must be referred to the sovereign will of God; it seems, that at this instant, there were no chosen ones to be called by grace, and there was work for the apostle and his companions to do elsewhere, namely, in Macedonia.

Ver. 7. *After they were come to Mysia,* &c.] Another country in Asia Minor. It is divided by Ptolomy [a] into two parts; superior Mysia is bounded by Dalmatia on the west, by Macedonia on the south, by part of Thrace on the east, and by part of the river Danube on the north; inferior Mysia is bounded on the west with part of the river Cimber and the Danube, on the south with part of Thrace, on the north with the turn of the river Tyra, and on the east with the Euxine Pontus; but this was the European Mysia: the Mysia which seems here intended, was divided into the lesser Mysia by the Hellespont, and had Troas on the south; and into the greater Mysia by Olympus, which was bounded on the west with the lesser Mysia and Troas, on the east with Bithynia, and on the south with Asia, properly so called. By Pliny [b] it is called Æolis, and so Jerom says [c], it was in his times; sometimes it is called Abretta and Abrettina, and of later years Thya, or Thyria: some suggest it has its name of Mysia from Mysus, the brother of Car [d], the father of the Carions; but according to the Talmudists, it had its name from Meshech, the son of Japhet, Gen. x. 2. for they say [e] Meshech, זו מוסיא, *this is Mysia;* Pliny observes [f], that there are some authors who assert that the Mysians, Brygians, and Thynnians came out of Europe, from whom they are called Mysians, Phrygians, and Bithynians, in Asia. The inhabitants of Mysia were very despicable; hence the proverb, ultimus Mysorum, *the last of the Mysians* [g], is used for a very mean and contemptible person. The apostle was willing to preach to the wise and unwise, and disdained not to carry the Gospel to the meanest part of mankind. *They assayed to go into Bithynia;* another country in Asia Minor; it makes one province with Pontus, and has the same boundaries; Pontus being at the east, and Bithynia at the west: it was bounded on the north with the Euxine sea, on the east with Galatia, on the south with Asia properly so called, and on the west with the Propontis; according to Pliny [h], it was called Cronia, afterwards Thessalis, then Maliande, (perhaps Mariandyne), and Strymonis; and Herodotus [i] reports, that the Thracians going into Asia were called Bithynians, who were first called (as they say) Strymonians, inhabiting Strymon; according to Jerom [k], it was formerly called Bebrycia, then Mygdonia, and Phrygia major, and by the river Iera, or, as Pliny calls it, Hieras, is di-

[w] Nat. Hist. l. 5. c. 29.
[x] Pausanias, l. 1. sive Attica, p. 32.
[y] Antiqu. l. 1. c. 6. sect. 1.
[z] Polymnia, c. 73. Vid. Plin. l. 5. c. 32.
[a] Geograph. l. 3. c. 9, 10.
[b] Nat. Hist. l. 5. c. 30.
[c] De locis Hebraicis, fol. 96. E.
[d] Herodotus, l. 1. c. 171.
[e] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 10. 1.
[f] Nat. Hist. l. 5. c. 32.
[g] Cicero. Orat. 24. pro. L. Flacco, p. 785.
[h] Ib.
[i] Polymnia, c. 75.
[k] De locis Hebraicis, fol. 95. L.

vided from Galatia; to which agrees Solinus[l], who says it was before called Bebrycia, afterwards Migdonia, and now Bithynia, from Bithynus the king; though others say, it was so called from Bithyne, a daughter of Jupiter: *but the spirit suffered them not*; the Alexandrian copy, and Beza's most ancient copy, and some others, and the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions read, *the spirit of Jesus*: so that it was not an evil spirit, or Satan, that hindered them, who sometimes did; but they were under the direction and guidance of the divine Spirit, called, in the preceding verse, the Holy Ghost; however, the Gospel was preached here afterwards, and churches formed; of which see the note on 1 Pet. i. 1.

Ver. 8. *And they passed by Mysia*, &c.] Without stopping or staying there, though they came to it: *came down to Troas*: either the country of Troas, as the Syriac version renders it; which, according to Solinus[m], is bordered on the north part of Galatia, and was near to Lycaonia, Pisidia, and Mygdonia on the south, and to Lydia on the east, and to Mysia and Caria on the north: or rather the city of Troas, which Pliny says[n], was formerly called Antigonia, now Alexandria, a colony of the Romans. Antigonus king of Asia called it Troas at first, because it was in the country, and near where Troy stood, but afterwards he called it, according to his own name, Antigonia; but Lysimachus king of Thrace having got this city into his hands, repaired it, and called it after the name of Alexander, Alexandria; and to distinguish it from Alexandria in Egypt, and other cities of the same name in other places, it was called Alexandria Troas.

Ver. 9. *And a vision appeared to Paul in the night*, &c.] Either in a dream, or, it may be, when he was awake: *there stood a man of Macedonia*; an angel in the form of a man; the Syriac version reads, *as a man of Macedonia*, and who might appear in a Macedonian habit, or speak in the Macedonian language; or the apostle might conclude him to be so, from his making mention of Macedonia, as the place where he requested him to come, and assist: *and prayed him, saying, come over into Macedonia*; Macedonia was a very large country in Europe; which formerly consisted, as Pliny[o] says, of a hundred and fifty people, or nations, and was called Emathia; it took its name of Macedonia from Macedo, a son of Jupiter, and of Thyd, a daughter of Deucalion: according to Ptolomy[p] it had on the north Dalmatia, superior Mysia and Thracia; on the west, the Ionian sea; on the south Epirus; and on the east, part of Thracia, and the gulfs of the Ægean sea. It had formerly other names besides Emathia and Macedonia, as Mygdonia and Edoma, and is now called Albania or Romelli. Troas, where the apostle now was, when he had this vision, was just by the Hellespont, over which he must go to Macedonia; and therefore the Macedonian prays him to *come over*, adding, *and help us*; by praying and preaching, to pull down the kingdom of Satan, to destroy superstition and idolatry, to enlighten the eyes of men, and turn them from darkness to light, from the power of Satan to God, and save them from utter ruin and destruction. This shews what a miserable condition this country was in; and that God had some chosen people among them to gather in, whose time was now come; and of what use and service the angels, Christ's ministering spirits, are, who are helpful in weakening the kingdom of Satan, and advancing the interest of Christ, and in spreading his Gospel, and particularly in directing the ministers of it where to preach it; though it follows not from hence, that this angel presided over the whole country, and was their tutelar angel, as some think.

Ver. 10. *And after he had seen the vision*, &c.] And considered it, and related it to his companions; and when they had well weighed it, and the circumstances of it: *immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia*; they determined upon it, and took all the proper methods, and made the necessary provisions for it. Here Luke, the writer of this history, first appears, saying, *we endeavoured*: whether he came with the apostle from Antioch, since he is commonly said to have been a physician of Antioch; or whether he met the apostle at Troas, since here is the first hint of him, is not certain: *assuredly gathering, that the Lord had called us for to preach the Gospel unto them*; they concluded from the vision with great certainty, that they had a manifest call from God to go into Macedonia, and preach the Gospel to the inhabitants of it, not doubting but that they should meet with success. The Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions, read *God*, instead of *Lord*.

Ver. 11. *Therefore loosing from Troas*, &c.] Or setting sail from thence, which, as before observed, was just by the Hellespont; which was a narrow sea that divided Asia from Europe, now called Stretto di Gallipoli, or Bracci di St. Georgio: and so Pliny[q] speaking of Troas says, it lies near the Hellespont; and Jerom[r] calls it a maritime city of Asia; and it further appears to be on the sea-coast, by what is said in ch. xx. for from Philippi hither, the apostle and his company sailed in five days, and from hence they sailed to Assos, ver. 6, 13. *we came with a straight course to Samothracia*; which was an island in the Ægean sea, or Archipelago: it was formerly called Dardania[s], from Dardanus the son of Jupiter by Electra, who fled hither from Italy, upon killing his brother Jasius; it had its name of Samothracia, from Thracia, near to which it was, and from the Samians who inhabited it; and it was called Samothracia to distinguish it from the island Samos in the Ionian sea; it is now called Samandrachi: Jerom[t] calls it an island in the gulf of Pagasa; of this island of Samothracia, Pliny says[u], that it was free before Hebrus, was thirty-two miles from Imbrus, twenty-two and a half from Lemnus, thirty-eight from the shore of Thracia, and in circumference thirty-two— and that it is fullest of good havens of any in those parts; and adds, that Callimachus calls it by its ancient name Dardania; it seems it was also called Leucosia, or Leucadia, because to spectators at a distance it

[l] Polyhistor. c. 54.
[m] Ib. c. 53.
[n] Hist. Nat. l. 5. c. 30.
[o] Ib. l. 4. c. 10.
[p] Geograph. l. 3. c. 13.
[q] Nat. Hist. l. 5. c. 30.
[r] De locis Hebraicis, fol. 96. K.
[s] Pausanias Achaica, sive, l. 7. p. 405. Ptolom. Geograph. l. 3, c. 13.
[t] Ib. fol. 96. I.
[u] Nat. Hist. l. 4. c. 12.

looked white: according to [w] Herodotus the Pelasgi first inhabited Samothracia, who with the Athenians dwelt there, and from them the Samothracians received their sacred rites and mysteries; for this island was famous for the worship of the Cabiri, or chief deities of the Gentiles, particularly Ceres, Proserpina, Pluto, Mercury, and the two brothers Castor and Pollux, Neptune, and all the sea-gods; insomuch that it was called *the holy island* [x], and persons of other nations, and even of the greatest figure, were initiated into the mysteries of the Samothracians, which Pliny [y] calls the most holy; for speaking of Venus, Potho, and Phaeton, adds, who are worshipped with the most holy ceremonies of Samothracia. The apostle did not stay to preach the Gospel in this place, nor do we read of its being preached here by him at any other time, or by any other, nor of any church in this place in after-ages in ecclesiastical history. The apostle and his companions are said to come hither, *with a straight course*; not only because they might have a fair gale, which brought them at once hither; but because when they were over the Hellespont, this island lay directly in their way, in a straight line to Macedonia: *and the next* day *to Neapolis;* the Alexandrian copy reads, *the new city*, as the word signifies; hence the Ethiopic version by way of interpretation renders it, *the next day we came to the new city, the name of which is Neapolis:* according to Ptolomy, it was a sea-port of Edonis, a part of Macedonia, and was upon the borders of Thrace; it is now called Christopoli; and was not Neapolis in Campania, nor Sychem in Samaria, which is so called, but was at a great distance from either of these. Pliny places it in Thracia, as he also does Edonis, and even Philippi [z]. Jerom calls [a] it a city of Caria, but wrongly: and though we have no account of the apostles preaching in this place, and of making converts, neither now nor at any other time; yet it appears even in after-ages that here was a church in this place: in the *sixth* century the bishop of it was sent to the fifth Roman synod; and in the *seventh* century one Andreas was bishop of this place, who was in the sixth synod at Constantinople [b].

Ver. 12. *And from thence to Philippi*, &c.] This place is by Appianus called Datos, which was its original name; and by Diodorus Siculus, Crenidæ [c], from the fountains of water, which were many and wholesome, that were about it; and it had its name Philippi, from Philip king of Macedon, father of Alexander the great, who rebuilt it [d]: it is now vulgarly called Chrixopolis, that is, Chrysopolis, from the veins and mines of gold found about it; it was famous for a battle here fought between Augustus Cæsar and Anthony on the one side, and Brutus and Cassius on the other, in which the latter were vanquished: *which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia;* which is called Edonis, in which Ptolomy places it; and *a colony:* that is, of the Romans; see ver. 37, 38. and which Pliny [e] also calls a colony: *and we were in that city abiding many days;* without doing any thing, having no opportunity, or door opened to them to preach the Gospel; which must be a great trial of their faith, after Paul had seen such a vision, by which they were so strongly assured it was the will of God they should come and preach the Gospel here, and after they had travelled so far by sea and land; though some observe, that the word used signifies not only to abide, but to exercise themselves, by teaching and preaching the word, which 'tis supposed they did with success; and that the women they after met with by the river-side, were such, at least some of them, who had been converted under their ministry; but the former seems to be the truest sense.

Ver. 13. *And on the sabbath*, &c.] That is, as the Syriac version renders it, *on the sabbath-day;* the Jewish sabbath, the seventh day of the week; though the words may be rendered, *on a certain day of the week;* agreeably to ch. xx. 7. where the first of the sabbath means the first day of the week; but be this as it will, on this day, *we went out of the city by a river-side;* perhaps the river Strymon, which was near; the Alexandrian copy and some others, and the Vulgate Latin version read, *without the gate;* and the Syriac version, *without the gates of the city;* all to the same sense: it looks as if there was no synagogue of the Jews in this place, or otherwise the apostle and his companions would have gone into that, according to their custom; and this the rather seems to be the case, since it is so particularly remarked, that at Thessalonica, the next place they stayed at there was one, ch. xvii. 1. and the reason might be, because that Philippi being a Roman colony, the Jews were not suffered to have one in it; wherefore Paul and his company, whether on the Jewish sabbath, or on any other day of the week, took a walk out of the city; either for the sake of a walk, or rather to converse together, and consider what was to be done, or to look out for an opportunity to preach the Gospel; and they came to a place, *where prayer was wont to be made:* or as the words may be rendered, *where was thought to be a place of prayer;* a *proseucha*, an oratory, or a place built and made use of for prayer; that is, as they walked along, they saw a place, which in their opinion looked like a religious house, or a place for prayer, and so made up to it, where they found some persons assembled together on that account: this sense is confirmed by several versions; the Vulgate Latin version reads, *where there seemed to be prayer*, and so reads Beza's most ancient copy; and the Syriac version is very express, *for there was seen* בית צלותא, *an house of prayer:* to which agrees the Arabic version, *we went out—to a certain place, which was thought to be a place of prayer;* to which may be added the Ethiopic version, *and we thought there was prayer there;* and that the Jews had their oratories, or prayer-houses, is certain; see the note on Luke vi. 12. and that these were without the cities, and in the fields, appears from a passage of Epiphanius [f], who says, "there "were anciently places of prayer, both among the "Jews, *without the city*, and among the Samaritans;— "there was a place of prayer at Sichem, which is now

[w] Euterpe, c. 51.
[x] L. Attilius in Liv. Hist. l. 45. c. 5.
[y] Nat. Hist. l. 36. c. 5.
[z] Ib. l. 4. c. 11.
[a] De locis Hebraicis, fol. 96. F.
[b] Magdeburg. Hist. Eccl. cent. 6. c. 2. p. 7. cent. 7. c. 10. p. 258.
[c] Ptolom. Geograph. l. 3. c. 13.
[d] Pausaniæ Eliac. 2. l. 6. p. 352. Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 4. c. 11.
[e] Ib.
[f] Contr. Hæres. Tom. 2. l. 3. Hæres. 80.

"called Neapolis, *without the city, in the field,* about "two stones distance, in form of a theatre, open to the "air, and without covering, built by the Samaritans, "who in all things imitated the Jews:" and if these were commonly built by fountains and rivers, and as some think, in imitation of Isaac, who went out into the field, *to meditate;* which the Chaldee paraphrase renders, *to pray;* and is also in the same place said to come, as the Jerusalem paraphrase renders it, לבארא, *to a well,* or *fountain,* Gen. xxiv. 62, 63. then this clause may be rendered, *where it was usual for a prayer-house to be:* and then the sense is, there being no synagogue in the city, the apostle and those with him went out of it, to the river-side, to look out for a prayer-house; where such places were wont to be built, and they accordingly found one: *and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted* thither; who seem to have been Jewish women, who met here to attend public prayer, there being no religious worship of the true God in the city; and among these worshippers of God was Lydia, hereafter mentioned; and worship not being begun, the apostle and his companions sat down among them, and entered into some religious conversation with them, and took the opportunity of preaching the Gospel, which was what they wanted, and were seeking after.

Ver. 14. *And a certain woman, named Lydia,* &c.] Whether this woman was a Jewess or a Gentile, is not certain, her name will not determine; she might be called so from the country of Lydia, which was in Asia minor, and where was Thyatira, her native place; Horace makes frequent mention of one of this name [g]: and it might be a Jewish name; we read of R. Simeon ben Lydia [h]; and as these seem to be Jewish women that met at this oratory, she might be one: *a seller of purple:* either of purple silks, much wore in the eastern countries; or of the purple dye, which in 1 Maccab. iv. 23. is called *purple of the sea,* or *sea-purple;* it being the blood or juice of a turbinated shell-fish, which the Jews call חלזון, *Chalson:* this they speak of as a shell-fish; hence those words [i], "go and learn of the Chalson, "for all the while it grows, its shell grows with it:" and that purple was dyed with the blood of it, appears from the following instances; *the best fruits in the land,* Gen. xliii. 11. are interpreted [k], the things that are the most famous in the world, as the Chalson, *&c.* with whose blood, as the gloss on the passage says, they dye purple: and the purple dyed with this was very valuable, and fetched a good price; the tribe of Zebulon is represented [l], as complaining to God, that he had given to their brethren fields and vineyards, to them mountains and hills, to their brethren lands, and to them seas and rivers; to which it is replied, all will stand in need of thee, because of Chalson; as it is said, Deut. xxxiii. 19. *They shall suck of the abundance of the seas:* the gloss upon it, interpreting the word Chalson, is, it comes out of the sea to the mountains, and with its blood they dye purple, which is sold at a very dear price. The text in Deut. xxxiii. 19. is thus paraphrased by Jonathan the Targumist; "at the "shore of the sea they dwell (*i. e.* they of the tribe of "Zebulon), and they delight themselves with (the "fish) Tuny, and take Chalson, and with its blood dye "purple the threads of their garments." And so Maimonides says [m], that they use this in dying the fringes on the borders of their garments; after they have scoured the wool, and the like, that it may take the dye, he says, "they take of the blood of Chalson, "which is a fish whose colour is like the colour of "purple, and its blood is black like ink, and it is found "in the salt sea," particularly about Tyre; so *the husbandmen* in Jer. lii. 16. are interpreted [n], they that catch Chalson from the ladder of Tyre to Chippah, or the shore; the gloss explains it, those that squeeze and press the Chalson, to fetch out its blood: and with all this agree the modern accounts given of purple, as follow; "purple was much esteemed among the an-"cients, especially the Tyrian purple; which under-"went more dyes than the rest, and which was almost "peculiar to emperors and kings, yet this purple "did not exceed that now in use.—The ancient "purple was tinged, or given with the blood or juice "of a precious turbinated testaceous sea-fish, called by "the Greeks πορφυρα, and by the Latins *purpura.*—In "the seas of the Spanish West-Indies, about Nicoya, "is found a shell-fish, which perfectly resembles the "ancient *purpura,* and in all probability is the very "same—these are gathered very plentifully in the "spring, and by rubbing one against another, yield a "kind of saliva, or thick glair, resembling soft wax; "but the purple dye is in the throat of the fish, and "the finest part in a little white vein—the chief riches "of Nicoya consist in this fish; cloth of Segovia dyed "with it, is sold for twenty crowns the ell.—In the "Philosoph. Transact. we have an account of a purple "fish discovered in 1686, by Mr. W. Cole, on the "coasts of Somersetshire, South Wales, *&c.* where it "is found in great abundance.—The fish is a kind of "*buccinum,* a name given by the ancients to all fishes, "whose shell bears any resemblance to a hunting "horn; and it appears from Pliny, that part of the "ancient purple was taken from this kind of shell-fish. "The Caribbee Islands have likewise their *purple* fish, "it is called *burgan,* being of the size of the end of "the finger, and resembling our periwinkles; its shell "is of a brownish azure, its flesh white, its intestines "of a very bright red, the colour whereof appears "through the body; and it is this that dyes that froth, "which it casts when taken, and which is at first of a "violet hue, bordering on blue; to oblige them to "yield the greater quantity of froth, they lay them on "a plate, and shake and beat them against one an-"other, upon which the plate is immediately covered "with the froth, which is received on a linen cloth, "and becomes *purple,* in proportion as it dries [o]." It may be further observed, that the fringes which the Jews wore upon their garments, had on them a ribband of blue or purple, Numb. xv. 38. for the word there used, is by the Septuagint rendered *purple,* in Numb. iv. 7. and sometimes *hyacinth;* and the whole fringe

[g] Carm. l. 1. ode 8, 13, 25. & l. 3. ode 9.
[h] Juchasin, fol. 105. 1.
[i] Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 18. 3.
[k] Bereshit Rabba, sect. 91. fol. 79. 4. & Mattanot Cehunah in ib.
[l] T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 6. 1.
[m] Hilchot Tzitzith, c. 2. sect. 2.
[n] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 26. 1. & 75. 1.
[o] Chambers's Cyclopædia in the word *Purple.*

was by the Jews called תכלת, *purple*: hence it is said [p], "does not every one that puts on *the purple* (*i. e.* the "fringes on his garments) in Jerusalem, make men to "wonder? and a little after, the former saints, or reli- "gious men, when they had wove in it (the garment) "three parts, they put on it תכלת, *the purple*." And there were persons who traded in these things, and were called מוכרי תכלת, *sellers of purple* [q], as here; that is, for the Tzitzith, or fringes for the borders of the garments, on which the ribband of blue or purple was put, as the gloss explains it: the Jews were very curious about the colour, and the dying of it; that it should be a colour that would hold and not change; and that the ribband be dyed on purpose for that use. Maimonides gives rules for the dying of it [r], and they were no less careful of whom they bought it; for they say, that *the purple* was not to be bought, but of an approved person, or one that was authorized for that purpose [s]; and a scruple is raised by one, whether he had done right or no, in buying it of the family of a doctor deceased [t]: now since Lydia might be a Jewess, or at least, as appears by what follows, was a proselytess of the Jewish religion, this might be her business to sell the purple for their fringes, and it may be the fringes themselves; and if this was her employment, she was thoroughly a religious person in their way, since we find, that מוכרי תכלת, *sellers of purple*, were free from reading "*hear O Israel*, &c. Deut. vi. 4. *and from* "*prayer*, and from the phylacteries, *&c.* for this reason, "because he that is employed in the commandment "(in any work for it) was free from the command- "ment [u];" and yet she attended at the place and time of prayer: *of the city of Thyatira*; which was in Lydia, or as others say in Mysia, which was in Asia Minor: Pliny [w] seems to place it in Ionia, by the river Lycus, and says it was formerly called Pelopia and Euhippa, and it was also called Semiramis; it had its name of Thyatira from Seleucus Nicanor, who being at war with Lysimachus near this place, and hearing he had a daughter born, called it Thygateira; though others say it was so called, because that when the Mysians were about to build a city, inquiring of the gods where they should build it, were told, that they should build it where a hart was struck, and appeared running; and διὰ τὸ θύειν, because of the sacrificing of the hart, they called it Thyateira. The Turks now call it *Ak hissar*, the white camp. This was Lydia's native place, from which she was now at a great distance, being either wholly removed hither, or was here upon business; for Thyatira was in Asia, and Philippi, where she now was, was in Europe: *which worshipped God*: the true God, the God of Israel, and not the gods of the Gentiles, among whom she was; which shews, that she was either a Jewish woman, who had knowledge of the one true and living God, or at least a proselytess of the Jewish religion: *heard* us; not alone, but with other women; and at first only externally, and not so as to understand and receive what she heard, until the efficacious grace of God was exerted upon her, signified in the following clause: *whose heart the Lord opened*: which was before shut and barred, with the bars of ignorance, hardness, and unbelief. The heart of a sinner before conversion, is like a house shut up, and wholly in darkness; whatever degree of natural or moral light is in it, there is none in spiritual things; it is empty of the grace of God, of the fear of him, and love to him; it is without proper inhabitants, without God, Christ, and the Spirit; and is the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, who delight in dark and desolate places; it is bolted and barred with unbelief, and walled up, and even petrified and hardened with sin, and is guarded and garrisoned by Satan, and its goods are kept in peace by him: and this had been the case of Lydia; but now the Lord opened her understanding, and put light into it, which was before darkness itself, as to spiritual things; by which she saw her wretched, sinful, and miserable state by nature, the insufficiency of all ways and means, and works, to justify and save her, and the necessity, suitableness, and fulness of grace and salvation by Christ; which was done by the same divine power, that at first created light in darkness: moreover, the Lord wrought upon her affections, and engaged them to divine and spiritual things; creating love in her soul to Christ, to his people, truths and ordinances; which was done by his almighty hand, taking away the stony heart, and giving an heart of flesh: he also removed the bar of unbelief, entered in himself, dispossessed Satan, and worked faith in her, to look to him, lay hold on him, and receive him, as her Saviour and Redeemer; making her willing in the day of his power, to be saved by him, and to serve him: it is a petition the Jews frequently make [x], in their prayers to God, דתפתח לבאי, *that thou wouldst open my heart*, in thy law; or as sometimes, open our hearts in the doctrine of thy law: not Lydia herself, nor the Apostle Paul, but the Lord opened her heart; Jehovah the Father, who commanded light out of darkness; Jehovah the Son, who has the key of the house of David; Jehovah the Spirit, who convinces of sin, righteousness, and judgment: *that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul*; concerning the person and offices of Christ, concerning his truths and ordinances, concerning free justification by his righteousness, pardon by his blood, and everlasting salvation by him; these things she hearkened unto in another manner than she had done; before she heard, but did not attend to what she heard; but faith coming by hearing, now she hears with the hearing of faith, and understands what she hears, and cordially receives and embraces it, and put into practice what she heard, submitting to the ordinance of Christ, as follows.

Ver. 15. *And when she was baptized*, &c.] In water, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, according to the commission of Christ, by the apostle, or some one of his companions; by whom she was instructed into the nature and use of this ordinance; and very likely it was performed in that river, by the side of which the oratory stood, where they were assembled: *and her household*; they were baptized also, being converted at the same time; these seem to

[p] T. Bab. Menachot, fol. 40. 1, 2.
[q] T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 50. 2.
[r] Maimon. Hilchot Tzitzith. c. 2. sect. 1, 2, 3.
[s] Ib. sect. 4.
[t] T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 39. 1.
[u] T. Bab. Succa, fol. 26. 1.
[w] Nat. Hist. l. 5. c. 29.
[x] Zohar in Exod. fol. 83. 1. Raziel, fol. 45. 1. & 42. 1, 2. Shaare Zion, fol. 53. 2. & 65. 1. Seder Tephillot. Ed. Basil. fol. 74. 2.

be her menial servants, who came along with her from her native place upon business, and who attended on her; accordingly the Ethiopic version renders it, *and she was baptized with all her men;* and these were believers, and are called *the brethren*, ver. 40. hence this passage will by no means serve the cause of infant baptism: whether Lydia was a maid, a wife, or widow, cannot be said; it looks, however, as if she had no husband now, since she is mentioned as a trader herself; and whether she had any children or no, is not certain, nor can it be concluded from this clause, for there are many households that have no children; and if she had young children, it is not likely she should bring them with her to such a distant place, whither she was come upon trade and business: the pleaders for infant baptism must prove that she had children; that these were her household, or part of her household here spoken of; and that they were baptized; or this instance will be of no service to their cause: *she besought us, saying, if ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord:* this she said, not as doubting whether they had so judged of her, but as supposing it, and taking it for granted, that they had; wherefore she reasons upon it, and argues from it; and the sense is this, that seeing the apostle and his company had judged her to be a believer in Christ, by admitting her to the ordinance of baptism; and she had shewn her faithfulness to him, by submitting to it, according to his will; therefore she earnestly entreated them to take up their residence at her house, whilst at Philippi: saying, *come into my house, and abide* there; her faith soon worked by love; and by the fruits of righteousness which followed upon it, it appeared to be true and genuine: *and she constrained us;* Paul and Silas, and Timothy and Luke, and whoever else were in company; she not only invited them, but obliged them to go with her; she would take no denial, and by her arguments, entreaties, and importunity, as it were forced them, and prevailed upon them to go with her.

Ver. 16. *And it came to pass as we went to prayer,* &c.] That is, to the house of prayer, or to the oratory, as they were in the way to it; for this is not to be understood of their just going to the act, or duty of prayer; for the damsel that now met them, is said to follow them, and to do so for many days, one after another; and it was by their going to the prayer-house, that she knew what they were; and besides, the phrase of *going to prayer*, as used by us, for the act or duty of prayer, is a mere Anglicism, and unknown to the eastern writers: now this their going to the oratory, was after they had been at Lydia's house, and had been entertained and refreshed there; whether this was on the same day that she was converted and baptized, is not certain: however, so it was, that *a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination, met us;* in the Greek text it is, *the spirit of Python:* the Alexandrian copy and the Vulgate Latin version read, *the spirit Python;* the same with Apollo, who was called Pythius, as was his oracle, from the people coming to him, πυνθανεσθαι, to inquire of him and consult with him, about difficult matters[x]; or rather from the Hebrew word פתן, which signifies a serpent; and so Apollo is said to have his name Pythius, from his killing the serpent Typhon, or Python[z]; hence the city of Delphos, where was the oracle of Apollo, was called Pytho[a]; the prophetess that sat upon the golden tripos, and delivered out the oracles, Pythia; and the feasts and plays instituted to the honour of Apollo, were called the Pythian feasts and plays, and the place of the oracle Pythium[b]: and so this maid, or the spirit in her, pretended to divine and foretel things to come; and the Arabic renders it, *an unclean spirit, foretelling* future things: the Jews[c] make this spirit of Python, to be the same with Ob, which we render *a familiar spirit*, Lev. xx. 27. Deut. xviii. 11. and the Septuagint by *Engastrimythos*, a ventriloquist, one that seemed to speak out of his belly, and pretended to predict future events; and most of the versions in the Polyglot Bible render it by *Python*, the word here used: so the Jews say[d], that a master of Ob (as the woman of Endor is called the mistress of Ob), הפיתום, this is *Pythom:* and so Jarchi on Deut. xviii. 11. explains the word, and adds, that it is one that speaks out of his arm-holes, as those sort of people did from several parts of their bodies, and even from their secret parts; the word signifies a bottle, and they were called masters or mistresses of the bottle; either because the place on which they sat, and from whence they gave forth their oracles, was in the form of one; or they made use of a bottle in their divinations; or as Schindler[e] observes, being possessed, they swelled and were inflated like bottles; and being interrogated, they gave forth answers out of their bellies, concerning things past, present, and to come: and this speaking out of their bellies might be done, without the possession of a real spirit, and much less was it from God, as Plutarch[f], an Heathen himself, observes; "it is foolish and "childish, to think that God, as the ventriloquists formerly called Eurycleans, and now Pythonists, should "hide himself in the bodies of the prophets, using "their mouths and voices as instruments to speak "with, for this was done by turning their voices down "their throats." The first of this sort was one Eurycles, of whom Aristophanes[g] makes mention; and the Scholiast upon him says, that he was a ventriloquist, and was said by the Athenians to prophesy by a *demon* that was in him, when it was only an artificial way of speaking; Tertullian affirms he had seen such women that were ventriloquists, from whose secret parts a small voice was heard, as they sat and gave answers to things asked: Cælius Rhodiginus writes, that he often saw a woman a ventriloquist, at Rhodes, and in a city of Italy his own country; from whose secrets, he had often heard a very slender voice of an unclean spirit, but very intelligible, tell strangely of things past or present, but of things to come, for the most part uncertain, and also often vain and lying; and Wierus relates of one Peter Brabantius, who as often as he

[x] Phurnutus de natura deorum, p. 94. Vid. Schol. Aristoph. Plut. p. 6. & Macrob. Saturnal. l. 1. c. 17.
[y] Homer. Hymn. in Apollo, v. 372, &c.
[z] Pausan. l. 10. p. 619.
[a] Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 6. c. 2.

[c] R. Moses Kotsensis Mitzvot Tora, pr. neg. 36, 38.
[d] Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 7. sect. 7.
[e] Lex. Pentaglott. col. 34.
[f] De defectu oracul. p. 691.
[g] Vespæ, p. 502.

would, could speak from the lower part of his body, his mouth being open, but his lips not moved, whereby he deceived many by this cunning; and there was a man at court in King James the First's time here in England, who could act this imposture in a very lively manner[h]: but now whether the spirit that was in this maid was a cheat, an imposture of this kind, is not so easy to say; it seems by the dispossession that follows, that it was a real spirit that possessed her; though some think it was no other than a deluding, devilish, imposture: *which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying:* divining or prophesying; it seems she had many masters, who had a propriety in her, and shared the gain she brought; unless by them are meant her master and mistress: vast treasures were brought to the temple at Delphos, by persons that applied to the Pythian oracle there; and great quantities were got by particular persons, who pretended to such a spirit, by which they told fortunes, and what should befall people hereafter, or where their lost or stolen goods were, and such like things; and of such sort were the magical boys and servants Pignorius[i] makes mention of, out of Apuleius, Porphyry, and others, who either for gain or pleasure, performed many strange things.

Ver. 17. *The same followed Paul and us,* &c.] Silas, Luke, and Timothy; the Arabic version reads, *the same followed Paul and Silas:* as they were going to the oratory: *and cried, saying, these men are the servants of the most high God;* not of Python, or Apollo, as she and her masters were; or of any of the deities of the Gentiles; nor of sin, nor of Satan, nor of men, but of the one only true and living God, one of whose titles is עליון, Elion, the *Most High,* Gen. xiv. 22. Psal. lxxxiii. 18. and these men were his servants, not merely by right of creation, as all men are, or should be; nor only through the power of divine grace upon their souls, bringing them into a willing obedience to him, as all the saints are; but by office, being ministers of the word: wherefore it follows, *which shew unto us the way of salvation;* which is not by the works of men; for by them the justice of God cannot be satisfied, nor his law fulfilled; God has declared against this way of salvation; it would make void the death of Christ, and frustrate the design of God in it; which is to magnify his grace, and exclude boasting in man: to which may be added, that the best works of men being imperfect, and attended with much sin, would rather damn than save; wherefore it is sinful, dangerous, and vain, to attempt salvation in this way. The only way of salvation is by the Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the law is fulfilled, satisfaction is made for sin, peace and pardon are procured, an everlasting righteousness is brought in, and through whom grace and glory are given: and this is a way of salvation, agreeable to all the perfections of God; in which the vilest sinner made sensible of his sins, and of his need of this, has no reason to despair; it is exceeding suitable to his case, and is a way in which none ever perish, that are directed to it: and now this way of salvation is only shewn in the Gospel, by the ministers of it; not by the light of nature, for to men who only have that, it is foolishness; nor by the law of Moses, for to such who are under that, it is a stumbling-block; nor by the carnal reason of men, it is not of men, nor after men, but by divine revelation: and therefore the natural man receives it not, it is hid from such; and therefore they project various ways of salvation, which are pleasing in their own eyes, but the end of them are the ways of death; the way to life and immortality, is only brought to light in the Gospel: whether she said this of her own accord, or was obliged to it by divine impulse; and whether it was through fear of Paul, and in flattery to him, or was with a good or bad design, is not easy to determine: however, certain it is, what she said was truth; and sometimes the devil himself, the father of lies, is obliged to speak it.

Ver. 18. *And this she did many days,* &c.] As the apostle and his company passed to and from the oratory, being for that time at Lydia's house; she followed them, and repeated the above words. This she was suffered to do, time after time; not that the apostle and his friends wanted such a testimony, or that it was of any use to them; but that the expulsion of the evil spirit might be more manifest, and more taken notice of: *but Paul being grieved;* at the unhappy condition the maid was in, being possessed with such a spirit; and that the people were so imposed upon and deluded by it; and that it should be thought that there was any combination and agreement between that and him: *turned;* himself to her, who was behind him, she following him, as is said in the preceding verse; this is left out in the Syriac version: *and said to the spirit;* or *to that spirit,* as the same version renders it; to the spirit of Python, or Apollo, or of divination, that was in the maid; the Ethiopic version reads, *and he said, in,* or *by the Holy Spirit;* being under a more than ordinary influence and impulse of his; but not the spirit by which he spake, but the spirit to which he spake, is here meant: *I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her, and he came out the same hour;* this is an instance of that power which Christ gave to his apostles to cast out devils in his name, Matt. x. 1. Mark xvi. 17.

Ver. 19. *And when her masters saw,* &c.] As they might by her sedateness and composure; she not being wild and frantic, and not having such motions and agitations she had whilst under the possession of the evil spirit: *that the hope of their gains was gone;* the Syriac version adds, *out of her;* namely, the evil spirit which was the ground and foundation of all their hope of gains, they expected to acquire for themselves; that being gone, they had no more work to do, nor tricks to play, nor profit to expect from the maid: wherefore *they caught Paul and Silas;* they being the chief speakers, and principally concerned in the ejection of the evil spirit; they laid hold on them, took them by the collar, or held them by their clothes, and drew them *into the market-place;* or rather into the court of judicature, as the word also signifies; there to accuse them, and to have them tried, condemned, and punished: *unto the rulers;* the judges of the court, it may be the Decuriones; for in a Roman colony as Philippi was, they chose out every tenth man, that was of capacity

[h] See Webster's Displaying of supposed Witchcraft, p. 122, 124.

[i] De Servis, p. 355.

and ability, to make and establish a public council, and who therefore were called by this name.

Ver. 20. *And brought them to the magistrates*, &c.] The same as before; wherefore the Syriac version omits them there, and reads them both together here, calling them the magistrates and chief men of the city; though the word here used, properly signifies military captains, captains of the Roman militia: but that they were the same with the Decuriones, or ten men before mentioned, appears from what Harpocratian says[k], that every year were chosen *ten στρατηγοι, magistrates*, the word here used: *saying, these men being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city:* they call Paul and Silas Jews, either because they knew them to be so, or because they attended at the Jewish oratory, or place of worship; and it was common with the Romans to call the Christians Jews; they were generally included in the same name; and this name of the Jews was become very odious with the Romans; a little after this, Claudius commanded them, the Jews, to depart from Rome, ch. xviii. 2. they were commonly looked upon as a troublesome and seditious sort of people, and indeed this was the old charge that was fastened upon them, Ezra iv. 15. Esth. iii. 8. So that it was enough to say that Paul and Silas were Jews, to prove them to be disturbers of the public peace: and it is to be observed, that their accusers make no mention of the dispossessing of the maid, who was their private property, and which was a private affair; but pretend a concern for the public welfare, and bring a charge of public disturbance and detriment, to which their malice and revenge prompted them, hoping in this way the better to succeed: the Arabic version reads, *these two men trouble our city, and they are both Jews.*

Ver. 21. *And teach customs*, &c.] The Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions read in the singular number, *custom* or *law:* referring to the doctrine of salvation by Christ, in whose name the spirit of divination was cast out of the maid, and whom they took for a new deity; and so concluded that the apostle and his company were introducing a new religious law or custom, the worship of another God: *which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans:* for the city of Philippi was a Roman colony, and so the inhabitants of it called themselves Romans; or these men might be strictly such, who were transplanted hither; and with the Romans, it was not lawful to receive, observe, and worship, a new or strange deity, without the decree of the senate[l].

Ver. 22. *And the multitude rose up together against them*, &c.] The crowd of people that were gathered together in the court on this occasion; being no doubt spirited up by the proprietors of the maid, out of whom the spirit of divination was cast, and encouraged by the rulers, and being provoked at the hearing of unlawful customs being introduced among them: *and the magistrates rent off their clothes;* not their own clothes, as did the high-priest, Mark xiv. 63. but the clothes of Paul and Silas; and so reads the Arabic version, *and the rulers rent the garments of both of them;* which removes the ambiguity in the words; for at the whipping or beating of malefactors, they did not pluck off their garments, but rent and tore them off, and so whipped or beat them naked: this was the custom with the Jews[m]; it is asked, "how did they whip any "one? his hands are bound to a pillar here and there, "and the minister of the synagogue (or the executioner) takes hold of his clothes; and if they are "rent, they are rent, and if they are ripped, they are "ripped, (be it as it will,) until he has made his breast "bare, *&c.*" And in like manner the Lictores, or executioners among the Romans, used to tear the garments of malefactors, when they beat them; this the magistrates themselves did here, unless they may be said to do it, because they ordered it to be done, as follows: *and commanded to beat* them; that is, with rods: this was one of the three times the apostle was beat in this manner, 2 Cor. xi. 25. and of this shameful treatment at Philippi, he makes mention in 1 Thess. ii. 2.

Ver. 23. *And when they had laid many stripes upon them*, &c.] Even above measure, as in 2 Cor. xi. 23. *They cast* them *into prison:* designing doubtless to inflict some greater punishment upon them, after they had further examined into their affairs: *charging the gaoler to keep them safely;* suggesting, that he must be answerable for them, should they escape, either through his favour or his negligence; and they might rather give this strict charge, because they perceived that they were uncommon men, possessed of a strange power, which they had exerted in the casting out of the evil spirit, which might come to their knowledge by some means or other; they might look upon them to be a sort of magicians, and therefore were to be narrowly watched, that they did not make use of their art to deliver themselves; however, they judged it necessary to use all the precautions they could, to secure them: some have thought this gaoler to be the same with Stephanas, 1 Cor. i. 16. but this is not certain, nor very probable.

Ver. 24. *Who having received such a charge*, &c.] So strict an one from the magistrates, was doubly careful and diligent: *thrust them into the inner prison;* the innermost part of it, the lowest or furthest part of the prison; so that there were the more doors, bolts, and bars, to break open, and pass through, should they attempt to make their escape: *and made their feet fast in the stocks;* or *wood*, a wooden machine, in which the feet of prisoners were put for security, and which we call *the stocks:* some say it was such an one, in which the neck as well as the feet were put, and so might be the same with our *pillory*.

Ver. 25. *And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed*, &c.] When others were asleep, and all things were still and quiet; see Psal. cxix. 62. and they prayed doubtless for themselves, for their deliverance in God's time and way, and for support under their present afflictions; and for supplies of grace, to enable them to bear them with patience and cheerfulness, until an issue was put to them; and for their enemies, and particularly it may be for the gaoler, who had used them so ill; and for the churches of Christ, for all the saints, and for

[k] Lexicon, p. 274.
[l] Tertull. Apolog. c. 5. Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. 2. c. 2.
[m] Misn. Maccot, c. 3. sect. 12. & Maimon. Hilchot Sanhedrin, c. 16. sect. 8.

the spread and success of the Gospel: *and sang praises unto God;* or *sang an hymn to God,* very likely one of David's psalms, or hymns: for the book of Psalms is a book of hymns, and several of the psalms are particularly called hymns; this shewed not only that they were cheerful, notwithstanding the stripes that were laid upon them, and though their feet were made fast in the stocks, and they were in the innermost prison, in a most loathsome and uncomfortable condition; and though they might be in expectation of greater punishment, and of death itself; but also that they were thankful and glorified God, who had counted them worthy to suffer for his name's sake: *and the prisoners heard them:* for it seems there were other prisoners besides them, and who were in the outer prison: and from hence it appears, that their prayer was not merely mental; nor was their singing praises only a making melody in their hearts, but were both vocal; and it might be chiefly for the sake of the prisoners, that they both prayed and praised in this manner, that they might hear and be converted; or at least be convicted of the goodness of the cause, for which the apostles suffered.

Ver. 26. *And suddenly there was a great earthquake,* &c.] An extraordinary and unusual one; which did not arise from natural causes, from wind being pent up in the earth, but from the prayers and praises of the saints, going up to heaven: when God was pleased to testify his presence and power this way; and the effects which followed upon this earthquake, shew it to be a supernatural one: *so that the foundations of the prison were shaken;* not the roof and walls only, as is common in earthquakes, but the very foundation also; and yet the edifice was not thrown down, as is usual when the foundation is shaken: *and immediately all the doors were opened;* both of the outer and inner prisons, which is another unusual effect of earthquakes: *and every one's bands were loosed:* not only the bands of Paul and Silas, but of the rest of the prisoners; though the Arabic version reads, *all the fetters and bands of both were loosed,* referring it only to Paul and Silas; this circumstance shews also, that the earthquake was miraculous, for when was it ever known that such an effect ever followed one?

Ver. 27. *And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep,* &c.] Not so much by the loud voices of Paul and Silas, as by the uncommon motion of the earth, which so shook him, as thoroughly to awake him: *and seeing the prison-doors open;* which was the first thing in his fright he was looking after, and careful of, and which he might perceive, though it was midnight, and though as yet he had no light: *he drew out his sword:* from its scabbard, which was girt about him; for it may be he had slept with his clothes on, and his sword girt to him; or if he had put on his clothes upon awaking, he had also girt himself with his sword: *and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled:* especially Paul and Silas, concerning whom he had received such a strict charge from the magistrates; and he knew that according to law, he must suffer the same punishment that was designed for them; and therefore in fear of the magistrates, and what they would inflict upon him, he was just going to destroy himself.

Ver. 28. *But Paul cried with a loud voice,* &c.] Knowing by divine revelation, what the gaoler was about to do; though being in the innermost prison, in a dark dungeon, he could not see him, unless it can be thought, that the opening of the doors had let in light sufficient; and it may be also, that he knew in the same way, what designs of grace God had towards this man and his family: *saying, do thyself no harm;* which is an instance of great tenderness, humanity, and love, to one that had used him and his companion with so much severity and cruelty: *for we are all here:* not only Paul and Silas, but the rest of the prisoners also; who either being so intent upon hearing the prayers and praises of the apostles, or so terrified with the earthquake, that they took no notice of their bands being loosed, and so never thought or attempted to make their escape; and as for Paul and Silas, all this happened to them, not for their deliverance in this way, as in the case of Peter, but to shew the power of God, what he could do, and his presence with his servants.

Ver. 29. *Then he called for a light,* &c.] Or *lights;* he ordered his servants to bring in some candles; the Syriac version renders it, *he lighted a light for himself;* and the Ethiopic version, *he brought a light:* whilst he was under the influence of Satan, and going about a work of darkness, namely, to destroy himself, he was in no concern for a light; but when he was delivered from the temptation and snare, he calls for light: *and sprang in;* leaped in at once, in all haste, into the inner prison: *and came trembling;* not as before, because of the prisoners and their escape; nor merely or so much on account of the earthquake, though the terror of that might not be as yet over; but chiefly through the horror of his conscience, and the dreadful sense he had of himself as a sinner, and of his lost state and condition by nature; the law had entered into his conscience, and had worked wrath there; the spirit of God had convinced him of his sin and misery, and there was a fearful looking-for of fiery indignation in him: *and fell down before Paul and Silas;* not in a way of religious adoration, for they would never have admitted that; but in token of civil respect unto them, and of his great veneration for them, as was the manner of the eastern people; the Syriac version renders it, *he fell down at their feet,* and so in Velesius's readings; at those feet, which he had before made fast in the stocks: a strange change and sudden alteration this! what is it that almighty power and efficacious grace cannot do?

Ver. 30. *And brought them out,* &c.] Of the inner prison, to some part of the prison that was more free and open: *and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?* he treats them with great reverence now, and addresses them under a title and character of honour and respect; whom but a few hours ago he despised and abhorred, and perhaps knew no name bad enough for them; he now saw himself lost and perishing, and wanted their instructions, advice, and assistance; and as most persons under first awakenings are, so he was, upon the foot of works; thinking he must do something to procure his salvation, and desires to know what it was he must do, that he might set about it directly; and it may be he had heard what the damsel possessed with

a spirit of divination had frequently said of Paul and Silas, that they were the servants of the most high God, and shewed unto men the way of salvation, ver. 17. and therefore he desires that they would acquaint him with it: his language shews he was in earnest, and expresses great eagerness, importunity, and haste.

Ver. 31. *And they said, believe in the Lord Jesus Christ*, &c.] Not with a bare historical faith, as only to believe that he was the son of God, and the Messiah, and that he was come in the flesh, and had suffered, and died, and rose again, and was now in heaven at the right hand of God, and would come again to judge both quick and dead, for there may be such a faith and no salvation; but so as to look unto him alone for life and salvation, to rely upon him, and trust in him; to commit himself, and the care of his immortal soul unto him, and to expect peace, pardon, righteousness, and eternal life from him; the answer is much the same our Lord returned to the Jews, when they asked, though not with the same affection and sincerity as this man, what they must do to work the works of God, John vi. 28, 29. *And thou shalt be saved*; from sin, and all its miserable effects and consequences; from the curses of the law, from the power of Satan, from the evil of the world, from the wrath of God, hell and damnation: this is to be understood of a spiritual and eternal salvation; for it is said, after that the gaoler was inquiring about it, being terrified in his conscience with a sense of sin and wrath; and between believing in Christ, and being saved with an everlasting salvation, there is a strict and inseparable connexion, Mark xvi. 16. though not faith, but Christ is the cause and author of salvation; faith spies salvation in Christ, goes to him for it, receives it from him, and believes unto it: *and thy house*; or family, provided they believe in Christ also, as they did, ver. 34. or otherwise there can be no salvation, for he that believeth not shall be damned.

Ver. 32. *And they spake unto him the word of the Lord*, &c.] That is, the Gospel; which comes from the Lord Jesus Christ, as the author of it; and is concerning him, as the subject-matter of it, and is what was preached by himself when on earth; this is the word, which is called the word of salvation, the word of reconciliation and peace, the word of life, the word of righteousness, and the word of faith; because it publishes salvation by Christ, peace and reconciliation by his blood, life by his death, his righteousness for justification, and proposes him as the object of faith, and encourages souls to believe in him; and faith comes by it, and it contains things to be believed: and this word Paul and Silas spake to the gaoler, and opened and explained it to him for his comfort, and for the encouragement of his faith in Christ: *and to all that were in his house*; his whole family, who were all alarmed by the earthquake, and were got together into the prison; for it seems as if, after this, the gaoler had them into his dwelling-house, ver. 34. These appear to be adult persons, such as were capable of having the word of the Lord spoken to them, and of hearing it, so as to believe in it, and rejoice at it, for faith came to them by hearing.

Ver. 33. *And he took them the same hour of the night*, &c.] After they had done preaching to him, and to his family: *and washed their stripes*; which were very many and heavy, and whereby they were covered with blood; and which by this time began to fester, and to produce corrupt matter; and all this in a pool, which Grotius supposes was within the bounds of the prison, he washed off from them: his faith worked by love, and shewed itself in fruits of charity and righteousness, and in obedience to Christ, and submission to his ordinance, as follows: *and was baptized, he and all his, straightway*; by immersion, that being the only way in which baptism was administered, or can be, so as to be called a baptism: and which might be administered, either in the pool, which Grotius supposes to have been in the prison; or in the river near the city, where the oratory was, ver. 13. and it is no unreasonable thought to suppose, that they might go out of the prison thither, and administer the ordinance, and return to the prison again before morning unobserved by any; and after that, enter into the gaoler's house and be refreshed, as in the following verse; and as this instance does not at all help the cause of sprinkling, so neither the baptism of infants; for as the gaoler's family were baptized as well as he, so they had the word of the Lord spoken to them as well as he, and believed as well as he, and rejoiced as he did; all which cannot be said of infants; and besides, it must be proved that he had infants in his house, and that these were taken out of their beds in the middle of the night, and baptized by Paul, ere the instance can be thought to be of any service to infant baptism.

Ver. 34. *And when he had brought them into his house*, &c.] After he and his family had been baptized, either in the pool in the prison, or in the river near the city of Philippi: *he set meat before them*; he spread a table for them, with provisions to refresh them after all their fatigue; partly by stripes and imprisonment, partly by the exercises of prayer and praise, and also by the ministration of the word, and the administration of the ordinance of baptism to the gaoler and his family: *and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house*; he and his rejoiced at the good news, of peace and pardon, righteousness, life, and salvation, which the Gospel brought unto them; they rejoiced in Christ Jesus, in his person, offices, grace and righteousness; believing in him who is truly and properly God, they were filled with joy unspeakable, and full of glory; with a joy that always attends true faith, and which a stranger intermeddles not with; and they rejoiced that they were admitted to the ordinance of Christ, and were among his baptized followers: so the eunuch, after baptim, went on his way rejoicing, ch. viii. 39.

Ver. 35. *And when it was day*, &c.] In one copy Beza says, these words are added, "the magistrates "came together in one place in the court, and remembering the earthquake that was made, they "were afraid, and sent the sergeants;" but they seem to be no other than a gloss, which crept into the text; however, it seems reasonable to suppose, that in the morning the magistrates met together, to consider what was further to be done with Paul and Silas; when upon cooler thoughts, they judged it best to be content with what punishment they had inflicted on

them, and dismiss them; and if they had felt any thing of the earthquake, or had heard of it in the prison, and of the converts that had been made there, they might be the more induced to let them go: *the magistrates sent the sergeants, saying, let these men go:* the Arabic version reads, *these two men;* that is, Paul and Silas: who these sergeants were, is not very certain; they seem to be so called in the Greek language, from their carrying rods, or little staves in their hands, and were a sort of apparitors; by these the magistrates sent orders, either by word of mouth, or in writing, to the gaoler, to let Paul and Silas out of prison, and set them at liberty, to go where they would; the same power that shook the foundations of the prison, and loosed the bands of the prisoners, wrought upon the hearts of the magistrates, to let the apostles go free.

Ver. 36. *And the keeper of the prison told this, saying to Paul,* &c.] The Ethiopic version adds, *and to Silas;* this was the same person with the gaoler, whom Paul had baptized; and indeed, the same word is here used, though a little differently rendered, who no doubt reported this message to Paul with great joy: *the magistrates have sent to let you go;* they have sent an order to let you out of prison: *now therefore depart, and go in peace;* which expresses the gaoler's pleasure of mind, and joy of heart, in executing his orders; and his sincere and hearty wishes for peace and prosperity to go along with them wherever they went, who had been instrumental of so much good to him and his family.

Ver. 37. *But Paul said unto them,* &c.] The sergeants, who were present when the gaoler reported to Paul the message they came with from the magistrates; though the Syriac version reads in the singular number, *Paul said to him,* to the gaoler: *they have beaten us openly uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast us into prison;* what the magistrates ordered to be done to them, is reckoned all one as if they had done it themselves; and which was done *openly,* before all the people, in the most public manner; to their great reproach, being put to open shame, as if they had been the most notorious malefactors living; when they were *uncondemned,* had done nothing worthy of condemnation, being innocent and without fault, as the Syriac and Ethiopic versions render the word; nor was their cause heard, or they suffered to make any defence for themselves; and what was an aggravation of all this, that this was done in a Roman colony, and by Roman magistrates; and to persons that were Romans, at least one of them, Paul, who was of the city of Tarsus: for, according to the Porcian and Sempronian laws, a Roman citizen might neither be bound nor beaten [n]; but these magistrates, not content to beat Paul and Silas, without knowing the truth of their case, had cast them into prison as malefactors, and for further punishment: *and now do they thrust us out privily? nay, verily;* or so it shall not be: this shews, that the apostle was acquainted with the Roman laws, as well as with the rites and customs of the Jews; and acted the wise and prudent, as well as the honest and harmless part; and this he did, not so much for the honour of the Roman name, as for the honour of the Christian name; for he considered, that should he and his companion go out of the prison in such a private manner, it might be taken for granted, that they had been guilty of some notorious offence, and had justly suffered the punishment of the law for it, which would have been a reproach to Christianity, and a scandal to the Gospel: wherefore the apostle refuses to go out in this manner, adding, *but let them come themselves, and fetch us out;* that by so doing, they might own the illegality of their proceedings, and declare the innocence of the apostles.

Ver. 38. *And the sergeants told these words unto the magistrates,* &c.] They returned to them, and acquainted them with what the prisoners said: *and they feared when they heard that they were Romans;* they were not concerned for the injury they had done them; nor for the injustice and cruelty they had been guilty of; nor did they fear the wrath of God, and a future judgment; but they were put into a panic, when they found the men they had so ill used were Romans; lest they should be called to an account by the Roman senate, and be found guilty, and have their places taken away from them, and their persons punished.

Ver. 39. *And they came,* &c.] To the prison in person, as Paul had insisted on they should: *and besought them;* that they would put up the injury that had been done them, and quietly depart out of prison: *and brought them out;* that is, out of prison; took them by the arms, and led them out, as they had put them in, which was what the apostle required: *and desired them to depart out of the city;* lest there should be any further disturbance about them: in Beza's most ancient copy, and in another manuscript copy, this verse is read thus, and which more clearly explains the passage; "and they came "with many friends unto the prison, and desired "them to go out, saying, we are not ignorant of "your case, that you are righteous men; and bring"ing them out they besought them, saying, go "out of this city, lest they (the people) should turn "again upon you, crying against you;" which looks as if they took along with them some persons, who were friends to the apostles as well as to them, to prevail upon them to depart quietly; and they excuse themselves by attributing what had passed to popular rage and fury, and pretend they consulted the safety of the apostles, by desiring them to go out of the city.

Ver. 40. *And they went out of the prison,* &c.] In a public manner, with great honour and reputation, at the request of the magistrates that put them there: *and entered into* the house of *Lydia;* whom Paul had baptized, ver. 14, 15. The word *house* is rightly supplied, for the sense is not, that they went into the country of Lydia, as some have been tempted to think; but they went to the woman Lydia, whose heart the Lord had opened, and was become a disciple and follower of Christ; they went to her house, it being in the city of Philippi, where she now abode;

[n] Cicero orat. 10. in Verrem, l. 5. p. 603. & orat. 18. pro Rabirio, p. 714.

and when they had seen the brethren; the men of Lydia's house, her servants, who were converted, and had been baptized with her, and are therefore called brethren; and whomsoever else they might have been instrumental in the conversion of, who might meet them in Lydia's house: in Beza's above-mentioned copy, 'tis here added, *they declared what the Lord had done for them;* they related the earthquake, and the effects of it, and how they had been useful for the conversion of the gaoler and his family, who had been baptized by them, and by what means they were released from prison; all which they ascribe to the Lord, who has all power, and the hearts of all in his hands: and thus, *they comforted them;* with what God had done for them, or *exhorted them;* to cleave to the Lord, to continue in the faith, and abide by the truths and ordinances of the Gospel: *and departed;* that is, out of the city of Philippi; this is wanting in the Syriac and Arabic versions here, but is placed in the beginning of the next chapter: and now these two families, Lydia's and the gaoler's, laid the foundation of a Gospel church in this city of Philippi, and which continued for ages after; Erastus, of whom mention is made in ch. xix. 21. is said to be bishop of this church, and it may be also Epaphroditus, for there were more bishops than one in this church in the apostle's time, Phil. i. 1. and ii. 25. and iv. 18. in the *second* century there was a church, to which Ignatius and Polycarp are said to send epistles; and there are epistles to the Philippians which go under their names, that are still extant: in the *third* century, Tertullian[o], among other churches, makes mention of the church at Philippi, as sound in the faith; and in the *fourth* and *fifth* centuries we read of a church in this place; in the *seventh* century, when it went by the name of Chrysopolis, there was a church in it, and a bishop of it, who was present at the sixth council in Constantinople; there were Christians dwelling here in the *ninth* century[p].

CHAP. XVII.

Ver. 1. *NOW when they had passed through Amphipolis, &c.*] A city of Macedonia, where it is placed by Pliny[q]; according to Ptolomy[r], it was in that part of Macedonia, which is called Edonis, and was near Philippi, and lay in the way from thence to Thessalonica; Harpocratian[s] says, it was a city of Thrace, formerly called *the Nine Ways;* it was upon the borders of Thrace, and had its name Amphipolis from the river Strymon running on both sides of it, making it a peninsula; it was also called Crademna, and Anadræmum; it is now in the hands of the Turks, and by them called Empoli; this city was originally built by Cimon the Athenian, into which he sent ten thousand Athenians for a colony, as the writer of his life reports[t]. The apostle only passed through this place; it does not appear that he at all preached in it, or at any other time, nor do we read of it in ecclesiastical history, nor of the following place: *and Apollonia;* this is also placed by Pliny[u] in Macedonia, and is said by him to have been formerly a colony of the Corinthians, and about seven miles from the sea; and by Ptolomy[w], in that part of Macedonia called Mygdonia, and with him its name is Apollonia of Mygdonia; it was situated by the river Echedorus, and was famous for Augustus Cæsar's learning Greek here, and is now called Ceres: there was another of this name in the region of Pentapolis, and was one of the five[x] cities in it; and another in Palestine mentioned by Pliny[y], along with Cæsarea; and by Josephus[z], with Joppa, Jamnia, Azotus, &c. but this was near Thessalonica; it is said to be about twenty miles from it: here also the apostle did not stay to preach the Gospel, nor is there any mention made of it elsewhere in the Acts of the Apostles, and yet Marcus, sister's son to Barnabas, is said to be bishop of Apollonia; see the note on Luke x. 1. but whether the same place with this, or whether fact, is not certain; *they came to Thessalonica;* a free city of Macedonia[a]; it was formerly called Halis[b], and sometimes Therme; it had its name of Thessalonica from the victory which Philip king of Macedon obtained over the Thessalians; and not from his daughter Thessalonica, the wife of Cassander, who also had her name from the same victory: in this place a sedition being raised, and some magistrates killed, Theodosius the Roman emperor suffered seven thousand men to be slain; and when he came to Milain, Ambrose bishop of that place having heard of it, would not suffer him to enter into the church and receive the Lord's supper, until he repented of his sin, and made public confession of it[c]. Thessalonica has been since the head of a new kingdom erected by Boniface marquis of Montferrat; it was for some time in the hands of the Venetians, but was taken from them by Amurath emperor of the Turks[d]. The Italians call it now Saloniki; it has been since inhabited by Christians, Turks, and Jews, and chiefly by the latter; their number, according to their own account, is fourteen thousand, and their synagogues fourscore. There always were many Jews in this place, and so there were when the apostle was here, for it follows; *where was a synagogue of the Jews;* it seems as if there was none, neither in Philippi, nor in Amphipolis, nor in Apollonia: why these two last places should be passed through by the apostle, without making any stay at

[o] De præscript. Heret. c. 36.
[p] Magdeburg. Hist. Eccles. cent. 4. c. 2. p. 6. & cent. 5. c. 2. p. 6. cent. 7. c. 2. p. 3, 5. cent. 9. c. 2. p. 4.
[q] Nat. Hist. l. 4. c. 10.
[r] Geograph. l. 3. c. 13.
[s] Lexic. Decem. Orat. p. 20, 104. Vid. Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 10. c. 8.
[t] Cornelius Nepos in Vita Cimon. c. 2.
[u] Nat. Hist. l. 3. c. 23.
[w] Geograph. l. 3. c. 13. Vid. Plin. l. 4. c. 10.
[x] Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 5. c. 5.
[y] Ib. c. 13.
[z] Antiqu. l. 13. c. 15. sect. 4. & de Bello Jud. l. 1. c. 5. sect. 2.
[a] Plin. l. 4. c. 10.
[b] Ptolem. l. 3. c. 13.
[c] Magdeburg. Hist. Eccles. cent. 4. c. 3. p. 32.
[d] Petav. Rationar. Temp. par. 1. p. 462, 475.

them, cannot be said; it is very likely he had, as in some other instances before, some particular directions from the spirit of God, there being none of the chosen vessels of salvation to be called there, at least, at this time, when there were many at Thessalonica.

Ver. 2. *And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them,* &c.] To the Jews in their synagogue; for though the Jews had put away the Gospel from them, and the apostle had turned to the Gentiles; yet he still retained a great affection for his countrymen the Jews, and as often as he had opportunity, attended their synagogues, in order to preach the Gospel to them; *and three sabbath-days reasoned with them out of the Scriptures;* that is, out of the Old Testament, concerning the Messiah, the characters of him, the work that he was to do, and how he was to suffer and die for the sins of men; and this he did three weeks running, going to their synagogue every sabbath-day, when and where the Jews met for worship; and made use of books, which they allowed of, and of arguments they could not disprove.

Ver. 3. *Opening,* &c.] That is, the Scriptures of the Old Testament, explaining and expounding them, giving the true sense of them; so this word is frequently used in Jewish writings[e], as that such a Rabbi פתח, *opened,* such a Scripture: *and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead;* he set this matter in a clear light, and made it plain and manifest, from the writings of the Old Testament, that there was a necessity of the Messiah's suffering and rising from the dead; or otherwise these Scriptures would not have been fulfilled, which have said that so it must be; for these things were not only necessary on account of God's decrees, and the covenant transactions the son of God entered into, and on the account of the salvation of his people; but because of the types, promises, and prophecies of the Old Testament: the Scriptures which the apostle opened and set before them, and reasoned upon, shewing the necessity of these things, very likely were such as these, Gen. iii. 15. Psal. xxii. Isa. liii. Dan. ix. Psal. xvi. 10. Hos. vi. 2. with many others: *and that this Jesus whom I preach unto you is Christ;* he shewed that all the things which were spoken of Christ, or the Messiah, in those Scriptures, were fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth, who was the subject-matter, the sum and substance of his ministry; and therefore he must be the Messiah, and the only Saviour and Redeemer of lost sinners.

Ver. 4. *And some of them believed,* &c.] That is, some of the Jews, power went along with the word, and faith came by it, and they believed that Jesus of Nazareth was the true Messiah, and that what the apostle preached concerning him was the truth; and this they received in the love of it, and cordially embraced it, and made a profession of it: *and consorted with Paul and Silas;* associated with them, and privately conversed with them, as well as publicly attended their ministry; for when souls are converted, they love to be in company with believers, and especially with the ministers of the Gospel, to hear their discourses, and learn from them the doctrines of grace: *and of the devout Greeks a great multitude;* these were Gentiles who were proselytes to the Jewish religion; and these in greater numbers believed, and joined themselves to the apostles, and became followers of them, than there were of the Jews, who were the most averse to the Gospel, and were more hardened, and incredulous: *and of the chief women not a few;* some of the wives of the principal men of the city were become proselytes to the Jews, and these attending synagogue worship, and hearing the discourses of Paul from time to time, were convinced and converted, and professed faith in Christ Jesus; and these converts laid the foundation of a Gospel church in Thessalonica, of which church Sylvanus is said to be the first bishop; see the note on Luke x. 1. In the *second* century there were martyrs for Christ here; and to the inhabitants of this place, Antoninus Pius the emperor wrote in behalf of the Christians there, to give them no disturbance[f]: in the *third* century there was a church here; Tertullian[g] makes mention of it: in the *fourth* century [h] Theodosius the emperor was baptized at Thessalonica, by Acholius bishop of that place; who first asked him what faith he professed, to which he replied, that he embraced and professed that faith which the churches in Illyricum, who were not yet infected with the Arian heresy, namely the same which was of old delivered by the apostles, and afterwards confirmed at the synod at Nice; in this century Ireminus, Paulinus, and Alexander, were bishops of Thessalonica: in the *fifth* century it was a metropolitan of Macedonia, and Anysius was bishop of it, and so were Rufus and Anastasius: and that there was a church here in the *sixth* century is manifest from hence, that their bishops, for fear of the emperor Anastasius, agreed with Timothy bishop of Constantinople, whom the council at Chalcedon had anathematized; and in this age Pope Gregory, among others, wrote to Eusebius bishop of Thessalonica, that he would not receive any of a military habit into monasteries within three years: in the *seventh* century a bishop of this place assisted at the sixth council at Constantinople; and in the same age it was the seat of an archbishop: in the *eighth* century there was one Thomas bishop of this place, and also Theophilus, who was present at the Nicene synod; in the *ninth* century a bishop of Thessalonica was beaten with two hundred stripes, for being against image-worship.

Ver. 5. *But the Jews which believed not,* &c.] The Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin, and Syriac versions leave out the words, *which believed not;* but whether this character is expressed or not, it is certain that the unbelieving Jews are here intended: *moved with envy;* at the success of the apostles, many of their own people and of their proselytes, and some of the better sort being converted by them: or *with zeal;* for what they called the glory of God, but it was not according to knowledge; it was a blind and ignorant zeal, a zeal for the rites and ceremonies of the law of Moses, and for the traditions of the elders: *took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort;* or of the market-

[e] Zohar passim.
[f] Euseb. Eccles. Hist. l. 4. c. 26.
[g] De Præscript. Heret. c. 36.
[h] Magdeburg. Hist. Eccl. cent. 4. c. 3. p. 62. & c. 10. p. 659. cent. 5. c. 2. p. 6. c. 7. p. 418. cent. 6. c. 2. p. 7. cent. 7. c. 2. p. 5. c. 7. p. 111. cent. 8. c. 2. p. 7. cent. 9. c. 3. p. 15.

folks, who sat and sold things in the market, and were generally of the meaner and vulgar sort, as the word may signify; or who stood idle in the market-place, squandering away their time in an idle manner, not caring to work, and so were fit persons, and who could easily be gathered together, for such service as the unbelieving Jews employed them in; or they were a sort of officers and servants, that attended courts of judicature, and cited persons thither, and assisted in the business done there, and who were commonly men of profligate and abandoned lives: *and gathered a company, and set all the city in an uproar;* they raised a mob, and made a clamour, which brought people out of their houses to inquire what was the matter, and so gave great disturbance and uneasiness to the inhabitants: *and assaulted the house of Jason;* who by what follows appears to have been a disciple of Christ, a believer in him, and the host of the apostle and his companions, who being an inhabitant of Thessalonica, at least having a dwelling-house there, received them into it. This Jason is said to be one of the seventy disciples, and afterwards bishop of Tarsus, but this is not certain; nor whether he was a Jew or a Greek, very probably the former: we read of Jason the brother of Onias the high-priest, a Jew, 2 Maccab. iv. 7. whose name was Jesus, the same with Joshuah, but as Josephus[i] says, he called himself Jason; and so this man's Hebrew name might be Jesus or Joshua, and his Greek name Jason; and very likely he was a believer in Christ before the apostle came to Thessalonica, and it may be is the same who is spoken of in Rom. xvi. 21. see the note there. Some of the ancients[k] make mention of a disputation between Jason, a Christian Hebrew, and Papiscus, an Alexandrian Jew, but there is no reason to believe that he is the Jason here spoken of: *and sought to bring them out to the people;* they expected to have found Paul and Silas in Jason's house, where they lodged, and their intention was to have dragged them out and exposed them to popular fury, to be beaten or stoned by the people; and so the Arabic version reads, *requiring those two apostles, that they might set them before the people:* or put them into the hands of the mob, which they had gathered, to do as they would with them.

Ver. 6. *And when they found them not,* &c.] In Jason's house, as they expected: *they drew Jason, and certain brethren:* the Syriac version adds, *who were there;* in Jason's house, who either came along with the apostle, and lodged with him there; or they were some of the inhabitants of Thessalonica, who were lately converted, and were come thither in order to have some Christian conversation; these with Jason the rabble seized on, and in a rude and violent manner dragged them out of the house, and had them, *unto the rulers of the city;* the civil magistrates, the judges in courts of judicature, to which some of these belonged: *crying;* in a very noisy and clamorous way; *these that have turned the world upside down;* the Syriac version reads, *the whole earth:* the apostles, according to the cry of these men, had thrown the whole world into disorder, and had made disturbances in kingdoms and cities, wherever they came; and had made innovations in religion, and turned men from their old way of worship to another; these, say they, *are come hither also;* to make the like disorders and disturbances, as elsewhere.

Ver. 7. *Whom Jason hath received,* &c.] Into his house in a private manner, and has entertained, contrary to law, which forbids men to receive and entertain persons of seditious principles, and practices, for this is mentioned as a charge against Jason: *and these all do contrary to the decrees of Cæsar:* both the apostle and those with him, and Jason, and the brethren, whom they now had set before the magistrates, who were all of the same sentiments and practices; and which were opposite to the decrees of the Roman emperor, and the Roman senate, who suffered none to be called a king but whom they pleased; whereas these men taught, *saying, that there is another king,* one Jesus; but then though they said he was a king, yet not a temporal one, but one whose kingdom was spiritual, and not of this world; and therefore asserted nothing contrary to the decrees of Cæsar, or what was in the least prejudicial to his worldly interest and glory.

Ver. 8. *And they troubled the people, and the rulers of the city,* &c. Fearing some revolution would be made, and some new king, or rather tyrant, would start up, and usurp a power over them; or that they should come under some suspicion or charge with the Roman government, and should be called to an account, for admitting such men and tenets among them; with such fears were they possessed, *when they heard these things;* alleged against the apostle and his company.

Ver. 9. *And when they had taken security of Jason, and of the other,* &c.] That is, received satisfaction from them, by the defence which they made for themselves, and the apostles, by the account that they gave of them and of their doctrines; whereby it plainly appeared to the full satisfaction of the magistrates, that their principles had no tendency to move sedition, or to alter the form of their government, or to do any thing detrimental to Cæsar, as was suggested: the Syriac and Arabic versions render it, *took sureties;* of them for their good behaviour, and that they would be forthcoming, whenever called for: *they let them go;* about their business, to their own houses, and company, and did not inflict any punishment upon them, or commit them to prison.

Ver. 10. *And the brethren,* &c.] The believers in Thessalonica, the young converts there, who were full of love and affection to their spiritual fathers: *immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea;* another city in Macedonia: and so it is placed by Pliny[l] in the north part of it; and, according to Ptolomy[m], it was in that part of Macedonia called Emathia, and was not far from Pella, the native place of Alexander the great. It is now called Veria; some say it was called Beræa from Beræa, daughter of Beres, son of Macedo, by whom it is said to have been built; others from Pheron; and some think it has some agreement with the Syriac word Barja and Baraitha; since what is called Berytus, is Beroe with others:

[i] Antiqu. l. 12. c. 5. sect. 1.
[k] Origen. contr. Celsum, l. 4. p. 199. Cyprian. opera, p. 562. & Hieron. Quæst. in Gen. fol. 65. E. Tom. III.

[l] Nat. Hist. l. 4. c. 10.
[m] Geograph. l. 3. c. 13.

there was besides this another Berœa, a city of Syria, which Josephus[a] speaks of, and is mentioned by Pliny[b] along with Hierapolis and Chalcis, and very likely is the same that is spoken of in 2 Maccab. xiii. 4. Hither the brethren sent Paul and Silas, when it was night and dark, and they could pass unobserved, in order to preserve them from the fury of the mob. *Who coming thither;* to Berœa; that is, Paul and Silas: *went into the synagogue of the Jews:* which was in that city; not being at all daunted or discouraged with what they had met with at Thessalonica.

Ver. 11. *These were more noble than those in Thessalonica,* &c.] That is, the Jews at Berœa were more noble than the Jews in Thessalonica, as the Syriac version expresses it; for the comparison is not between the native inhabitants of Berœa and Thessalonica, but between the Jews that dwelt in these places: and the one being *more noble* than the other, does not refer to their birth, lineage, and descent, as in 1 Cor. i. 26. few such were called; and besides, both sorts were Jews, and of the same descent; and as for the proselytes in both places, there were some of the chief and honourable women converted in each: but to their minds, dispositions, and manners; the one were more candid, and ingenuous, and open to conviction and susceptive of the word, than the other; and used the apostles with better manners, with more mildness and gentleness, willing to hear what they had to say, without contradicting and blaspheming, and to examine with patience and candour what they delivered. Not that there is in any man, nor was there in those men naturally a disposition to attend to, and regard the Gospel of Christ; for there is a natural enmity in the minds of men to it, and with them it is folly and nonsense; nor are there any previous dispositions in the minds of men qualifying them for the grace of God; nor is any thing of this kind a reason why some, and not others, are called by grace, for all are children of wrath, and none better than others; but this more noble disposition of mind and conduct was owing to the grace of God bestowed upon them; and which shewed itself in the following instance: *in that they received the word with all readiness;* or *who received,* &c. which is a character, not of the Thessalonian Jews, as some think; though it is true of them that they received the word with joy of the Holy Ghost, and not as the word of man, but as the word of God, it coming to them not in word only, but in power, 1 Thess. i. 5, 6. and ii. 13. but of the Berœan Jews, who exceeded them, who shewed at once a readiness and eager desire to attend the Gospel, and embrace it. This is to be understood not of the essential word Christ; though as it is true of him, that he is the word, and he is said to be received, and that readily and willingly, so these Berœans did receive him by faith, they believed in him, and made a profession of him; nor of the written word, for that is designed by the Scriptures, which they searched daily, and by which they examined, tried, and judged of the word they received; but of the word spoken by the apostle, the word of truth, the Gospel of salvation: this they received into their understandings, not merely notionally, so as to give their assent to it; but spiritually and experimentally, so as to feel the power, and enjoy the comfort of it, their understandings being opened by the spirit of God for this purpose; otherwise the Gospel is unknown unto, and rejected by the natural man: they received the love of the truth, or the word of truth into their affections, not with a mere carnal flashy affection, arising from a principle of self-love; but with a spiritual affection of the Holy Ghost, with real solid gladness, it bringing the good news of salvation by Christ to them who saw themselves miserable, and undone: they received it into their hearts, so that it had a place there, and worked effectually in them: they believed it, not with a mere historical faith, but from the heart obeyed this form of doctrine delivered to them; and this they did with all readiness, as an hungry man receives his food, and greedily feeds upon it, or as a man ready to perish receives and lays hold on any thing that offers for his safety. *And searched the Scriptures daily whether those things were so:* they did not dispute with, and cavil at the apostle, as the Thessalonian Jews first did, ver. 2. nor did they receive the word, right or wrong, or with an implicit faith; but they immediately betook themselves to reading and searching the writings of the Old Testament, to see whether the things which the apostle preached, concerning the Messiah, his incarnation, obedience, sufferings, death, and resurrection from the dead, were agreeable to them, or no; determining, if they were not, to reject them, but if they were, to embrace them, as they did; see John v. 39. and this they did continually day after day. They were neither backward to hear and receive the word, nor slothful to examine it.

Ver. 12. *Therefore many of them believed,* &c.] What the apostle preached, and in Jesus of Nazareth, as the true Messiah, and professed their faith in him, upon finding, through reading and searching the Scriptures, that the characters of the Messiah agreed in him, and that what the apostle delivered were entirely consonant to those writings: *also of honourable women which were Greeks, and of men not a few;* besides the Jews, there were Gentiles also, both men and women, who were proselytes to the Jewish religion, and who were persons of figure and credit, especially the women, who were also converted and believed in Christ. These converts were the beginning of a Gospel church-state in this place, which continued many ages after. Timon, one of the first seven deacons of the church at Jerusalem, is said to be bishop of Berœa; though, according to others, Onesimus, the servant of Philemon, was the first bishop of this church: even in the fifth century mention is made of Lucas, bishop of Berœa, who was present in the synods of Chalcedon and Ephesus; yea, in the ninth century, there were Christians dwelling in this place[p].

Ver. 13. *But when the Jews of Thessalonica,* &c.] The unbelieving Jews there, *had knowledge that the word of God was preached of Paul at Berœa:* which they came at, either by persons that came from thence to Thessalonica, or by letters sent them: *they came thither also;* as the Jews from Antioch and Iconium

[a] Antiqu. l. 12. c. 8. sect. 7.
[b] Nat. Hist. l. 5. c. 23, 26.

[p] Magdeburg. Hist. Eccles. cent. 5. c. 10. p. 660. cent. 9. c. 2. p. 4.

came to Lystra on a like account, ch. xiv. 19. *and stirred up the people:* the common people, the natives of the place, against the apostles; suggesting that they were wicked men, and enemies to all laws, human or divine, civil or religious.

Ver. 14. *And then immediately the brethren,* &c.] That were at Beræa, the new converts there: *sent away Paul:* whom they knew the Jews mostly sought after, and were offended with: *to go as it were to the sea,* the Ægean sea, or Archipelago, near to which Beræa was: this seems to have been done, in order to make the people conclude that he intended to take shipping, and go into some other parts of the world, when the design was to go to Athens a-foot, and so be safe from any lying in wait of his persecutors: the Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin, and the Oriental versions read, *to go to the sea:* to the sea-side, whither it seems he did go; and yet it looks as if he did not go by sea, but by land, to Athens: *but Silas and Timotheus abode there still:* at Beræa, to confirm and strengthen the young converts there made.

Ver. 15. *And they that conducted Paul,* &c.] From Beræa to the sea-side: *brought him unto Athens;* a famous city in Attica, where both [q] Pliny and Ptolomy [r] place it, well known for the learning and wisdom of the ancient philosophers, who had their schools and universities in it; the former of these calls it a free city, and says, it needed no description nor commendation, its fame was so diffused everywhere. The account Jerom [s] gives of it is, "Athens, a city in "Achaia, dedicated to the studies of philosophy, "which though but one, is always used to be called "in the plural number; its haven, called the Piræum, "is described as fortified with seven walls." The city itself stood about two miles from the sea; it had its name either from the Greek word αθονοη, which signifies the mind of God, as boasting of its divine knowledge; or rather from the word אתין, *Athen,* which may be interpreted *strangers,* it being originally inhabited by the Pelasgi, who were a set of people that moved from place to place [t]; or because of the great multitude of strangers which flocked from all parts hither for learning, of whom mention is made in ver. 21. The inhabitants of it have been called by different names; when under the Pelasgi, as Herodotus [u] observes, they were called Cranai; when under King Cecrops, they went by the name of Cecropidæ; when Erechtheus had the government, they changed their name into Athenians; from Ion, the son of Xythus, their general, they were called Ionians. This city has gone through different fates: it was burnt by Xerxes, about 480 years before Christ; some years after that it was taken by Lysander; and after that restored to its ancient liberty by Demetrius; after this the Romans were possessed of it; and now it is in the hands of the Turks, and goes by the name of Setines. In Beza's ancient copy it follows, *but he passed through Thessalia, for he was forbidden to preach the word to them;* for as he came from Beræa to Athens, he must come through Thessalia; but he made no stay here, but passed through, being forbid to preach the Gospel here, as he had been before to preach it in Asia and Bithynia, ch. xvi. 6, 7. nor have we any account anywhere else of the Gospel being preached in Thessaly; and in the second century, we read of Heathenism prevailing there, and of many gross acts of idolatry, particularly at Pella in Thessaly, a man was sacrificed to the gods: though in the beginning of the fourth century there were bishops out of Thessalia at the synod of Nice; and so there were at the synod at Sardica, about the middle of the same century: in the sixth century, Dion, bishop of Thebes in Thessalia, was in the first synod at Ephesus; and Constantinus, bishop of Demetrias, and Vigilantius of Larissa, both cities in Thessalia, were in another at the same place [w]. *And receiving a commandment;* or *a letter from him,* as one copy, and the Syriac version read; that is, the brethren from Paul: *unto Silas and Timotheus for to come to him with all speed;* to Athens, where he now was: *they departed;* from Paul at Athens, and came back to Beræa.

Ver. 16. *Now while Paul waited for them at Athens,* &c.] That is, for Silas and Timotheus: *his spirit was stirred in him;* not only his soul was troubled, and his heart was grieved, but he was exasperated and provoked to the last degree: he was in a paroxysm; his heart was hot within him; he had a burning fire in his bones, and was weary with forbearing, and could not stay; his zeal wanted vent, and he gave it: *when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry;* or *full of idols,* as the Syriac and Arabic versions render it. So Cicero says [x], that Athens was full of temples; and Xenophon [y] observes, that they had double the feasts of other people; and Pausanias [z] affirms, that the Athenians far exceeded others in the worship of the gods, and care about religion; and he relates, that they had an altar for Mercy, another for Shame, another for Fame, and another for Desire, and expressed more religion to the gods than others did: they had an altar dedicated to twelve gods [a]; and because they would be sure of all, they erected one to an unknown god; in short, they had so many of them, that one [b] jestingly said to them, our country is so full of deities, that one may more easily find a god than a man: so that with all their learning and wisdom they knew not God, 1 Cor. i. 21.

Ver. 17. *Therefore disputed he in the synagogue with the Jews,* &c.] There being a synagogue of the Jews here, and there being many Jews settled in this place, hence we read in Jewish writings [c] of men going from Jerusalem to Athens, and from Athens to Jerusalem; and hence it may be accounted for, how many of the Athenian philosophers came to be acquainted with the books and sentiments of the Jews, from whom they borrowed many things; since there were so many that dwelt among them, and doubtless had for years past,

[q] L. 4. c. 7.
[r] L. 3. c. 15.
[s] De locis Hebraicis, fol. 95. K.
[t] Vid. Hiller. Onomasticum Sacrum, p. 676, 758.
[u] Urania, c. 44.
[w] Magdeburg. Hist. Eccles. cent. 2. c. 15. p. 193. cent. 4. c. 9. p. 5. & c. 9. p. 425. cent. 6. c. 10. p. 666.

[x] De responsis Aruspicum.
[y] De Athen. Polit.
[z] Attica, p. 29, 42.
[a] Thucydides Bell. Peloponness. l. 6.
[b] Petronius.
[c] Echa Rabbati, fol. 43. 3, 4. & 44. 1.

as well as by their travels into Egypt: and a Jewish synagogue being here, the apostle went into it, according to his usual manner, and began with them, as he was wont to do, preaching the Gospel to the Jews first, and then unto the Gentiles: with them he disputed, not about idolatry, or the worship of many gods, to which they were not addicted; nor about the one true and living God, whom they knew and professed; but about the son of God, about the Messiah, contending and proving that Jesus of Nazareth was he: *and with the devout persons;* that is, with the Gentiles, who were proselytes to the Jewish religion, and worshipped the God of Israel with the Jews, in their synagogues, but knew nothing of Jesus Christ, and the way of salvation by him: *and in the market daily with them that met him:* where there was a concourse of people; and where, after the apostle had been once or twice, the people came purposely to meet with him, and to hear his discourses, and reason with him about points in religion: the Syriac version renders it, *in the street;* and then the sense seems to be, that as he met persons in the street, day by day, as he walked along, he would stop and talk with them, about religious things, and about their idolatry, vanity, and superstition.

Ver. 18. *Then certain philosophers of the Epicureans,* &c.] These were so called from Epicurus, the son of Neocles, who was born 342 years before Christ, and taught philosophy at Athens, in his garden; the principal tenets of which were, that the world was not made by any deity, or with any design, but came into its being and form, through a fortuitous concourse of atoms, of various sizes and magnitude, which met, and jumbled, and cemented together, and so formed the world; and that the world is not governed by the providence of God; for though he did not deny the being of God, yet he thought it below his notice, and beneath his majesty to concern himself with its affairs; and also, that the chief happiness of men lies in pleasure. His followers were called *Epicureans;* of which there have been two sorts; the one were called the strict or rigid *Epicureans,* who placed all happiness in the pleasure of the mind, arising from the practice of moral virtue, and which is thought by some to be the true principle of Epicurus; the other were called the loose, or the remiss *Epicureans,* who understood their master in the gross sense, and placed all their happiness in the pleasure of the body, in brutal and sensual pleasure, in living a voluptuous life, in eating and drinking, &c. and this is the common notion imbibed of an Epicurean. *And of the Stoics;* the author of this sect was Zeno, whose followers were so called from the Greek word *Stoa,* which signifies a portico, or piazza, under which Zeno used to walk, and teach his philosophy, and where great numbers of disciples attended him, who from hence were called *Stoics:* their chief tenets were, that there is but one God, and that the world was made by him, and is governed by fate: that happiness lies in virtue, and virtue has its own reward in itself; that all virtues are linked together, and all vices are equal; that a wise and good man is destitute of all passion, and uneasiness of mind, is always the same, and always joyful, and ever happy in the greatest torture, pain being no real evil; that the soul lives after the body, and that the world will be destroyed by fire. Now the philosophers of these two sects *encountered him;* the Apostle Paul; they attacked him, and disputed with him upon some points, which were contrary to their philosophy: *and some said, what will this babbler say?* this talking, prating fellow? though the word here used does not signify, as some have thought, a sower of words; as if they meant, that the apostle was a dealer in many words, a verbose man, and full of words, but not matter; but it properly signifies a gatherer of seeds; and the allusion is either to a set of idle people, that used to go to markets and fairs, and pick up seeds of corn, that were shook out of sacks, upon which they lived; and so the word came to be used for an idle good-for-nothing fellow, and for one that picked up tales and fables, and carried them about for a livelihood. So Demosthenes, in a way of reproach, called Æschines by this name; and such an one was the apostle reckoned: or the metaphor is taken from little birds, as the sparrow, &c. that pick up seeds, and live upon them, and are of no value and use. Harpocratian says[d], there is a certain little bird, of the jay or jackdaw kind, which is called *Spermologos* (the word here used), from its picking up of seeds, of which Aristophanes makes mention; and that from this a base and contemptible man, and one that lives by others, is called by this name: from whence we may learn in what a contemptuous manner the apostle was used in this polite city, by these men of learning. *Other some, he seemeth to be a setter-forth of strange gods:* other than those worshipped in the city of Athens: this was the charge which Melitus brought against Socrates; "Socrates (says he[e]) has acted an "unrighteous part; the gods, whom the city reckons "such, he does not, introducing other and new gods." Ælianus[f] represents him as censured by Aristophanes, as one that introduced ξενα δαιμονας, *strange gods,* though he neither knew them, nor honoured them. The reason why they thought the apostle was for bringing in other gods, than which nothing was more foreign from him, was, *because he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection:* the Syriac version reads, *and his resurrection;* that is, the resurrection of Christ; the Arabic version renders it, *the resurrection from the dead;* the general resurrection; both doubtless were preached by him, see ver. 32. Jesus they took for one strange and new God, they had never heard of before, and *Anastasis,* or *the resurrection,* for another; which need not be wondered at, when they had altars erected for Mercy, Fame, Shame, and Desire, as observed on ver. 16.

Ver. 19. *And they took him,* &c.] Not that they laid hands on him, and carried him away by violence, as a derider of their gods, and an introducer of new ones, in order to punish him; but they invited him to go with them, and they took him along with them in a friendly manner, and had him to a more convenient place for preaching and disputation, and where

[d] Lexicon, p. 271, 272.
[e] Laertius in Vita Socratis.
[f] Var. Hist. l. 2. c. 13.

were many learned men to hear and judge of his doctrine; and this appears from their desire to hear what his doctrine was, and from his quiet departure, after he had ended his discourse: *and brought him unto Areopagus.* The Arabic version seems to understand this of a person, rendering it, *and brought him to the most skilful, and the judge of the doctors*; to be heard and examined before him, about the doctrine he preached, who was most capable of judging concerning it; and this might be Dionysius, who is called the *Areopagite*, and was converted by the apostle, ver. 34. The Ethiopic version renders it, *they brought him to the house of their god*: to one of their idols' temple, the temple of Mars, which is not much amiss; for we are told[g], that Areopagus was a street in Athens, in which was the temple of Mars, from whence it had its name; but the Syriac version renders it best of all, *they brought him to the house of judgment*, or *court of judicature, which is called Areopagus*; and so it is called *Martium judicium*, or *Mars's court of judicature*, by Apuleius[h], and *Martis curia*, or *the court of Mars*, by Juvenal[i], for it was a court where causes were tried, and the most ancient one with the Athenians, being instituted by Cerops, their first king; and is thought to be near as ancient, if not full as ancient, yea, as more ancient than the sanhedrim, or the court of seventy elders, appointed by Moses among the Jews. It was called Areopagus, because Ares, or Mars, was the first that was judged there[k]. The case was this, Alcippe, the daughter of Mars, being ravished by Habirrhothius, the son of Neptune, and caught by Mars in the very fact, was killed by him; upon which Neptune arraigned Mars for the murder, and tried him in this place, by a jury of twelve deities, by whom he was acquitted[l]. Hither Paul was brought, not to be tried in a legal manner; for it don't appear that any charge was exhibited against him, or any legal process carried on, only an inquiry was made about his doctrine, and that only to gratify their curiosity: *saying, may we know what this new doctrine, whereof thou speakest, is?* for they had never heard of Jesus, nor of salvation by him, nor of the resurrection of the dead; these were all new things to them, and therefore they were the more curious to ask after them, new things being what they were fond of: wherefore they call his doctrine new, not so much by way of reproach, as suggesting it to be a reason why they inquired after it, and why they desired him to give them some account of it; and that it should be a new doctrine with them, or if they reproached it with the charge of novelty, it need not be wondered at in them, when the Jews charged and reproached the doctrine of Christ in like manner, Mark i. 27.

Ver. 20. *For thou bringest certain strange things to our ears,* &c.] Strange doctrines and strange deities, such as they had never heard of before: *we would know therefore what these things mean*: they desire he would explain these things to them, and let them know the rise, and ground, and nature, and end, and design of them.

Ver. 21. *For all the Athenians,* &c.] The natives of Athens, who were born and lived there, and were inhabitants of the city, and free of it: *and strangers which were there*: who came there from several parts of the world, to get wisdom and knowledge, to learn the several arts and sciences, and to attend the several sects of philosophers they made choice of: *spent their time in nothing else but either to tell or to hear some new thing*: that is, they did so for the most part; and this was the complexion and taste of the generality of them; and with this agrees what Demosthenes himself says of them[m], "we, says he (for the truth shall be "said), sit here, οὐδὲν ποιοῦντες, *doing nothing*——inquir-"ing in the court, εἴ τι λέγεται καινόν, *whether any new "thing is said*." The character of such persons is given, and they are described in a very lively manner by Theophrastus[n]. The Jewish doctors, at this time, were much of the same cast in their divinity schools; the usual question asked, when they met one another, was, מה חדוש, *what new thing* have you in the divinity school to-day[o]?

Ver. 22. *Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' hill,* &c.] Or of Areopagus, as it is better rendered in ver. 19. for it is the same place, and it is the same word that is here used: Paul stood in the midst of that court of judicature, amidst the Areopagites, the judges of that court, and the wise and learned philosophers of the different sects that were assembled together: *and said, ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious*; or *more religious*, than any other persons, in other places, which has been observed before on ver. 16. they had more gods, and more altars, and more festivals, and were more diligent and studious in the worship of the gods, than others. And this manner of addressing them, both as citizens of Athens, and as very religious persons, and who, as such, greatly exceeded all others, must greatly tend to engage their attention to him.

Ver. 23. *For as I passed by,* &c.] Or *through*; that is, through the city of Athens: *and beheld your devotions*; not so much their acts of worship and religion, as the gods which they worshipped; in which sense this word is used in 2 Thess. ii. 4. and the altars which were erected to them, and the temples in which they were worshipped; and so the Syriac and Arabic versions render it, *the houses*, and *places of your worship*; and the Ethiopic version, *your images*, or *deities*, *I found an altar with this inscription, to the unknown God.* Pausanias[p] speaks in the plural number of altars of gods, that were named unknown, at Athens; and so says Apollonius Tyanæus to Timasion[q], it is wisest to speak well of all the gods, especially at Athens, where there are altars to unknown gods: it may be, there were altars that had the inscription in the plural number; and there was one which Paul took particular notice of, in the singular number; or the above writers may speak of altars to unknown gods, because there might be many altars with this inscription: the whole of the inscription, according to Theophylact, was this;

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[g] Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 3. c. 5.
[h] Milesiarum 10.
[i] Satyr. 5.
[k] Pausaniæ Attica, p. 52.
[l] Apollodorus de deorum origine, l. 3. p. 193.
[m] Respons. ad Philippi Epistolam.

[n] Ethic. character. p. 13.
[o] T. Hieros. Taanith, fol. 75. 4. Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 14. fol. 212. 4.
[p] Attica, p. 2.
[q] Philostrat. Vita Apollonii, l. 6. c. 2.

"to the gods of Asia, Europe, and Lybia (or Africa), "to the unknown and strange god;" though Jerom[r] makes this to be in the plural number: certain it is, that Lucian[s] swears by the unknown god that was at Athens, and says, we finding the unknown god at Athens, and worshipping with hands stretched out towards heaven, gave thanks unto him: the reason why they erected an altar with such an inscription might be, for fear when they took in the gods of other nations, there might be some one which they knew not; wherefore, to omit none, they erect an altar to him; and which proves what the apostle says, that they were more religious and superstitious than others: or it may be they might have a regard to the God of the Jews, whose name Jehovah with them was not to be pronounced, and who, by the Gentiles, was called *Deus incertus*[t]; and here, in the Syriac version, it is rendered, the *hidden God*, as the God of Israel is called, Isa. xlv. 15. and that he is here designed seems manifest from what follows, *whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you;* which could not be said by him of any other deity. God is an unknown God to those who have only the light of nature to guide them; for though it may be known by it that there is a God, and that there is but one, and somewhat of him may be discerned thereby; yet the nature of his essence, and the perfections of his nature, and the unity of his being, are very little, and not truly and commonly understood, and the persons in the Godhead not at all, and still less God in Christ, whom to know is life eternal: hence the Gentiles are described as such who know not God; wherefore, if he is worshipped by them at all, it must be ignorantly: and that they are ignorant worshippers of him, appears by worshipping others more than him, and besides him, or him in others, and these idols of gold, silver, brass, wood, and stone; and by their indecencies and inhumanity used in the performance of their worship: wherefore a revelation became necessary, by which men might be acquainted with the nature of the divine Being, and the true manner of worshipping him; in which a declaration is made of the nature and perfections of God, and of the persons in the Godhead, the object of worship; of the counsels, purposes, and decrees of God; of his covenant transactions with his son respecting the salvation of his chosen people; of his love, grace, and mercy, displayed in the mission and gift of Christ to be the Saviour and Redeemer of them; of the glory of his attributes in their salvation; and of his whole mind and will, both with respect to doctrine and practice; and which every faithful minister of the Gospel, as the Apostle Paul, shuns not, according to his ability, truly and fully to declare.

Ver. 24. *God that made the world, and all things therein,* &c.] In this account of the divine Being, as the Creator of the world, and all things in it, as the apostle agrees with Moses, and the rest of the sacred Scriptures; so he condemns both the notion of the Epicurean philosophers, who denied that the world was made by God, but said that it owed its being to a fortuitous concourse of atoms; and the notion of the Peripatetics, or Aristotelians, who asserted the eternity of the world: and some of both sects were doubtless present. *Seeing that he is the Lord of heaven and earth;* as appears by his being the Creator of both; hence he supports them in their being, and governs all creatures in them by his providence. *Dwelleth not in temples made with hands;* such as were the idol-temples at Athens; nor in any other edifices built by man, so as to be there fixed and limited; no, not in the temple at Jerusalem: but he dwells in temples that are not made with hands, as in the temple of Christ's human nature, in which the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily, and in the hearts of his people, who are the temples of the Holy Ghost. This strikes at a notion of the Athenians, as if God was limited, and circumscribed, and included within the bounds of a shrine, or temple, though it is not at all contrary to his promises, or the hopes of his own people, of his presence in places appointed for divine worship, but is expressive of the infinity and immensity of God.

Ver. 25. *Neither is worshipped with men's hands,* &c.] Or *served* with them; or *ministered unto* by them, as the Syriac version renders it: and the sense is, that men by worshipping God do not give any thing to him, that can be of any use or service to him; he, being God all-sufficient, stands in need of nothing; for external worship is not here intended by worshipping with men's hands, in distinction from, and opposition to, internal worship, or to the worship of God with the heart; but that whether it be with the one or with the other, or both, nothing is given to God, as adding any thing to his essential glory and happiness: *as though he needed any thing;* for he does not, he is *El-Shaddai*, God all-sufficient; nor can any thing be given to him, he has not; or otherwise all perfection would not be in him: but that he cannot be indigent of any thing, appears from hence, *seeing he giveth to all life and breath;* or *the breath of life*, as the Ethiopic version renders it; this God breathed into man at first, and he became a living soul; and every animate creature, every one that has life and breath, have them from God; he gives them to them, and continues them: *and all things;* that are enjoyed by them, and are necessary for their subsistence, and for the comfort of life, and for both their use and profit, and for their delight and pleasure; wherefore he that gives them all things, cannot want any thing himself, nor receive any thing at their hands. This clause is left out in the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions.

Ver. 26. *And hath made of one blood,* &c.] That is, of one man's blood; the Vulgate Latin version reads, *of one*; and the Arabic version of De Dieu reads, *of one man;* of Adam, the first parent of all mankind, and who had the blood of all men in his veins: hence the Jews[v] say, "the first man was דמו של עולם, *the "blood of the world;*" and this by propagation has been derived from him, and communicated to all mankind. They also say[w], that "the reason why man

[r] In Titum 1. 12.
[s] In Dialog. Philopatris.
[t] Lucan. Pharsalia, l. 2.

[v] Caphtor, fol. 37. 2.
[w] T. Hieros. Sanhedrin, fol. 22. 2.

"was created alone (or there was but one man created) "was, on account of families, that they might not be "stirred up one against another;" that is, strive and contend with one another about pre-eminence: and they add, "that the righteous might not say we are "the sons of the righteous, and ye are the sons of the "wicked." And it is a certain truth that follows upon this, that no man has any reason to vaunt over another, and boast of his blood and family; and as little reason have any to have any dependence upon their being the children of believers, or to distinguish themselves from others, and reject them as the children of unbelievers, when all belong to one family, and are of one man's blood, whether Adam or Noah: of whom are *all nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth;* for from Adam sprung a race of men, which multiplied on the face of the earth, and peopled the world before the flood; these being destroyed by the flood, and Noah and his family saved, his descendants were scattered all over the earth, and re-peopled it: and this is the original of all the nations of men, and of all the inhabitants of the earth; and stands opposed to the fabulous accounts of the Heathens, which the apostle might have in his view, that men at first grew up out of the earth, or after the flood were formed of stones, which Deucalion and Prometheus threw over their heads; and particularly the Athenians boasted that they sprung out of the earth, which Diogenes ridiculed as common with mice and worms. But the apostle ascribes all to one blood: *and hath determined the times before appointed;* how long the world he has made shall continue; and the several distinct periods, ages, and generations, in which such and such men should live, such and such nations should exist, and such monarchies should be in being, as the Assyrian, Persian, Grecian, and Roman, and how long they should subsist; as also the several seasons of the year, as seed-time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, and day and night; and which are so bounded, and kept so distinct in their revolutions, as not to interfere with, and encroach upon each other; and likewise the several years, months, and days of every man's life; see Job vii. 1. and xiv. 5. to which may be added, the times of the law and Gospel; the time of Christ's birth and death; the time of the conversion of particular persons; and all their times of desertion, temptation, affliction, and comfort; the times of the church's sufferings, both under Rome Pagan and Rome Papal; of the holy city being trodden under foot, of the witnesses prophesying in sackcloth; and of their being killed, and their bodies lying unburied, and of their resurrection and ascension to heaven, Rev. ii. 10. and xii. 6. and xi. 2, 3, 9, 11, 12. the time of antichrist's reign and ruin, ch. xiii. 5. and of Christ's personal coming, and the day of judgment, 1 Tim. vi. 15. Acts xvii. 31. and of his reign on earth for a thousand years, Rev. xx. 4, 5, 6. All these are appointed times, and determined by the Creator and Governor of the world: *and the bounds of their habitation;* where men shall dwell, and how long they shall continue there; the age or distinct period of time, in which every man was, or is to come into the world, is fixed and determined by God; nor can, nor does any one come into the world sooner or later than that time; and also the particular country, city, town, and spot of ground where he shall dwell; and the term of time how long he shall dwell there, and then remove to another place, or be removed by death. And to this agrees the Ethiopic version, which renders the whole thus, *and hath appointed his times, and his years, how long they shall dwell;* see Deut. xxxii. 8. to which the apostle seems to refer.

Ver. 27. *That they should seek the Lord,* &c.] Or *God,* as the Alexandrian copy and others, and the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions read; their Creator, and kind Benefactor, and who has appointed their time of life, and their habitations for them; and this should engage them to seek to know him, who has done all this for them, and to fear and serve him, and to glorify his name: *if haply they might feel after him, and find him;* which shews, that though it is possible for men, by a contemplation of the perfections of God, visible in the works of creation and providence, so to find God, as to know that there is one, and that there is but one God, who has made all things; and so as to be convinced of the vanity and falsehood of all other gods, and to see the folly, wickedness, and weakness of idolatrous worship; yet, at the same time, it very strongly intimates, how dim and obscure the light of nature is; since those, who have nothing else to direct them, are like persons in the dark, who *feel* and grope about after God, whom they cannot see; and after all their search and groping, there is only an *haply,* a peradventure, a may-be, that they find him: *though he be not far from every one of us:* not only by his omnipresence, and immensity, whereby he is everywhere; but by his power in supporting all in their being; and by his goodness in continually communicating the blessings of providence to them.

Ver. 28. *For in him we live, and move, and have our being,* &c.] The natural life which men live is from God; and they are supported in it by him; and from him they have all the comforts and blessings of life; and all motions, whether external or internal, of body or of mind, are of God, and none of them are without the concourse of his providence, and strength and assistance from him; though the disorder and irregularity of these motions, whereby they become sinful, are of themselves, or of the devil; and their being, and the maintenance of it, and continuance in it, are all owing to the power and providence of God. *As certain also of your own poets have said:* the Syriac version reads in the singular number, *as a certain one of your wise men has said;* but all others read in the plural: and some have thought, that the apostle refers to what goes before, that being an Iambic verse of some of the poets, as well as to what follows, which is a citation from Aratus [x]; and whom the apostle might have called his own, as he was his countryman; for Aratus was a native of Solis, a city of Cilicia, not far from Tarsus; yea, some say [y] he was of Tarsus, where the apostle was born: but Aratus being an Heathen, and the apostle speaking to Heathens, calls him one of them;

[x] In Phænomenis, p. 1.

[y] Vid. Fabricii Biblioth. Gr. l. 3. c. 18. p. 451.

and the rather, that what is cited might be the more regarded by them: though the expression is also* said to be in an hymn to Jove, written by Cleanthes, who taught at Athens; and so the apostle addressing the Athenians, might, with greater propriety, say, *as certain of your own poets say:* it is also said to be in Aratus the astronomer, and in the poet Homer; so that the plural number may well be used. Which is, *for we are also his offspring:* the offspring of Jove, says Aratus; which the apostle applies to the true Jehovah, the Creator of all men, by whom, and after whose image, they are made, and so are truly his offspring; upon which the apostle argues as follows.

Ver. 29. *Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God,* &c.] In the sense before given; for the apostle is not here speaking of himself, and other saints, as being the children of God, by adoption, and by regenerating grace, and faith in Christ Jesus, but as men in common with others, and with these Athenians: *we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device:* for men themselves, who are the offspring of God, and made after his image, are not to be compared to graven images of gold, silver, and stone, but are vastly preferable to them, they being formed by their art, and the device of their minds; and much less then should God, the Creator of men, and from whom they spring, be likened to, or represented by, any such thing; for so to think of God, is to think very unworthily of him; for if to think thus of ourselves, who are descended from him, would be a debasing of us, then much more to think so of God, the father of spirits, must be a depreciating of him; and which by no means ought to be done, and argues great stupidity: if living rational creatures are not to be equalled to, and compared with, senseless statues, much less God, the former of men and angels.

Ver. 30. *And the times of this ignorance God winked at,* &c.] Not that he approved of, or encouraged such blindness and folly, as appeared among the Gentiles, when they worshipped idols of gold, silver, and stone, taking them for deities; but rather the sense is, he despised this, and them for it, and was displeased and angry with them; and as an evidence of such contempt and indignation, he overlooked them, and took no notice of them, and gave them no revelation to direct them, nor prophets to instruct them, and left them to their stupidity and ignorance: *but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent;* that is, he hath given orders, that the doctrine of repentance, as well as remission of sins, should be preached to all nations, to Gentiles as well as Jews; and that it becomes them to repent of their idolatries, and turn from their idols, and worship the one, only, living and true God: and though for many hundreds of years God had neglected them, and sent no messengers, nor messages to them, to acquaint them with his will, and to shew them their follies and mistakes; yet now he had sent his apostles unto them, to lay before them their sins, and call them to repentance; and to stir them up to this, the apostle informs them of the future judgment in the following verse. Repentance being represented as a command, does not suppose it to be in the power of men, or contradict evangelical repentance, being the free-grace gift of God, but only shews the need men stand in of it, and how necessary and requisite it is; and when it is said to be a command to all, this does not destroy its being a special blessing of the covenant of grace to some; but points out the sad condition that all men are in as sinners, and that without repentance they must perish: and indeed, all men are obliged to natural repentance for sin, though to all men the grace of evangelical repentance is not given: the Jews* call repentance מצות התשובה, *the command of repentance,* though they don't think it obligatory on men, as the other commands of the law. The law gives no encouragement to repentance, and shews no mercy on account of it; it is a branch of the Gospel ministry, and goes along with the doctrine of the remission of sins; and though in the Gospel, strictly taken, there is no command, yet being largely taken for the whole ministry of the word, it includes this, and every thing else which Christ has commanded, and was taught by him and his apostles; see Matt. xxviii. 20.

Ver. 31. *Because he hath appointed a day,* &c.] The day of judgment is fixed by God in his eternal purposes, and is sure and certain, and will come, though it is not known by men or angels; and this is a reason why God will have the doctrine of repentance everywhere published, both to Jews and Gentiles, since all must come to judgment: and the day for it is appointed by him, *in the which he will judge the world in righteousness;* the whole world will be judged, and every individual in it, good and bad, righteous and wicked; and this judgment will be a righteous one; it will proceed according to the strict rules of justice and equity, and upon the foot of the righteousness of Christ, as that has been received or rejected by men, or as men are clothed with, or are without that righteousness: *by that man whom he hath ordained:* Beza's ancient copy reads, *the man Jesus:* not that the apostle means that Christ is a mere man; for then he would not be fit to be a Judge of quick and dead, and to pass and execute the definitive sentence; which requires omniscience and omnipotence: but preaching to mere Heathens, he chose not at once to assert the deity of Christ, though he tacitly suggests it; but intended, by degrees, to open the glories of his nature and office to them, he being the person God had from all eternity ordained, and in time had signified, should have all judgment committed to him, and by whom the last judgment shall be managed and transacted: *whereof he hath given assurance to all men:* or full proof, both of his being the Judge, and of his fitness to be one, and also of the righteousness, according to which he will judge: *in that he hath raised him from the dead;* whereby he was declared to be the son of God; and when all power in heaven and in earth was given to him; and which was done for the justification of all those for whose offences he was delivered: and this seems to be the reason why the apostle calls Christ the Judge a man, that he might have the opportunity of mentioning his resurrection from the dead.

Ver. 32. *When they heard of the resurrection of the*

* Vid. Fabricii Biblioth. Gr. l. 3. c. 18. p. 453.

* Tzeror Hammor, fol. 157. 4.

dead, &c.] Of a certain man that the apostle said God had raised from the dead, though they knew not who he was: *some mocked*: at him, and at the doctrine he preached: these very likely were of the Epicurean sect, who disbelieved a future state; though, as Tertullian observes[b], the doctrine of the resurrection was denied by every sect of the philosophers: it is a doctrine of pure revelation, and what the light of nature never taught men, and by which men being only guided, have declared against, and have treated it with the utmost ridicule and contempt. Pliny[c] reckons it among childish fancies, and calls it vanity, and downright madness to believe it; as does also Cæcilius in Minutius Felix[d], and who even calls it a lie, and places it among old wives' fables; and Celsus in Origen[e] represents it as exceeding detestable, abominable, and impossible. *And others said, we will hear thee again of this matter*: some think these were of the Stoic sect, who held a future state, and that the soul would live after the body, and had some notions which looked inclining to this doctrine: however, these thought there might be something in what the apostle said; they could not receive it readily, and yet could not deny it; they were willing to take time to consider of it; and were desirous of hearing him again upon that subject; in which they might be very open and upright; and this might not be a mere excuse to shift off any further hearing at that time, like that of Felix, ch. 24. 25.

Ver. 33. *So Paul departed from among them.*] As it was high time, when they fell to deriding and scoffing at him; for hereby they judged themselves unworthy of the Gospel ministry: the Ethiopic version adds, *from Athens*; but it does not appear that the apostle went directly out of the city; we read afterwards of his departing from Athens, ch. xviii. 1. but the sense is, that he went out of the Areopagus, from that court of judicature; and from among the judges of it, and the philosophers of every sect, that stood around him in it; they having no more to say to him, nor he to them. And this shews, that he was not brought to be tried and judged, in order to be punished, but only to be heard concerning his doctrine; of which, when they had heard enough, he departed quietly, no one molesting him, unless with scoffs and jeers.

Ver. 34. *Howbeit, certain men clave unto him, and believed, &c.*] There were some who were ordained to eternal life, to whom the Gospel came in power, and they received the love of the truth, and their hearts and affections were knit unto the apostle; and they followed him, and kept to him, and privately conversed with him, and believed his doctrine, and in Jesus Christ, whom he preached unto them; to these the Gospel was the savour of life unto life, when to the scoffers and mockers it was the savour of death unto death: and this is the fruit and effect of the Gospel ministry, wherever it comes: *among the which was Dionysius the Areopagite*: a judge in the court of Areopagus: how many judges that court consisted of, is not certain, nor whether there was one who was superior to the rest; if there was such an one, Dionysius seems to have been he, since he is called the Areopagite. The business of this court was not only to try causes of murder, which seems to have been the original business of it; but by these judges the rights of the city were preserved and defended, war was proclaimed, and all law-suits adjusted and decided; and they made it their business to look after idle and slothful persons, and inquire how they lived[f]: they always heard and judged causes in the night, in the dark, because they would only know facts, and not persons, lest they should be influenced by their affections, and be led wrong[g]; they were very famous in other nations for their wisdom and skill, and for their gravity and strict justice. Dolabella, proconsul of Asia, having a woman brought before him for poisoning her husband and son, which she confessed, and gave reasons for doing it, referred the matter to a council, who refused to pass sentence; upon which he sent the case to Athens, to the Areopagites, as to judges *more grave* and *more experienced*[h]: and hence these words of Julian the emperor[i], "let an Areopagite be judge, and we will not be afraid of the judgment." This Dionysius the Areopagite is said, by another Dionysius, bishop of the Corinthians, a very ancient writer[k], to be the first bishop of the Athenians, which is more likely than that he should be a bishop in France. It is reported of him, that being at Heliopolis in Egypt, along with Apollophanes, a philosopher, at the time of Christ's sufferings, he should say concerning the unusual eclipse that then was, that *a God unknown, and clothed with flesh, suffered*, on whose account the whole world was darkened; or, as others affirm, he said, *either the God of nature suffers, or the frame of the world will be dissolved*: it is also related of him, that when he was converted by the apostle at Athens, he went to Clemens, bishop of Rome, and was sent by him with others into the west, to preach the Gospel; some of which went to Spain, and others to France, and that he steered his course to Paris, and there, with Rusticus and Eleutherius his *colleagues*, suffered martyrdom[l]. The books ascribed unto him concerning the divine names, and ecclesiastical hierarchy, are spurious things, stuffed with foolish, absurd, and impious notions, and seem to have been written in the *fifth* century. *And a woman named Damaris*: some of the ancients, and also some modern writers, take this woman to be the wife of Dionysius; but had she been his wife, she would have been doubtless called so; however, by the particular mention of her name, she seems to have been a person of some note and figure: the name is a diminutive from Δαμαρ, *Damar*, which signifies *a wife*. *And others with them*: with these two, as the Arabic version renders it; that is, with Dionysius and Damaris. These laid the foundation of a Gospel church at Athens. Dionysius, as before observed, was the first *bishop*, or pastor of it: it is also said that Narcissus, one of the seventy disciples,

[b] De præscript. Heret. c. 7. p. 232.
[c] Nat. Hist. l. 7. c. 55.
[d] Octav. p. 10.
[e] Contra Cels. l. 5. p. 240.
[f] Alexander ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 2. c. 13. & l. 4. c. 11.
[g] Alexander ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 3. c. 5.
[h] A Gellii noctes Attica, l. 12. c. 7.
[i] Orat. 2. p. 112.
[k] Apud Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. 3. c. 4. & l. 4. c. 23.
[l] Magdeburg. Hist. Eccles. cent. 1. l. 2. c. 10. p. 491.

was bishop of this place; see the note on Luke x. 1. In the *second* century Publius was bishop of the church at Athens, who suffered martyrdom for Christ in the time of Hadrian; and was succeeded by Quadratus[m], who was famous for a writing he presented to the said emperor, in favour of the churches in common, and the success of it, about the year 128; at the same time, Aristides, a famous philosopher and Christian, flourished in the church at Athens, who wrote an apology for the Christian religion; and also Jovius, a presbyter and martyr, and a disciple of Dionysius; likewise Athenagoras, a man of great learning and piety, who wrote also an apology for the Christians, and a treatise concerning the resurrection of the dead, which are still extant; the former was written to the emperors Antoninus and Commodus: in the *third* century mention is made of the church at Athens; and Origen[n] speaks very honourably of it, as meek and quiet, and desirous of approving itself to God. In the *fourth* century it appears that there were Christians there, since Maximus the emperor stirred up wicked men to molest and distress them; and there was a Christian school there, in which Bazil and Gregory Nazianzen were brought up. In the *fifth* century there was a church in this place; and in the *sixth*, a Christian school, in which Boethius Patricius learned the liberal arts; and in the *seventh* century mention is made of a bishop of Athens, who was in the sixth council at Constantinople[o]: thus far this church-state is to be traced.

CHAP. XVIII.

Ver. 1. *AFTER these things*, &c.] The Arabic version renders it, *after these words*, or *discourses*: after the apostle's disputation with the philosophers, and his sermon in the Areopagus, the effects of which are before related: *Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth*; the metropolis of Achaia, or Peloponnesus. The city was formerly called Ephyra, from Ephyra[p], the daughter of Oceanus, and had its name of Corinth from Corinthius, the son of Maratho, who repaired it when destroyed; or, as others say, from Corinthus the son of Pelops, others of Orestes, and others of Jupiter: though more probably it was so called from the multitudes of whores in this place, as if it was κοραι ενθα, *corai entha, here are girls*, or *whores*; for in the temple of Venus there were no less than a thousand whores provided, to be prostituted to all comers thither; see the note on 2 Cor. xii. 21. It was situated between two great seas, the Ægean and Ionian; hence[q] Horace calls it Bimaris: it had a very strong tower, built on a high mount, called Acrocorinthus, from whence these two seas might be seen, and where was the fountain Pirene, sacred to the Muses: the city was about sixty furlongs, or seven miles and a half, from the shore[r]: it was a city that abounded in riches and luxury. Florus[s] calls it the head of Achaia, and the glory of Greece; and Cicero[t], the light of all Greece: it was in time so much enlarged, and became so famous, that it was little inferiour to Rome itself, on which account it grew proud and haughty; and using the Roman ambassadors with some degree of insolence, who were sent into Greece, on some certain occasion, first Metellus, and then Mummius, were sent against it, which latter took it, and burnt it; and the city then abounding with images and statues of gold, silver, and brass, were melted down together in the fire, and made what was afterwards called the Corinthian brass, which became so famous, and is often spoken of in history[u]: but Julius Cæsar, moved with the commodious situation of the place, rebuilt it[w], and it became a colony of the Romans, as Pliny[x] and Mela[y] both call it: and so it was at this time when the apostle was there. After this it came into the hands of the Venetians, from whom it was taken by Mahomet, the second son of Amurath, in the year 1458[z]; but is now again in the hands of the Venetians; and that and the country about it are called the Morea. And as the Gospel was to be preached to the worst of sinners, among whom God's chosen ones lay, the apostle was directed to come hither; and it appears by the sequel, that God had much people here, even more than at Athens, among the wise and learned.

Ver. 2. *And found a certain Jew named Aquila*, &c.] This seems to have been his Roman name, which he had took, or was given him, while he was at Rome; very likely his Jewish name was נשר, *Nesher*, which signifies an eagle, as *Aquila* does: unless it should rather be thought to be a Greek name; and as *Olympas* is from *Olympios*, and *Nymphas* from *Nymphios*: so *Akilas*, as it in the Greek text, from *Akylios*, and this from Ακυλος, *Akylos*, which signifies an *acorn*. There was a Jewish proselyte of this name, who translated the Bible into Greek, who is called by the Jewish writers עקילס, *Akilas*[a]; and Eusebius[b] calls him Ακυλας ο Ποντικος, *Akylas*, or *Aquila* of Pontus, as here, but cannot be the same; for one was a Jew, the other a Gentile, then a Christian, and afterwards a Jewish proselyte, and lived after the destruction of Jerusalem many years, even in the times of Adrian: nor is it the same name with Onkelos, the famous Chaldee paraphrast, as some have thought, and much less the same person; for though their age better agrees, yet

[m] Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. 4. c. 23.
[n] Contra Cels. l. 3. p. 128.
[o] Magdeburg. Hist. Eccles. cent. 2. c. 2. p. 4, 17. & c. 10. p. 151, 152, 153. cent. 3. c. 2. p. 3. cent. 4. c. 7. p. 297. & c. 10. p. 599. cent. 5. c. 2. p. 6. cent. 6. c. 7. p. 203. cent. 7. c. 2. p. 3.
[p] Vellei Paterculi Hist. Rom. l. 1. Pausanias, Corinthiaca, sive l. 2. p. 85.
[q] Carmin. l. 1. Ode 7.
[r] Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 4. c. 4.
[s] Hist. Rom. l. 2. c. 16.
[t] Pro Lege Manilia Orat. 12. p. 636.
[u] Florus, ib.
[w] Pausanias, Corinthiaca, sive l. 2. p. 85, 89.
[x] Nat. Hist. l. 4. c. 4.
[y] De Situ Orbis, l. 2. c. 10.
[z] Petav. Rationar. Temp. par. 1. p. 476.
[a] Ganz Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 28. 2.
[b] Eccl. Hist. l. 5. c. 8.

neither their name, nor their nation; for Onkelos was only a proselyte, not a Jew, as this man was; and the agreement the names of these proselytes may be thought to have with this, does but confirm it to be a Roman name; and in a decree of Claudius the Roman emperor, mention is made of Akylas, or Aquila, a Roman governor of Alexandria [c]: and in the reign of Caius Caligula, there was a consul of Rome whose name was M. Aquila Julianus. This is said to be afterwards bishop of Heraclea; but that is not to be depended upon: *born in Pontus;* a country in Asia; see the note on ch. ii. 9. where many Jews lived; though he was born in an Heathen country, his parents were Jews: *lately come from Italy;* a famous and well-known country in Europe: see the note on Heb. xiii. 24. *with his wife Priscilla;* she and her husband are both highly spoken of in Rom. xvi. 3, 4. see the note there: *because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome;* of which edict Suetonius [d] makes mention, who says, that Claudius "expelled the Jews from Rome, who were "continually making tumults, being moved there-"unto by one Chrestus," who is generally understood to be Christ; and it is thought that the reason of this edict was, that the Jews in Rome continually opposing and disputing with the Christians, about Jesus being the Messiah, Claudius, who was of a timorous disposition, was afraid of a tumult, and that it might issue in his detriment, and therefore banished all the Jews, with whom the Christians were involved: for by the Heathens they were all called Jews, the first Christians being Jews: though others say the reason was, that the Jews had contracted an acquaintance with Agrippina, the wife of Claudius, and had drawn her into Judaism: but be it as it will, such an edict was made, on account of which Aquila and Priscilla were obliged to leave Rome, and come to Corinth. It must be something that was very provoking to him, otherwise before he had shewn much favour to the Jews; for he not only granted to the Jews at Alexandria, that they should continue in the observance of their laws and customs, but permitted the same to them in all parts of the empire, by a special decree, which runs thus [e]; "Tiberius Claudius Cæsar, "&c. decrees, seeing the Kings Agrippa and Herod, "my dearest friends, have entreated me that I would "suffer the Jews in every government under the "Romans, to observe their laws as in Alexandria; I "most willingly grant it, not only for the sake of "gratifying those who ask it, but judging that those "are worthy, for whom it is asked, because of their "faithfulness and friendship to the Romans; especi-"ally accounting it most just that no Grecian city "should be deprived of these rights, seeing they were "kept for them by the divine Augustus; wherefore "it is right also that the Jews throughout all our "empire should observe the customs of their country "without any hinderance, whom I now command "that in love to us they would behave more mode-"rately, and not despise the religion of other nations, "but keep their own laws; and I will that governors "of cities, and colonies, and freedoms, both in Italy "and without, have this my edict transcribed, and "also kings and princes by their ambassadors, and "that it be put in such a place in less than thirty "days, from whence it may be plainly read." This Claudius was the *fifth* emperor of Rome; and this decree passed in the *ninth*, or, as others, in the *eleventh* year of his reign, and about the year of Christ 51, or, as others, 54. *And came unto them:* that is, the apostle, having found out Aquila and Priscilla, he came and visited them, and took up his lodging with them.

Ver. 3. *And because he was of the same craft,* &c.] Art, occupation, or trade: *he abode with them;* in the same house in which they were; *and wrought;* with his own hands, to support himself, for he was a stranger in this place; and as yet here was no church to minister to him; and when there was, he would take nothing of them, that the false teachers, who rose up among them, might not make any handle of it against him, and to the prejudice of the Gospel; though otherwise he thought it his just due to receive a maintenance from the churches; and insisted upon it as an ordination of Christ. He learned a trade whilst among the Jews, with whom it was common for their greatest doctors to be brought up to some trade or another; see the note on Mark vi. 3. *for by their occupation they were tent-makers;* either for the soldiers, and which were made of sack-cloth of hair, or of leather, and of the skins of various animals [f], sewed together; hence the phrase, sub pellibus, *under the skins,* is used for to lie in tents [g]: or those tents they made, were canopies made of linen, and other things, which were erected in the summer season to shade and screen from the heat of the sun; though others take them for a sort of tapestry, or hangings, which they made for theatres, palaces, and stately rooms; and according to the Syriac version, they were horses' trappings which they made: perhaps they were of the same occupation with Menedemus the philosopher, who was σκηνορραφος, *a sewer of tents* [h].

Ver. 4. *And he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath,* &c.] In Corinth there was a synagogue of the Jews, in which they met together for worship on the seventh day of the week, which was their sabbath; and hither Paul went, and took the opportunity of reasoning with them out of the Scriptures, concerning Christ, his person, and offices, his incarnation, obedience, sufferings, and death, and about redemption and salvation by him: we may observe the diligence, industry, and indefatigableness of the apostle; on the sabbath-day he went to the synagogue, and preached Christ to those who there attended; and on the week-days he laboured with his own hands. Beza's most ancient copy, and the Vulgate Latin version add here, *interposing the name of the Lord Jesus;* frequently making mention of his name, or calling upon it, and doing miracles in it. *And persuaded the Jews and the Greeks;* this was the effect of his reasoning, and the

[c] Joseph. Antiqu. l. 19. c. 5. sect. 2.
[d] In Vita Claudii, c. 25.
[e] Joseph. ib. sect. 3.
[f] Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 1. c. 12.
[g] Cæsar. Comment. l. 5. de Bello Africano. p. 471. Liv. Hist. l. 3. in principio.
[h] Laert. Vit. Philosoph. l. 2. p. 172.

success that attended it; some, both of the Jews, who were so by birth, as well as religion, and of the Greeks, or Gentiles, who were Jewish proselytes, and attended synagogue-worship, were convinced by his arguments, and were induced to believe the truth of his doctrine, and to embrace it; or at least he endeavoured to persuade them that they were lost sinners, and that there was salvation for them in Christ, and in him only.

Ver. 5. *And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia*, &c.] Not from Berœa in Macedonia, for from hence they came to the apostle while at Athens, and from whence he sent them, at least Timothy, to Thessalonica, to know the state of the saints there, as appears from 1 Thess. iii. 1, 2. and from hence they now came to the apostle at Corinth: when *Paul was pressed in spirit*; either by the Holy Spirit, by which he was moved and stirred up to preach the Gospel more frequently, and more powerfully; for he had not always the same measure of the spirit, or was not always under the same influence; or else in his own spirit, and so the Arabic version renders it, *grief beset the spirit of Paul*; his soul was filled with trouble and sorrow, when he observed the impenitence and unbelief, the contradiction and blasphemy of the greater part of the Jews; and being filled with zeal for their welfare, he continued preaching Christ unto them. The Alexandrian copy, and some others, and the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions, instead of *in spirit*, read *in speech*, or *in word*; and the sense is, not that he was straitened in his speech, and knew not what to say to the Jews, or had not freedom of speech with them; but he was instant in preaching to them, and preached the word more frequently and fervently, upon the coming of Silas and Timothy to his assistance: *and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ*; he continued to produce more testimonies out of the writings of Moses, and the prophets, to prove that Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ, or Messiah, prophesied of in those writings, and promised to the Jews, and whom they expected.

Ver. 6. *And when they opposed themselves*, &c.] To the truth, and contradicted themselves in many instances, and their own prophecies; or those books which they themselves allowed to be the oracles of God, and blasphemed both Christ, and the apostle, and the doctrine which he taught; and railed at him, and spoke evil of him, and used him in a very contumelious and reproachful manner, as they were used from contradicting to go to blaspheming; see ch. xiii. 45. *he shook his raiment*; his outer garment, and the dust off from it, as a testimony against them; see Matt. x. 14. and Acts xiii. 51. *and said unto them, your blood be upon your heads*; meaning, that they were the authors of their own ruin and destruction; that they could not impute it to any other, when it came upon them; and that they were left inexcusable, and must bear their own iniquities, and the punishment of them: this clause is wanting in the Syriac version. *I am clean*; meaning from their blood; see ch. xx. 26. The apostle seems to allude to Ezek. xxxiii. 4, 5, 6, 8, 9. signifying, that he had discharged his duty as a preacher, and so had delivered his own soul from their blood being required at his hands; and that it rested entirely on themselves, and they were answerable for all their impenitence, unbelief, and blasphemy: *from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles*; in that city, and preach the Gospel to them, and no more enter into their synagogue, as it is very likely he afterwards never did; for though Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, was afterwards converted, yet his conversion seems to have been not in the synagogue, but in the house of Justus, which was hard by it. Compare with this Acts xiii. 36.

Ver. 7. *And he departed thence*, &c.] Not from Corinth, but from the synagogue: *and entered into a certain man's house named Justus*; he did not return to Aquila and Priscilla, because they were Jews, lest he should be thought not to abide by his words, that he would henceforth go to the Gentiles; wherefore as he came out of the synagogue, he turned into a house adjoining to it, which belonged to one Justus: in one copy of Beza's, and in some others, and in the Vulgate Latin version, he is called *Titus Justus*; and in the Arabic version, *Titus* the son of *Justus*; the Syriac version only reads *Titus*: whether this is not the same Titus, who afterwards was a companion of the apostle, and to whom he wrote an epistle, may be inquired. *One that worshipped God*; a Gentile, but a religious man, such an one as Cornelius: he might be a proselyte either of the gate, or of righteousness; though if he was the same with Titus, he could not be the latter, because he was not circumcised, Gal. ii. 3. *whose house joined hard to the synagogue*; had this man been a Jew, his house might very well have been taken for the house which was סמוך לבית הכנסת, *near to the synagogue*, in which travellers were entertained, and ate, and drank, and lodged[i]; and that he was the person appointed to take care of them, and so a very suitable house for Paul, a stranger, to take up his lodging in. The Ethiopic version adds, very wrongly, taking it from the beginning of the next verse, *because he was the ruler of the synagogue*; as if Justus was the ruler of the synagogue; and this the reason why his house was so near; whereas not he, but Crispus, was the ruler, as follows.

Ver. 8. *And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue*, &c.] This was a Jewish name; frequent mention is made of R. Crispa in the Jewish writings[k]: this person, either through hearing Paul before he departed from the synagogue, or when in Justus's house, which was hard-by the synagogue, *believed on the Lord with all his house*: he believed the doctrine the apostle preached, concerning Jesus, and that he was the Messiah; and he believed in him for life and salvation, and made a profession of his faith in him, and so did all his family, upon which he was baptized by the apostle; see 1 Cor. i. 14. *and many of the Corinthians hearing*: not *his faith*, as the Arabic version adds; as if hearing of the faith of Crispus induced them to believe also; for the ruler of the Jewish synagogue had no such influence on the Gentile Corinthians, as these were: but these hearing the Gospel preached by the

[i] Vid. Maggid Misna in Maimon. Hilchot Sabbat, c. 29. sect. 8. & Gloss. in T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 10. 1. & in Bava Bathra, fol. 3. 2.

[k] T. Hieros. Yebamot, fol. 2. 3. & 12. 2. & 18. 1. & passim.

apostle, very likely in the house of Justus, to which they came, *believed*: faith came by hearing; they believed the Gospel, and they believed in Christ, the sum and substance of it; and not with a bare historical faith, but with a spiritual and saving one, or such as is unto salvation, with their heart, and with their mouth made confession of it: *and were baptized*: not by the apostle, for he baptized at Corinth none but Crispus and Gaius, and the household of Stephanas, but by some of his companions, as Silas, or Timothy, or both: this is a plain instance of believers' baptism; first they heard the word of God; then they believed, this word coming with power to them; and upon their believing, they are baptized. These laid the foundation of a famous church in this place, which continued for many ages after; Silas, who is reckoned among the seventy disciples, is said to be the first bishop or pastor of it; see the note on Luke x. 1. in the *second* century Primus was bishop of this church, with whom Egesippus as he went to Rome stayed some days, and was much refreshed with the orthodox faith of him, and the Corinthians; in the same century Dionysius presided over this church, who was not only very useful to the church under his care, but to many others [l]; in the same age, under Severus lived Bacchylus bishop of Corinth, who wrote a book concerning Easter in the name of all the bishops in Achaia [m]; in the *third* century Tertullian [n] makes mention of a church at Corinth; in the *fourth* century Epictetus was bishop of the said church, and was cotemporary and familiar with Athanasius, to whom a letter is extant in the works of Athanasius [o]; in the *fifth* century there was a church at Corinth, and a bishop of it was in the synod at Chalcedon, and it was then a metropolitan church; in this age Peregrinus bishop of Corinth was in the first synod at Ephesus, held against Nestorius, and Erisistratus, a bishop also of the same church, was in another synod at the same place, and Peter bishop of Corinth was in the Chalcedon council; in the *sixth* century mention is made of a bishop of the Corinthians, in the fifth synod at Constantinople, and in the same century Gregory instructed John bishop of the Corinthians rightly to govern the Lord's flock, and exhorted all the Corinthian bishops to concord. In this age Adrianus also was bishop of Corinth, he flourished under Mauritius the emperor; as likewise did Anastasius archbishop of the Corinthians; and he being removed from his office, John succeeded him in it; in the *seventh* century there was a Corinthian bishop in the sixth council at Constantinople [p]; thus far this ancient church is to be traced in history.

Ver. 9. *Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision*, &c.] On a certain night as he was asleep, the Lord Jesus Christ appeared to him in a dream, and spake after this manner to him: *be not afraid*; it is very likely that after the baptism of Crispus and his family, and of many of the Corinthians, that both the Jews and the Gentiles were exasperated against the apostle; and his life might seem to be in danger, and he might be thinking of removing from hence for his preservation and safety; and might be advised to it by his friends, or at least that he should be incognito, and not be seen publicly: wherefore the Lord appears to him, and bids him not indulge any fears, or conceal himself and be silent, *but speak, and hold not thy peace*; preach freely and boldly the Gospel without fear of men; the fear of men should not stop the mouths of Christ's ministers.

Ver. 10. *For I am with thee*, &c.] According to his promise, Matt. xxviii. 20. not only to assist in the ministry of the word, to give light into it, and liberty to preach it, and success in it, but to keep and preserve him from being hurt by men: *and no man shall set on thee*; attack thee, or lay hands on thee: *to hurt thee*; to do any injury to thy person, to thy body, in any part of it: wicked men can't strike a blow, or do the least damage to a servant of Christ without his permission; he can tie their hands, and restrain their rage. *For I have much people in this city*; this wicked and luxurious city; there were many here who were yet in their sins, in a state of unregeneracy, whom God had chosen to be his people, and had taken into his covenant as such; and who were given to Christ as his peculiar people, and whom he had redeemed with his precious blood: they were his people both by gift and purchase, before they were called by grace; and because of this his interest in them, he will have his Gospel continued for the gathering them in to himself; for Christ will lose none of his, all shall come unto him: from all which it appears, that Christ has a *people* who are related to him, and he has an interest in, before they are effectually called by grace; for this refers not to the many Corinthians who had heard and believed, and were baptized, but to some that had not, and were yet to be called; not the Jews in this city, Christ's own nation, nor all the inhabitants of it who were in some sense Christ's people, being made and supported in their beings by him, are intended; but a special people among the Gentiles, the same with the other sheep Christ speaks of, John x. 16. not yet of his fold; a people beloved of God, chosen in Christ, given to him, and with whom a covenant was made in him, for whom Christ undertook, in whose name he acted, and for whom he received blessings and promises, as well as took the care and charge of their persons; for the sake of these he assumed human nature, and suffered and died; towards these his heart always is; his eye is upon them, and he knows them, and where they are; and therefore he will look them up and find them out, and they shall be brought to believe in him, and shall not perish, but have everlasting life: and it may be further observed, that Christ has *many* such, though they are but comparatively few, yet in themselves they are a great number; yea, he has sometimes many of these in the worst of places, and among the vilest of men; and for the sake of these, in order to select and separate them from the rest, is the Gospel preached and continued. The ministers of it are sent here and there, where such persons are, and there they are continued till they are

[l] Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. 5. c. 22. & 23.
[m] Hieronymi Catalog. Script. Eccles. sect. 54. fol. 96. D.
[n] De Praescript. Heret. c. 36.
[o] Tom. 1. p. 453. Ed. Commelin.
[p] Magdeburg. Hist. Eccles. cent. 5. c. 2. p. 6. & c. 7. p. 418. & c. 10. p. 665. cent. 6. c. 2. p. 6. & c. 10. p. 349. cent. 7. c. 2. p. 5.

gathered in; yea, on this account both the Gospel and its preachers are continued in the world; and even the world itself, for the sake of these, till they are brought in, and then it will be destroyed; and it may be also remarked, that for the encouragement of Gospel ministers, Christ promises his presence and protection, and which was fulfilled in the Apostle Paul at Corinth: who though he stayed there a year and six months, none were suffered to do him any injury; and when an insurrection was made within that time, yet the apostle escaped, and quietly departed elsewhere.

Ver. 11. *And he continued there,* &c.] At Corinth, as the Syriac version, and some copies, read; he was obedient to the heavenly vision: in the Greek text it is, *he sat* there, answerable to the Hebrew word ישב, which signifies to sit, continue and abide: he staid there in all *a year and six months;* which was a long time for the apostle to stay in one place, and longer than he did anywhere, unless at Ephesus, where he continued two years, ch. xix. 10. for as for his stay at Rome, that was by confinement: but here were many people to be called, and much work to do, a large church to be raised, and put in order; and this required time as well as care and labour: *teaching the word of God among them;* he did not sit idle here, but preached the Gospel, which is the word of God, and not man, openly and publicly, among them all; and that frequently, in season and out of season, and with great boldness and faithfulness.

Ver. 12. *And when Gallio was the deputy of Achaia,* &c.] This province, which was now become a Roman one, Pliny the younger [q] calls true and mere Greece; it went by the name of Ægialus [r], and now it is called Livadia: it has on the north the country of Thessaly, and on the west the river Acheloo, or Aracheo, on the east the Ægean sea, and on the south Peloponnesus, or the Morea. Gallio, who was now deputy of it, was brother to L. Annæus Seneca, the famous philosopher, who was preceptor to Nero; his name at first was M. Annæus Novatus, but beng adopted by L. Junius Gallio, he took the name of the family. According to his brother's account of him [s], he was a very modest man, of a sweet disposition, and greatly beloved; and Statius [t] calls him Dulcem Gallionem, *the sweet Gallio,* mild and gentle in his speech, as Quintilian says. Seneca [u] makes mention of him as being in Achaia; and whilst he was deputy there he had a fever, when as soon as it took him he went aboard a ship, crying, that it was not the disease of the body, but of the place. *The Jews made insurrection with one accord against Paul;* being provoked that so many of their people, as well as of the Gentiles, were converted by him to the Christian religion, and were baptized: *and brought him to the judgment-seat:* of Gallio, the deputy, to be tried and judged by him.

Ver. 13. *Saying, this fellow persuadeth men to worship God contrary to the law.*] Meaning either to the law of the Romans, which forbad the bringing in of any new gods, without the leave of the senate; see the note on ch. xvi. 21. or rather to the law of Moses: the Arabic version reads, *our law;* though this was false, for Moses in his law wrote of Christ, and ordered the children of Israel to hearken to him.

Ver. 14. *And when Paul was now about [to open his mouth,* &c.] In his own defence, and plead his own cause, and answer to the charge exhibited against him: *Gallio said unto the Jews, if it was matter of wrong;* of injury to any man's person or property, as murder, theft, &c. *or wicked lewdness;* as fraud, forgery, perjury, treason, &c. *O ye Jews, reason would that I should bear with you:* his sense is, that it would be according to right reason, and agreeably to his office as a judge, to admit them and their cause, and try it, and hear them patiently, and what was to be said on both sides of the question, what the charges were, and the proof of them, and what the defendant had to say for himself. The Vulgate Latin version reads, *O men Jews;* and so Beza's ancient copy.

Ver. 15. *But if it be a question of words,* &c.] Or *of the word,* what the Jews called the word of God, which Gallio did not pretend to understand; *and names;* as the names of God, of Jesus, and of Christ, whether he is God, and the Messiah: *and of your law;* concerning circumcision, whether these Christians, and the proselytes they make, are obliged unto it: *look ye to it;* suggesting that this was a matter that lay before them, and they were the proper judges of, and might determine for themselves, since they had the free exercise of their religion, and a right of judging of every thing that respected that within themselves, and for which they were best furnished, as having a more competent knowledge of them; as the Arabic version renders it, *and ye are more learned in these things;* and most conversant with them: *for I will be no judge of such matters;* and it would be well if every civil magistrate would act the same part, and not meddle with religious affairs, any further than to preserve the public peace.

Ver. 16. *And he drave them from the judgment-seat.*] He would not hear, and try the cause; but dismissed them with threatening them, if ever they brought an affair of that kind to him any more.

Ver. 17. *Then all the Greeks took Sosthenes,* &c.] These were not the Greeks or Gentiles that were devout persons, or converted to Christianity, and were on the side of Paul, and fell foul on Sosthenes, as being his chief accuser; for this is not agreeably to the spirit and character of such persons, but the profane and unconverted Greeks, who observing that Gallio sent the Jews away, with some resentment and contempt, were encouraged to fall upon the principal of them, and use him in a very ill manner; it is very likely that this person was afterwards converted, and is the same that is mentioned in 1 Cor. i. 1. The name is Greek, and there is one of this name mentioned among the executors of Plato's will [w]. This man was now *chief ruler of the synagogue;* chosen in, very likely, upon Crispus becoming a Christian, and being baptized: *and beat him before the judgment-seat;* of Gallio; before he and his friends could get out of court: *and*

[q] L. 8. Ep. 24.
[r] Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 4. c. 5. Pausanias, l. 7. p. 396.
[s] Præfat. ad l. 4. Nat. Quæst.
[t] Sylvarum, l. 2. Sylv. 7.
[u] Ep. 104.
[w] Laert. l. 3. in Vita Platon.

Gallio cared for none of these things; which might not be owing to any sluggishness in him, but to an ill opinion he had of the Jews, as being a turbulent and uneasy people, and therefore he connived at some of the insolencies of the people towards them; though it did not become him, as a magistrate, to act such a part, whose business it was to keep the public peace, to quell disorders, to protect men's persons, and property, and prevent abuse and mischief, and to correct and punish for it. The Arabic version renders it, and *no man made any account of Gallio:* they did not fear his resentment, he having drove the Jews from the judgment-seat.

Ver. 18. *And Paul* after this *tarried* there *yet a good while,* &c.] A year and a half, as in ver. 11. for this insurrection might follow immediately upon the vision the apostle had; and who by that was encouraged to continue in this city, notwithstanding the treatment he met with; he not doubting of the promise of God, and of his power and faithfulness to fulfil it, though this was a trial of his faith and constancy: *and then took his leave of the brethren;* whom he had been instrumental in the conversion of, and had established and confirmed in the faith; and having now done his work in this place, at least for the time present, he takes his leave of them and departs: *and sailed thence into Syria;* or towards Syria, for he took Ephesus by the way, which was in Asia, and stopped there a little while: *and with him Priscilla and Aquila;* whom he had met with at Corinth, and with whom he had lodged and wrought at his trade, ver. 2, 3. *Having shorn his head in Cenchrea;* which some understand not of Paul, but of Aquila, who is the last person spoken of; and the Ethiopic version reads in the plural number, referring this to both Priscilla and Aquila, *and they had shaved their heads, for they had a vow;* and so it was read in a manuscript of Baronius, and Bede observes, that it was read in like manner in some copies in his time; but the more authentic reading is in the singular number, and is more generally understood of the Apostle Paul; who being about to go into Judea, to the Jew became a Jew, that he might gain some: Cenchrea, where this was done, was a sea-port belonging to the Corinthians, on the east of the Isthmus, as Lechea was on the west; according to Pliny [x], there were two gulfs, or bays, to the Isthmus, the one he calls the Corinthian bay, and others the Crissean and Alcyonian bay, and Golfo de Petras; the other the Saronic bay, now called Golfo de Engia; Lechea was in the Corinthian bay, and Cenchrea in the Saronic bay; and both belonged to Corinth, and were the bounds of the Straights; the space between them was the Isthmus, which consisted of about five miles; and so Pausanias says [y], the Isthmus of the Corinthians is washed on both sides by the sea; on one side at Cenchrea, and on the other at Lechea, and this makes the island a continent; and likewise Philo [z] giving an account of a voyage of Flaccus says, that passing over the Ionian gulf, he came to the sea (or shore) of Corinth——and going over the Isthmus from Lechea, to the opposite sea, he came down to Cenchrea, a sea-port of the Corinthians; of which Apuleius [a] gives this account: "this town is a most noble colony of the "Corinthians, it is washed by the Ægean and Saronic "sea, where there is a port, a most safe receptacle "for ships, and very populous." Hither the apostle came from Corinth to take shipping, and from hence he sailed to Syria, as before observed: it has its name either from millet, for *Cenchros* signifies *millet;* and *Cenchrias* is *bread made of millet;* or from the bird *Cenchris,* which is a kind of hawk; see the note on Rom. xvi. 1. *For he had a vow;* this, some think, could not be the vow of the Nazarites, for then he should have staid till he came to Jerusalem, and have shaved his head at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and cast the hair into the fire, under the pot in which the peace-offerings were boiled [b]; though he that vowed in the country, was not obliged to this: others think it was such an one as the Jews in travelling used, that they would not shave till they came to such a place; and so the apostle had made a vow that he would shave at Cenchrea; and accordingly did; but this is not likely, that the apostle should make a vow upon so light an occasion: others that it refers to his going to Jerusalem, to keep the feast there, ver. 21. and so these think the words are a reason, not of his shaving of his head, but of his sailing to Syria; the first is most probable, that it was a Nazarite's vow; see ch. xxi. 24.

Ver. 19. *And he came to Ephesus,* &c.] The metropolis of Asia; according to Pliny [c], it had been called by many names; at the time of the Trojan war, Alopes, then Ortygia and Morges, also Smyrna Trachea, Samornion and Prelea, and which he calls the work of the Amazons: some say [d] it was called Ephesus, because Hercules permitted the Amazons to dwell in it, Ephesus in the Greek language signifying *permission;* Pausanias [e] denies, that the famous temple in it was built by them, but by Ephesus the son of Caystrus, and says that from him the city had its name; though others say it was built by Androclus, the son of Codrus, king of Athens, in the time of David king of Israel; and that having suffered by the sea, it was rebuilt by Lysimachus king of Thrace, who called it after his wife's name Arsinoe; but he being dead, it was called by its ancient name Ephesus: it is now a poor village in the hands of the Turks, and with them goes by the name of Aiasalik; though with others it still has the name of Epheso; the Syriac version reads, *they came;* not only Paul, but Aquila and Priscilla; and certain it is that they came with him thither, since it follows, *and left them there;* unless this is to be understood of Cenchrea: this clause is not here read in the Syriac version, but is placed at the end of ver. 21. where it reads much better; as that he should leave them at Ephesus, when he departed from thence, than when he first came thither; unless the sense is, that he left them in some part of the city, whilst he went to the Jewish synagogue; since it follows, *but he himself entered into the*

[x] Nat. Hist. l. 4. c. 4.
[y] Corinthiaca sive, l. 2. p. 86.
[z] In Flaccum, p. 987.
[a] Metamorphos. l. 10. in fine.

[b] Misn. Nazir, c. 6. sect. 8. Maimon. & Bartenora in ib. Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 10. fol. 201. 3.
[c] Nat. Hist. l. 5. c. 29.
[d] Heraclides de politiis, p. 456.
[e] Achaica sive, l. 7. p. 399.

synagogue and reasoned with the Jews; concerning Jesus being the Messiah, and the abrogation of the law; and the doctrine of justification by the righteousness of Christ, and not by the deeds of the law: which were the principal things in debate, between him and the Jews: Beza's ancient copy reads, *and the sabbath following he left them there.*

Ver. 20. *When they desired him to tarry longer time with them*, &c.] Either Aquila and Priscilla, whom he left here, for here they were, as is certain from ver. 24, 26. or rather the Jews with whom he reasoned, who might be desirous of further conference with him, upon the subject they had disputed about; either in order to gain more knowledge, or in hopes of baffling and confounding him: *he consented not*; for a reason afterwards given.

Ver. 21. *But bade them farewell, saying*, &c.] As follows: *I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem*; which perhaps was the passover, since that often went by the name of the feast: the reason why he must by all means keep it, was not because it was obligatory upon him; nor did he always observe it, as appears from his long stay at Corinth, and other places; and besides, as a Christian, he had nothing to do with it; but either because of his vow, ver. 18. or because he knew he should have an opportunity of preaching the Gospel to great numbers; the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions omit this clause: *but I will return again unto you, if God will*; he promises to return to them, but not peremptorily as knowing that he was altogether subject to the will of God, who disposes and orders all things according to his sovereign pleasure; see James iv. 15. *and he sailed from Ephesus*; which was near the Ægean sea: such was the situation of Ephesus, according to Apollonius[f]; who says, that it stood out to the sea, which encompassed the land on which it was built; so Pausanias[g] relates, that Lysimachus passing into Asia by shipping, took the kingdom of Antigonus from him, and built the city the Ephesians now inhabit near the sea; so Josephus[h] reports of Herod and Agrippa, that travelling by land to Phrygia Major, they came to Ephesus, and again, ἀπέπλευσαν, *they sailed from Ephesus* to Samos.

Ver. 22. *And when he had landed at Cæsarea*, &c.] This was Cæsarea Stratonis, formerly called Strato's tower: it would have been nearest for the apostle to have landed at Joppa, in order to go to Jerusalem, but that haven was a dangerous one; this was the safest, and which therefore Herod had repaired at a vast expense, and in honour of Cæsar had called it by this name: of the port at Cæsarea, and what a convenient and commodious one, as it was made by Herod, Josephus[i] gives a particular account, and who often calls this place Cæsarea, παράλιος, *Cæsarea by the sea*[k]; and in other Jewish[l] writings mention is made of this place as a sea-port, and of שונתא דימא דקיסרין, *the shore of the sea of Cæsarea*: Josephus[m] sometimes calls it the port Sebastus, or Augustus, it being, as before observed, made by Herod, and so called in honour of Augustus Cæsar; and in another place[n], Sebastus the port of Cæsarea: according to Jerom[o], or a writer under his name, this was neither Cæsarea Philippi, which indeed it could not be, that being an inland town; nor Cæsarea formerly called Strato's tower, but a third Cæsarea, the metropolis of Cappadocia; in which he must be mistaken, seeing that was no sea-port, and the apostle could not be said to land there; nor did it lie in the way to Jerusalem from Ephesus; but this city was in Phenice, and lay between Joppa and Dora; which cities were maritime ones, but very disagreeable havens, because of the vehement strong winds from Africa: which rolling up the sand out of the sea upon the shore, would not admit of a quiet station[p]; wherefore the apostle chose to land here, and not at either of the said ports; *and gone up*; not to Cæsarea, but to Jerusalem, from thence, which lay higher; and going to and from these places, is signified by a going up and down, ch. ix. 30. and xxv. 1. Moreover, the apostle had told the Ephesians, that he must go and keep the feast in Jerusalem, as he undoubtedly did; and yet if this does not refer to his going up thither, it will not be easy to observe that he went thither at all before his return to Ephesus; and besides, to suppose him to go from Cæsarea to Antioch, was all one as to go back to Ephesus; and so to go, as one observes, by the same place to Jerusalem, into which he promised, in his return from Jerusalem, to come again, if God would: *and saluted the church*; at Jerusalem, the mother church: *he went down to Antioch*; in Syria, from whence he first set out.

Ver. 23. *And after he had spent some time there*, &c.] At Antioch: *he departed*; from thence: *and went over all the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order, strengthening all the disciples*; that were in those parts, confirming them in the faith of Christ, and fortifying their minds against the temptations of Satan, and encouraging them to bear the reproaches and persecutions of men; which shews the affection, diligence, and industry of the apostle: it seems there were disciples in these countries of Galatia and Phrygia, which very likely were made by the apostle, when he passed through those places, ch. xvi. 6. and who were the beginning of Gospel churches in these places, which continued for ages after: certain it is, there were churches in Galatia in the apostle's time, of whom he makes mention, and to whom he wrote, 1 Cor. xvi. 1. Gal. i. 2. According to the apostolical constitutions, Crescens, mentioned 2 Tim. iv. 10. was appointed by the apostles bishop of the churches of Galatia; and particularly it is said, that he was bishop of Chalcedon in Galatia; see the note on Luke x. 1. and in the *second* century, there was a church at Ancyra, which was disturbed by the heresy of Montanus, and was established by Apolinarius, who makes mention of the elders of this church[q]: in the *third* century there were churches in Galatia, which Stephen bishop of Rome

[f] Philostrat. Vita Apollonii, l. 8. c. 3.
[g] Attica sive, l. 1. p. 16.
[h] Antiqu. l. 16. c. 2. sect. 2.
[i] Antiqu. l. 15. c. 9. sect. 6. & de Bello Jud. l. 1. c. 21. sect. 5, 6, 7.
[k] Ib. de Bello, l. 1. c. 8. sect. 5. & l. 3. c. 8. sect. 1. & l. 7. c. 1. sect. 3. c. 2. sect. 1.
[l] Midrash Kohelet, fol. 71. 4. & 82. 2.
[m] Antiqu. l. 17. c. 5. sect. 1.
[n] De Bello Jud. l. 1. c. 31. sect. 3.
[o] De locis Hebraicis, fol. 96. A.
[p] Joseph. Antiqu. l. 15. c. 9. sect. 6.
[q] Apud Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. 5. c. 16.

threatened with excommunication, because they rebaptized heretics: in the beginning of the *fourth* century, there were bishops from hence, which assisted at the council of Nice, against Arius, and at the synod of Sardica, in the same century; and at the beginning of it, Clemens bishop of Ancyra, after he had taught twenty-nine years, suffered much in the persecution of Dioclesian, first at Rome, then at Nicomedia, and at last was put to death by the sword; in this age also lived Basil, bishop of Ancyra, under Constantius; he first came to the bishopric of that place under Constantine, but being deprived of it for four years, was restored by Constantius in the council of Sardica; under the former he disputed against Photinus, as Epiphanius[r] relates; who makes mention of Anysius his deacon, and Eutyches and Theodulus his notaries; and the same writer[s] takes notice of several elders and officers of the same church in that age, as Photinus, Eustathius, another Photinus, and Sigerius, elders, Hyginus deacon, Heracides sub-deacon, Elpidus reader, and Cyriacus president of the church: in the *fifth* century, there were many churches in Galatia, yea, they are said to be innumerable; Leontius was bishop of Ancyra in the times of Arcadius and Honorius; and was succeeded by Theodotus, who was in the first Ephesine synod against Nestorius, as was also Eusebius bishop of the same church, at another synod in the same place; Anastasius was bishop of the said church, lived under the emperor Leo the first, and was at the synod of Constantinople; Meliphthongus, bishop of Juliopolis in the same country, assisted at several synods; Eusebius, bishop of Aspona in Galatia, was present in the first synod at Ephesus, against Nestorius; likewise Peter bishop of Gangræ, and Theoctistus bishop of Pessinus, both lived in the time of the two synods, the infamous one at Ephesus, and the other at Chalcedon: in the *sixth* century, there were bishops of Ancyra, Juliopolis, and other cities in Galatia, who were present at the Roman and Constantipolitan synod; in this age, under Anastasius the emperor, lived Dorotheus bishop of Ancyra: in the *seventh* century were present, at the sixth council at Constantinople, several bishops of the churches of Galatia; as of Sinope, Pessinus, Aspona, and others: in the *eighth* century, mention is made of Basil, bishop of the church at Ancyra, Nicodemus bishop of Didymi, Gregory bishop of Sinope: and even in the *ninth* century a garrison of Christians was placed in Ancyra, against the incursions of the Saracens[t]; so long the Christian name remained in those parts: and that there were also churches in Phrygia is as evident; Aristarchus, a companion of the apostle Paul, is said to be bishop of Apamea, which was a city in Phrygia; see the note on Luke x. 1. in the *second* century, Papias, a disciple of the Apostle John, was bishop of Hierapolis in this country[u]; and in the same age there was a church at Philomelium in Phrygia, to which the church at Smyrna wrote a letter, still extant in Eusebius[w], which gives an account of the martyrdom of Polycarp; likewise the church at Lyons, in France, sent a letter to the churches in Asia and Phrygia, giving an account of their martyrs, which is to be seen in the same writer[x]; in this century lived Apolinarius, bishop of Hierapolis, who opposed the Phrygian heresy of Montanus; and who makes mention of Zoticus, of the village of Comana, and Julianus of Apamea, both in Phrygia, as his fellow elders and bishops[y]: Dionysius, of Alexandria, speaks of a church, and of the brethren at Synnada, which was in Phrygia, in a letter of his to Philemon, a presbyter at Rome[z]; at Lampsacus in Phrygia, there were martyrs that suffered under Decius: in the *third* century, there was a church at Hierapolis, famous from the times of the apostles. Tertullian makes mention of the believers in Christ in Phrygia, in his time[a]: in the beginning of the *fourth* century under Dioclesian, a whole city in Phrygia of Christians was set on fire and burnt, men, women, and children, calling upon Christ the God of all[b]; and at the council of Nice, under Constantine, were present bishops of many churches in Phrygia; as Ilium, Synnada, Eucarpia, Hierapolis, and others; at Lampsacus, in this country, was held a memorable synod against Eudoxus and Acacius, the chief of the Arian faction: in the *fifth* century there were churches in Phrygia; Theodosius and Agapetus were bishops of Synnada in Phrygia Pacatiana; Marinianus, bishop of the same place, was present at the several synods in this century; Nunechius of Laodicea, Gennadius of Acmonii, Thomas and Olympius, both of Theodosiopolis, Lucianus of Ipsa, Albertus of Hierapolis, Eusebius of Doryleus, with many others, all in Phrygia, are made mention of in history: in the *sixth* century, several bishops of Phrygia, as of Philomelium, *&c.* were present at the synod held at Rome and Constantinople: in the *seventh* century, bishops of several churches in this country, as of Hierapolis, Synnada, *&c.* assisted at the sixth synod at Constantinople: in the *eighth* century were many churches here, whose bishops were present at the Nicene synod, as Basil, bishop of Pergamus, Nicetas of Ilium, John of Synnada, and others[c].

Ver. 24. *And a certain Jew named Apollos*, &c.] Who by some is thought to be the same with Apelles, Rom. xvi. 10. his name is Greek, though he was a Jew, not only by religion, but by birth, being of a Jewish extract: *born at Alexandria*; in Egypt, which was built by Alexander the great, from whence it had its name; it was the metropolis of Egypt, and the seat of the kings of it; great numbers of Jews were in this place; here lived Philo the famous Jew: *an eloquent man*: in speech, as well as learned, wise, and *prudent*, as the Ethiopic version renders it: *and mighty in the Scriptures*; of the Old Testament, particularly in the

[r] Contra Hæres. l. 3. Hæres. 71.
[s] Ib. Hæres. 72.
[t] Magdeburg. cent. 3. c. 7. p. 137. cent. 4. c. 2. p. 3. c. 9. p. 350, 425. c. 10. p. 550, 554. cent. 5. c. 2. p. 4. c. 10. p. 604, 605. cent. 6. c. 2. p. 5. c. 10. p. 341. cent. 7. c. 2. p. 3. c. 10. p. 254. cent. 8. c. 2. p. 5. c. 10. p. 360. cent. 9. c. 2. p. 3.
[u] Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. 3. c. 36.
[w] Ib. l. 4. c. 15.

[x] Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. 5. c. 1.
[y] Ib. c. 16.
[z] Ib. l. 7. c. 7.
[a] Adv. Judæos, c. 7.
[b] Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. 8. c. 11.
[c] Magdeburg. Hist. Eccles. cent. 3. c. 2. p. 2. cent. 4. c. 2. p. 3. c. 9. p. 481. cent. 5. c. 2. p. 3. c. 10. p. 597, &c. cent. 6. c. 2. p. 4. cent. 7. c. 2. p. 3. c. 10. p. 254. cent. 8. c. 2. p. 4. c. 10. p. 306.

prophecies of them concerning the Messiah; he had thoroughly read them, and carefully examined them, and could readily cite them; as well as had great knowledge of them, and was capable of explaining them; he was *skilful in the Scriptures*, as the Syriac version renders it; or he *knew* them, as the Ethiopic; he had large acquaintance with them, and was well-versed in them: it is a Jewish way of speaking; so Ahitophel is said to be גבור בתורה, *mighty in the law*[d]; the same is said of the sons of Reuben[e]: this man *came to Ephesus;* after the departure of the Apostle Paul, and while Aquila and Priscilla were there; the reason of his coming hither was to preach the word, as he did.

Ver. 25. *This man was instructed in the way of the Lord*, &c.] Which John, whose baptism he only knew, came to prepare: the word here used signifies *catechised;* and suggests, that he was trained up by his parents in this way, who might have been the disciples of John, though afterwards removed from Judea to Alexandria; and that he only had been taught the rudiments of the Christian religion, or doctrine of the Gospel; here called the way of the Lord, or which directs and leads unto him, as the only Saviour, and is the path of faith and truth; or as some copies read, *the word of the Lord;* and which accounts for what is afterwards said of him: *and being fervent in the spirit;* either in or by the spirit of God, being made so by him, who is compared to fire, and who, in the form of cloven tongues of fire, sat upon the disciples at the day of Pentecost, and upon others; among whom this Apollos is by some thought to be, though without any reason; however, he might be inspired with zeal by the spirit of God: or *in his own spirit*, as the Ethiopic version renders it; his soul was inflamed with zeal for the glory of God, the honour of Christ, and the good of souls; his ministry was very affectionate, warm, and lively; see Rom. xii. 11. *He spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord;* or *of Jesus*, as read the Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions; according to the measure of light and grace he had received, he spake out freely and fully, and taught the people with great industry, and with all the exactness he could, the things he knew concerning the person, offices, and grace of the Lord Jesus: *knowing only the baptism of John;* which must be understood, not of the ordinance of baptism singly, as administered by John, but of the whole ministry of John; as of that ordinance, so of his doctrine concerning repentance and remission of sins; and concerning Christ that was to come, and concerning his being come, and who he was, whom John pointed at, and taught the people to believe in: but perhaps he might know very little, if any thing, of the miracles of Christ, or of his death and resurrection from the dead, and the benefits and effects thereof; and of the pouring out of the Holy Ghost upon the apostles, and the light and knowledge which were communicated thereby.

Ver. 26. *And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue*, &c.] Of the Jews at Ephesus; using great freedom of speech, and shewing much intrepidity and greatness of soul, and presence of mind; not fearing the faces of men, nor the revilings and contradictions of the Jews: *whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard;* they attending at the synagogue, and having observed what he delivered, that there was some deficiency in it, though they took no notice of it publicly; partly on their own account, it not being proper, especially for Priscilla, to speak in public, nor was it allowed in the Jewish synagogues for a woman to speak there; and partly on his account, that they might not put him to the blush, and discourage him; and chiefly on account of the Gospel, that they might not lay any stumbling-blocks in the way of that, and of young converts, and give an occasion to the adversary to make advantages: wherefore *they took him unto them;* they took him aside when he came out of the synagogue, and privately conversed with him; they had him *to their own house*, as the Syriac version renders it; *and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly;* these two doubtless had received a considerable measure of evangelical light and knowledge from the Apostle Paul, during the time of their conversation with him; and as they freely received from him, they freely imparted it to Apollos, with a good design to spread the truth of the Gospel, and to promote it and the interest of Christ in the world: and as on the one hand it was a good office, and a kind part in them, to communicate knowledge to him, so it was an instance of a good spirit, and of condescension in him, to be taught and instructed by them; especially since one of them was a woman, and both mechanics, and made but a mean figure: and from hence it may be observed, that women of grace, knowledge, and experience, though they are not allowed to teach in public, yet they may, and ought to communicate in private, what they know of divine things, for the use of others.

Ver. 27. *And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia*, &c. The chief city of which was Corinth, and whither Apollos went, as appears from ch. xix. 1. What disposed him to go thither, after he had received a greater degree of light and knowledge, was no doubt that he might communicate it, to the good of others, to which he was moved by the Holy Ghost, who had work for him to do there: according to Beza's most ancient copy, there were Corinthians sojourning in Ephesus, who when they had heard him (Apollos), besought him that he would go with them into their country; to which he agreeing, the Ephesians wrote to the disciples at Corinth to receive him, as follows: *the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him;* that is, the brethren at Ephesus, among whom Aquila was a principal one, wrote letters of recommendation to the brethren of the churches in Achaia, particularly at Corinth, not only that they would receive him into their houses, and hospitably entertain him as a Christian man, but admit him, and behave towards him as a preacher of the Gospel: *who when he was come;* into Achaia, and to Corinth: *helped them much which had believed through grace;* the phrase

[d] T. Hieros. Sanhedrin, fol. 29. 1.

[e] Tzeror Hammor, fol. 60. 1.

through grace, is omitted in the Vulgate Latin version, but is in all the Greek copies, and may be connected either with the word *helped*: as the Syriac version, *he helped through grace*: and then the sense is, that Apollos, through the gifts of grace bestowed on him, or by the assistance of the grace of God, or both, greatly helped and contributed much to the advantage of the believers in those parts; as to the encouragement of their faith, and the increase of the joy of it; for the quickening, and comforting, and establishing them in the truths and doctrines of the Gospel, by his affectionate, fervent, and nervous way of preaching: or it may be connected with the word *believed*, as it is in the Arabic version and in ours; and the meaning is, that he greatly assisted such who were already believers; and who became so, not of themselves, but through the grace of God; for faith is not of nature, nor the produce of man's free will, but is the gift of God's grace; it is a fruit of electing grace, an instance of distinguishing grace, it is owing to efficacious grace, and comes along with effectual calling grace, through the word preached, the means of grace; and is supported and maintained by the grace of God; the Ethiopic version renders it, *he preached much to them, who believed in the grace of God*: that is, in the Gospel, the doctrine of the grace of God, which they had received and professed; or in the love and favour of God, they were rooted and grounded in, and persuaded of.

Ver. 28. *For he mightily convinced the Jews*, &c.] His reasoning was so strong and nervous, his arguments so weighty and powerful, and the passages he produced out of the Old Testament so full and pertinent, that the Jews were not able to stand against him; they could not object to the texts of Scripture he urged, nor to the sense he gave of them, nor answer the arguments founded upon them; he was an overmatch for them; they were refuted by him over and over, and were confounded to the last degree: and that *publicly*, in their synagogue, before all the people; which increased their shame and confusion; and was the means of spreading the Gospel, of bringing others to the faith of it, and of establishing them in it, who had already received it: *shewing by the Scriptures*; of the Old Testament, which the Jews received and acknowledged as the word of God: *that Jesus was Christ*; or that Christ, that Messiah, which these Scriptures spoke of, whom God had promised, and the church of God expected; and which was the main thing in controversy between the Jews and the Christians, as it still is.

CHAP. XIX.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to pass that while Apollos was at Corinth*, &c.] Whither he came after the Apostle Paul, and where he watered what the apostle had planted, and where he became very famous and eminent; insomuch that he was set up, though not with his will, at the head of a party, in opposition to the chief of the apostles, Peter and Paul; see 1 Cor. i. 12. and iii. 4, 5, 6. and iv. 6. *Paul having passed through the upper coasts*: that is, of Phrygia, Galatia, Pontus, Bithynia, Lydia, Lycaonia, and Paphlagonia; *came to Ephesus*; into Ionia, of which Ephesus was the chief city, and lay near the sea; wherefore the other countries are called the upper coasts; hither he came, according to his promise in ch. xviii. 21. *And finding certain disciples*; such as believed in Christ, made a profession of him, and had been baptized in his name, for such were commonly called disciples: these don't seem to be persons, who were either converted by Paul, when he was at Ephesus before, or by Apollos, who had been there since, and was gone; but rather some who came hither from other parts, since the apostle was at this place; though indeed his stay at Ephesus before was so short, that they might be here, and he not hear of them, or meet with them.

Ver. 2. *He said unto them, have ye received the Holy Ghost*, &c.] Meaning, not the special regenerating and sanctifying grace of the Holy Ghost, for that is supposed in their being disciples and believers, but the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost, for it follows, *since ye believed?* that is, in Christ; which is taking it for granted, that they had received the special grace of the spirit of God; for this believing is to be understood of true, spiritual, special faith in Christ: *and they said unto him, we have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost*; by which they could not mean the person of the Holy Ghost: for they must have known that there was such a divine person as the Holy Ghost, from the writings of the Old Testament, with which they were conversant: and from the ministry of John, into whose baptism they were baptized; who saw the spirit of God descend on Jesus, and bore witness of it; and declared, that Christ who was to come after him, would baptize with the Holy Ghost: nor could they mean the special grace of the spirit, which they themselves had received; but the extraordinary gifts of the spirit of God, which they at present knew nothing of, and which were afterwards bestowed upon them: they knew that there were prophecies in the Old Testament, concerning the effusion of the spirit in the last days, in the days of the Messiah; but they had not heard that these had had their accomplishment; they had heard nothing of the day of Pentecost, and of the pouring out of the spirit upon the apostles then, nor of any instance of this kind since; they did not know that the Holy Ghost was yet, John vii. 39. they knew he was promised, but not that he was given; the Ethiopic version, to avoid the difficulty of the text, renders it, *we have only heard that there was an Holy Ghost*.

Ver. 3. *And he said unto them, unto what then were ye baptized?* &c.] The apostle takes it for granted that they were baptized, since they were not only believers, but disciples; such as not only believed with the heart, but had made a profession of their faith, and were followers of Christ; but asks unto what they were baptized; either in whose name they were baptized, since Christian baptism was administered in the name of the Spirit, as well as in the name of the Father and of the Son; or what attended or followed their baptism, seeing sometimes

the Holy Ghost fell upon persons, either before baptism, or at it, or after it: *and they said, unto John's baptism;* some think they had never been baptized at all with water-baptism, only had received the doctrine preached by John, concerning repentance and remission of sins, and so were baptized unto him, professing the same doctrine he did, just as the Israelites were baptized into Moses; others think they were baptized, but very wrongly, being baptized in the name of John, and not in the name of Jesus Christ; and so, as it was not Christian baptism they had submitted to, it was right to baptize them again: but neither of these are probable, for it is not likely that they should receive John's doctrine, and not his baptism; that they should be his disciples and followers, and not attend to the more distinguishing branch of his ministry; and it is still more unlikely that they should be baptized in his name, who preached Jesus Christ to his followers, and pointed out to them the Lamb of God, and declared him to be greater than he; it seems rather that they were baptized, and that they were baptized in the name of Christ, as John's disciples were, as the apostle affirms in the following words.

Ver. 4. *Then said Paul,* &c.] In reply to their answer, understanding them that they were baptized by John, he takes it up, and gives an account of John's baptism: shewing how agreeable it was, and that it was the same baptism with the baptism of Christ, being administered in his name: *John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance;* which required repentance antecedent to it, and was a fruit and effect, and so an evidence of it: *saying unto the people,* the people of the Jews, the common people, the multitude that attended on his ministry: *that they should believe on him, which should come after him, that is, on Jesus Christ;* so that he preached faith in Christ, as well as repentance towards God; and made the one as well as the other a necessary pre-requisite unto baptism; which shews, that his baptism and Christian baptism are the same.

Ver. 5. *When they heard* this, &c.] That is, the people to whom John preached, his hearers; when they heard of the Messiah, and that Jesus was he, and that it became them to believe in him: *they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus;* not the disciples that Paul found at Ephesus, but the hearers of John; for these are the words of the Apostle Paul, giving an account of John's baptism, and of the success of his ministry, shewing, that his baptism was administered in the name of the Lord Jesus; and not the words of Luke the Evangelist, recording what followed upon his account of John's baptism; for then he would have made mention of the apostle's name, as he does in the next verse; and have said, when they heard this account, they were baptized by Paul in the name of the Lord Jesus: the historian reports two things, first what Paul said, which lies in ver. 4. 5. then what he did, ver. 6. where he repeats his name, as was necessary; as that he laid his hands upon them, which was all that was needful to their receiving the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost, having been already baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus: which sense is the more confirmed by the particles μεν and δε, which answer to one another in ver. 4, 5, and shew the words to be a continuation of the apostle's speech, and not the words of the historian, which begin in the next verse. Beza's ancient copy adds, *for the remission of sins.*

Ver. 6. *And when Paul had laid* his *hands upon them,* &c.] They having been before baptized, not by him, but by John, or one of his disciples, in the name of the Lord Jesus; just as Peter and John laid their hands upon the believing Samaritans, who had been before baptized by Philip, Acts viii. 14, 15, 16, 17. and the same extraordinary effects followed: *the Holy Ghost came on them;* in his extraordinary gifts, whose special grace they had before an experience of: *and they spake with tongues;* with other tongues, or in other languages, which they had never learned, or had been used to, as the disciples did at the day of *Pentecost: and prophesied;* preached, having an extraordinary gift at once, of explaining the prophecies of the Old Testament, and also foretold things to come.

Ver. 7. *And all the men were about twelve.*] The Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, have not the word *about;* but affirm, that the men were twelve; and indeed the number being so small, the historian might be at a certainty about it: these seem to be the first materials of a Gospel church at Ephesus, which afterwards was very large and flourishing, and very likely were some of the elders of it.

Ver. 8. *And he went into the synagogue,* &c.] Of the Jews at Ephesus, for it seems to have been a private house, where he had met with the twelve baptized disciples, and had laid his hands on them; and these being Jews, as it seems most likely, by their having been baptized into John's baptism, the apostle went along with them to the synagogue on the sabbath-day, as was his usual custom; having a very great desire, and an affectionate concern, for the welfare of his countrymen the Jews: *and spake boldly for the space of three months;* that is, he used great freedom of speech, and shewed much courage and intrepidity of mind, in preaching the Gospel at the synagogue every sabbath-day as it returned, during this space of time; some manuscripts read, *three days: disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God;* the kingdom of the Messiah, the Gospel dispensation, the doctrines and ordinances of the Gospel, and the Gospel church-state, often signified by the kingdom of God, and of heaven, in Scripture; and concerning the glory of a future state, the way and right unto it, and meetness for it; and these things he reasoned upon in such a strong and nervous manner, and made use of such powerful arguments, in proof and demonstration of them, as were very persuasive, and engaged many to believe them, and give their assent unto them.

Ver. 9. *But when divers were hardened and believed not,* &c.] For though some were affected with and convinced by the arguments the apostle used, others were but the more hardened and remained incredulous: for the Gospel, while it is the savour of life unto life to some, it is the savour of death unto death to others; as the sun melts the wax, and hardens

the clay: *but spake evil of the way before the multitude*: the Syriac version and Beza's ancient copy read, *before the multitude of the Gentiles*: the unbelieving Jews not only contradicted the Gospel preached by the apostle, but blasphemed it, and said all the evil things of it they could, and loaded it with reproaches, and charged it with all the bad consequences they could think of; and that publicly, before all the people, in order to prejudice them against it; for by *the way*, is meant the doctrine of the Gospel, which the Vulgate Latin here reads, *the way of the Lord*: and so some copies; and two of Stephens's copies read, *the way of God*, as does also the Syriac version; and the Arabic version, *the way of faith*; and the Ethiopic version, *the doctrine*; the doctrine, which shews the way of God's salvation by Jesus Christ: *he departed from them*; the hardened, unbelieving, and blaspheming Jews, as being unworthy of the means of grace; he went out of their synagogue, and no more entered there: *and separated the disciples*; from them, the twelve disciples he had laid his hands on, and others who in this space of time, the space of three months, had been converted under his ministry; these he formed into a separate Gospel church-state, as well as engaged them to quit the company and conversation of these blasphemers, and no more attend with them in their synagogue, that so they might not be infected and corrupted by them; a separation from such who contradict and blaspheme the truths and ordinances of the Gospel, is justifiable: *disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus*: which was either built by him, and so went by his name, or which one of this name possessed, and made use of; for it seems to be the proper name of a man, and so the Syriac version renders it, *whose name was Tyrannus*; though by others it is taken to be an appellative, and to design some great person, who patronised the apostle, and in whose house he taught; the word *tyrant*, being formerly used for a king, a prince, or nobleman; and so the Arabic version renders it, *in the dwelling-house of one of the great men*; the chief of Asia, that were his friends, ver. 31. and so the Ethiopic version, *and he taught daily before the court and the governors*: some copies read *Tyrannius*; mention is made of a philosopher whose name was *Tyrannion*, who was so called, because he vexed and disturbed those that were brought up in the same school with him[f]; this man it seems was a schoolmaster; there was one of his name a bishop of Tyre, a martyr under Dioclesian; and another whose name was Tyrannus, bishop of Antioch[g]; Beza's ancient copy, and one of Stephens's, add, *from the fifth hour to the tenth*: as if he spent five hours in public teaching every day, and rest in his trade and devotion.

Ver. 10. *And this continued by the space of two years*, &c.] Reckoning from the end of the three months, which had been spent in teaching in the synagogue: *so that all they which dwelt in Asia*; in the lesser Asia, called the proconsular Asia, of which Ephesus was the chief city: *heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks*; these, as they came to Ephesus, whether on account of religion, the Asiatic Jews to their synagogue, and the Greeks or Gentiles to the famous temple of Diana, or on account of trade and business, or for the sake of seeing this place, had the opportunity of hearing the Apostle Paul preach, concerning the person, offices, and grace of Christ; and dispute and reason concerning the more abstruse and difficult points of the Christian religion, in the above school, for two years together; so that the word of the Lord went out from hence, and was spread in all the cities and towns in Asia.

Ver. 11. *And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul.*] For the confirmation of the doctrine which he preached, and of his mission, as an apostle; and these were not any sort of miracles, common and vulgar ones, and much less things of chance, and what were merely accidental, as the word may signify; but they were rare and uncommon ones, and in which there was a visible display of the power of God; to whom as the efficient cause they are ascribed, the apostle being only an instrument God made use of.

Ver. 12. *So that from his body were brought unto the sick*, &c.] The Ethiopic version renders it, *from the extremity*, or *border of his garment*; and the Syriac version, *from the garments which were upon his body, were brought and put upon the sick*; that is, of the clothes which the apostle wore, some of them were taken and carried to sick persons, and used by them: particularly *handkerchiefs or aprons*; the former were such as he might use to wipe his face with, and remove sweat, or any filth from the body; and the latter, what he might wear as a mechanic, when working at his trade: *and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them*; who were afflicted and possessed with them; these were some of the special and uncommon miracles wrought by the hands of the apostle, and which were wrought in an uncommon way; and which most clearly shewed that they were wrought by a divine power.

Ver. 13. *Then certain of the vagabond Jews*, &c.] Who strolled about from place to place, pretending to tell fortunes, cure diseases by charms, and dispossess devils by conjuration, and therefore are called as follows, *exorcists*; such there were among the Jews, as Justin Martyr observes[h], who adjured by the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: these *took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits, the name of the Lord Jesus*; they imitated the Apostle Paul, and attempted to do as he did, using the same name; hoping to get money or applause, or both, in this way; and it may be observed, that there were some who really did cast out devils in the name of Christ, who did not belong to him, Matt. vii. 22. Mark ix. 38. *Saying, we adjure you by Jesus, whom Paul preacheth*: that is, to come out of the bodies of those men which they had possessed: and the Jews made use of the name of Jesus for healing diseases; for it is said of one[i], that " he swallowed something " which almost choked him, and one came and

[f] Hesychius de Philosophis, p. 64.
[g] Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. 7. c. 32. & l. 8. c. 13.

[h] Dialog. cum Tryphon. p. 311.
[i] T. Hieros. Sabbat, fol. 14. 4. & Avoda Zara, fol. 40. 4.

" muttered to him in the name of Jesus ben Pandira, " and he was well." The Alexandrian copy, Beza's ancient one, and others, the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions, read, *I adjure you*, &c.

Ver. 14. *And there were seven sons of one Sceva a Jew*, &c.] Who strolled about the country, and used exorcisms: and *chief of the priests*: that were at Ephesus; not the high-priest of the Jews, for he would have been at Jerusalem, and not at Ephesus; though indeed it does not necessarily follow from the words, that Sceva himself was there, only his seven sons: however, no such name appears in the catalogue of the Jewish high-priests, nor is it reasonable to think, that seven sons of an high-priest should follow such a vagabond course of life: Beza's ancient copy only calls him *a priest*; and the Alexandrian copy reads his name, Sceuta, and the Ethiopic version omits it; it is the same with סכואה, and signifies a spectator, or observer; see the Targum on 2 Sam. xiii. 34. Isa. xxi. 6. *which did so*: adjured the devils in the name of Jesus, to come out; at least they did so in one case, as follows.

Ver. 15. *And the evil spirit answered and said*, &c.] The Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, add, *to them*; to the seven sons of Sceva: *Jesus I know*; to be the son of God and Messiah, and own that he has power of dispossessing spirits, of which there were many instances in the days of his flesh: *and Paul I know*; and own to be a servant of the most high God, by whom miracles of this kind have been wrought: *but who are ye?* you are not the disciples of Jesus, nor the servants of God, but the children of the devil, and have no power over us, but on the other hand are subject to us.

Ver. 16. *And the man in whom the evil spirit was*, &c.] Being agitated by him: *leapt upon them*; with great agility and force, and laid hold on them, and struggled with them, and beat and wounded them, and stripped them naked: *and overcame them, and prevailed against them*; the Alexandrian copy, Beza's most ancient one, and some others, and the Vulgate Latin version read, *and overcame both*; as if only two of these seven sons had made this attempt, and were so used; though the Ethiopic version reads, *and overcame them all*; all the seven sons: *so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded*; having their clothes tore off, and their bodies beat and bruised.

Ver. 17. *And this was known to all the Jews*, &c.] These men being Jews: *and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus*; for though it was done in a private house, yet there might be many spectators and witnesses, both Jews and Greeks, who spread this fact about the city, and who were to be depended upon: *and fear fell on them all*; on the enemies of Christ and his Gospel, so that others were deterred from making such an attempt for the future: *and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified*; which had such power over evil spirits, and whose power they themselves acknowledged: this was done by them that believed in Christ, who thought and spake the more highly of him; and who more strongly believed in him, and so magnified him, and gave more glory to him; Christ is great in himself, and he is magnified and made great, when he is declared to be so, and is treated as such.

Ver. 18. *And many that believed*, &c.] In Jesus Christ, whose name was spoken of with great respect, and which spread fear in every person: *came*; to the apostle: *and confessed*; their sins, and acknowledged what a wicked life they had led: *and shewed their deeds*; their former evil deeds, which they had been guilty of; one copy reads, *their sins*; see Matt. iii. 6.

Ver. 19. *Many also of them which used curious arts*, &c.] Magic arts, soothsaying, necromancy, conjuration, and the like, being convinced of the folly and wickedness of them: *brought their books together*; by which they had learned these arts; Ephesus was famous for this sort of learning; here Apollonius Tyaneus, in the beginning of Nero's reign, opened a school and taught magic, and such like things: frequent mention is made of the Ephesian letters, which were no other than enchantments; and even Diana, the goddess of the Ephesians, is said to be a magician[k]: *and burned them before all men*; to shew their detestation of them, and the truth and genuineness of their repentance for their former sins; and that these books might not be a snare to them for the future, nor be made use of by others: *and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver*; which is thought to answer to one thousand five hundred sixty-two pounds and ten shillings of our money; reckoning a piece of silver, an Attic drachma; for such might be the silver pieces at Ephesus, a city of Greece, and which was of the value of our money seven-pence halfpenny; but if Luke meant by pieces of silver, shekels, according to the Jewish way, see the note on Matt. xxvi. 15. then the sum is much larger, for a shekel was about two shillings and six-pence of our money; so that fifty thousand pieces of silver, amount to six thousand two hundred and fifty pounds; a large sum indeed for magic books! some manuscripts read *gold* instead of *silver*, which must greatly increase the value.

Ver. 20. *So mightily grew the word of God, and prevailed.*] Over conjuring books, conjurers themselves, yea, even the devils; the power of God going along with it, many were converted; which is meant by the increase of it, and were delivered from the power of darkness, out of the hands of Satan, and translated into the kingdom of Christ. Beza's ancient copy reads, the *faith of God*; and the Syriac version, *faith in God*.

Ver. 21. *After these things were ended*, &c.] After that the apostle had disputed with the Jews in their synagogue, for the space of three months, and in the school of Tyrannus about two years; and after many souls had been converted at Ephesus, and were formed into a church-state, and were established in the faith: *Paul purposed in the spirit*; either under the influence of the spirit of God, by whom he was directed whither to go, and in all the parts of the work assigned unto him; or rather *in his own spirit*,

[k] Tatian. contr. Græcos, p. 147.

as the Syriac and Ethiopic versions read; though this might be the effect of the impulse and influence of the divine Spirit upon him, he determined within himself: *when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia;* in the former of which were the cities of Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea, and in the latter, Corinth; where the apostle had already been, and preached the Gospel with success, and had laid the foundation of a Gospel church-state in each place; but was willing to visit them again, both to confirm them in the doctrines of the Gospel, and, if it was the will of God, that he might be the instrument of converting others, and adding them to them, as well as to make some collections among them, for the poor saints at Jerusalem: for through these places he intended *to go to Jerusalem;* to visit the church there, and distribute to the poor what he had gathered, or should gather for them among the Gentile churches: *saying, after I have been there, I must also see Rome;* the metropolis of the empire, and the glory of the whole world; and which to see was one of Austin's three wishes: but the apostle's desire was not so much to see the magnificence of the city, as the saints in it; and that he might impart some spiritual gift unto them, and have some fruit among them; and be a means of quickening and comforting them, and of gaining others to them; and it was the will of God that he should go there; and this he spake by a prophetic spirit, and as being under the impulse of the spirit of God; see ch. xxiii. 11.

Ver. 22. *So he sent into Macedonia,* &c.] To Philippi, or Thessalonica, or Berea, or some of the places there, to let them know of his coming, and to prepare for him: *two of them that ministered unto him;* that were his assistants in preaching the Gospel: *Timotheus and Erastus;* the former of these was a disciple he found at Lystra, and took along with him, and to whom he afterwards wrote two epistles; and the latter seems to be the same with him, who was chamberlain of the city of Corinth, and is said to abide there, Rom. xvi. 23. 2 Tim. iv. 20. The Ethiopic version, instead of Erastus, wrongly reads Aristarchus; whereas it is certain he was not sent into Macedonia, but was with the apostle at Ephesus in the tumult, ver. 29. But *he himself staid in Asia for a season;* that is, at Ephesus, as the following narration shews.

Ver. 23. *And the same time there arose no small stir about that way.*] The Syriac version reads, *the way of God;* and the Vulgate Latin version, *the way of the Lord;* that is, the Christian religion, and the doctrines and ordinances of the Gospel, which the saints were directed to walk in; and the Ethiopic version renders it, *about this doctrine;* which mightily grew and prevailed, and which such numbers embraced; and how great the stir was about it, and from whence it arose, who began it, and what were the consequences of it, are hereafter related.

Ver. 24. *For a certain man, named Demetrius, a silversmith,* &c.] Who worked in silver, not in coining silver money, but in making silver vessels, in melting silver, and casting it into moulds, and forming it into different shapes; and particularly, *which made silver shrines for Diana;* who Diana was, see the note on ver. 27. these were not coins or medals of silver, struck by Demetrius, with the figure of the temple of Diana on them, nor images of Diana, as the Ethiopic version reads; but they were chaplets, or little temples made of silver, in imitation of the temple of Diana at Ephesus, with her image included in it; the words may be rendered, *silver temples:* in some manuscripts 'tis added, *like little chests:* which being sold to the people, *brought no small gain to the craftsmen;* who were of the same trade with him; masters of the same business, who employed others under them, as appears by what follows.

Ver. 25. *Whom he called together,* &c.] That is, the craftsmen; *all his co-artificers,* as the Syriac version reads, all the chief of the trade, the masters of it, as he himself was: *with the workmen of like occupation;* who were employed by him, and the rest of the masters in the several branches of the business; as founders, engravers, polishers, &c. some might make the images, and others the temples, or shrines; some do one part and some another, so that abundance of persons might be employed in this business: *and said, Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our wealth;* the workmen not only had a comfortable and sufficient livelihood, but the masters of the trade grew rich: such a demand had they for their goods, and so profitable was this craft to them: this was a very strong and moving argument, to influence the masters and workmen; it so nearly touched them, and their worldly interest, than which nothing sticks closer to carnal men. Demetrius's way of address was very moving and persuasive, but his method manifestly betrayed what was his greatest concern, not religion, but his own secular interest; that which he should have mentioned last, if at all, he begins with: self is the leading and governing principle in a natural man.

Ver. 26. *Moreover, ye see and hear,* &c.] Demetrius appeals to their senses of seeing and hearing; they saw what was done in their own city, and they had heard how things were elsewhere; they might believe what they saw with their eyes, and they had reason to depend upon the report which was brought to their ears: *that not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people;* by *all Asia* is meant Ionia, that part of Asia, of which Ephesus was the metropolis; from whence great multitudes came to Ephesus, and heard Paul in the school of Tyrannus, ver. 10. so that not only many in the city of Ephesus, but even in almost every city and town of Asia, had heard and received the Gospel preached by Paul; of whom Demetrius speaks very contemptibly, as if he was a worthless vagabond fellow, who had the art of persuading and deluding people; he prevailed upon them to believe in Christ whom he preached, and turned away much people from the worshipping of idols, to the living God: *saying, that they be no gods which are made with hands;* such as was their Diana, and the images of her, which these workmen made; and consequently if his doctrine prevailed, as it had much already, their trade would be nothing worth, and their livelihood be lost, which was the grand thing they had in view; for one would think they

could never believe themselves, that the images they made were really gods; but whether they did or no, certain it is, that the apostle's doctrine was true, that such could not be gods, and which agrees both with reason and revelation.

Ver. 27. *So that not only this our craft is in danger to be set at nought*, &c.] Or *to come into reproof*, as the words may be literally rendered, and as they are in the Vulgate Latin version; that is, if this notion prevails, that they are not gods, which are made with hands, this art and business of making shrines and images for Diana will be brought into contempt, and come to nothing; who will buy them, when once they believe there is no divinity in them? they'll despise them, and the makers of them; yea, the latter will be in danger of being taken up, and charged, convicted, reproved and punished as idolaters, and blasphemers of deity; to which sense the Ethiopic version inclines, which renders it, *and not only for this thing we shall be in danger*; of being called to an account for making these shrines; our business will be put down, and we shall be treated with disgrace, if not with severity: *but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana should be despised*; here religion is pretended, and a concern shewn for that; partly on purpose to cover, as much as could be, the selfish and avaricious principles from which Demetrius acted; and partly the more to stir up the meaner and more ignorant sort of people, and irritate and provoke them, and set them against Paul and his doctrine, who generally speaking are the most bigotted. Diana is said to be the daughter of Jupiter, by Latona; she is often called the goddess of hunting, and is said to preside at births; the moon was worshipped by the Heathens under her name; she is here called the *great* goddess, for the Gentiles had their greater and their lesser gods, and she is reckoned among the former, which were in number twelve; Juno, Vesta, Minerva, Ceres, Diana, Venus, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Neptune, Vulcan, and Apollo: the temple of Diana at Ephesus is reckoned among the seven wonders of the world; it was about seven furlongs distant from the city [l], and was 425 feet long, and 220 feet broad, and had in it 127 pillars, 60 feet high; it was built on marshy ground, that it might not be affected with earthquakes; and yet that such a pile of building might not stand upon a slippery and unstable foundation, coals and fleeces of wool were laid in the foundation and trodden in it, according to Pliny [m], from whom this account is taken; who says it was two hundred and twenty years in building, and elsewhere he says it was four hundred years; the architect who first began it, he makes to be one Chersiphron; but it is commonly ascribed to the Amazons, and particularly to the Amazon Otrira, the wife of Mars; though Pausanias [n], as he observes that the temple of Diana of the Ephesians was built before the Ionians came into these parts, so he denies that it was built by the Amazons, but affirms that the builders of it were Cresus, and Ephesus, the son of Caystrus. Solinus [o], who calls it a fabric of the Amazons, says it was "so magnificent, that Xerxes, when he burnt "all the temples in Asia, spared this only; but (adds "he) this clemency of Xerxes did not preserve the "sacred temple from evil; for Herostratus set fire to "this noble fabric with his own hands, for no other "reason, as he confessed, than to get himself a name." At which the Ephesians were so enraged, that they got an order published by the common council of Asia, throughout all the neighbouring kingdoms and nations, that his name should not be once mentioned [p]; which however, though it might be regarded for a while, was not always; for his name has since been both spoken of, and transmitted in writing to posterity. The above historian observes, that the temple at Ephesus was burnt, the same day in which Alexander was born at Pella; which occasioned Timæus facetiously to say, as is related by Cicero [q], "it is no wonder that the temple of Diana of the Ephesians should be burnt the "same night that Alexander was born, seeing Diana, "being desirous to be present at the delivery of Olympias, (the mother of Alexander,) was absent from "her own house." However, the inhabitants of Ephesus being very rich, and also willing to communicate to the charge of rebuilding this edifice, the women even bringing their gold, silver, and other precious ornaments, the work was set about, and a fabric was raised much more beautiful than the former; the name of the architect by whom it was rebuilt was Dinocrates; and so it continued, to this time the apostle was at Ephesus, a very fine and grand building, and commanded great attention, veneration, and respect from men; and which Demetrius suggests would fall into contempt, through the doctrine of the apostle, should he be suffered to go on: *and her magnificence should be destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worshippeth*; by *her magnificence* is meant, her deity; which must be denied her, as well as her temple despised, if Paul's doctrine was true, and should obtain; so the Syriac version renders it, *the goddess herself*: and the Ethiopic version, *her divinity*: what Demetrius says of her, that she was worshipped by all Asia, and the world, was fact; not only all Asia was concerned in building her temple at Ephesus, as many writers affirm [r]; but she was one of the highest class of deities, and received as such by the whole Gentile world; yea, Diana of the Ephesians, as distinguished from all other Dianas, was revered by all nations. There were temples of Diana of the Ephesians in other places, particularly at Corinth, as Pausanias relates; and who also affirms, that all the cities celebrate Diana of the Ephesians, and men in private honour her above other deities; the reasons are, the glory of the Amazons, from whom according to fame her image was, and because of the antiquity of the temple: three other things besides these, adds he, contribute to the glory of it: the magnificence of the temple, which exceeds whatever was done by man, and the splendour of the city of the Ephesians, and the renown of the deity in it [s]: here the silversmith suggests the catholicism and universality of their religion, in favour of it.

[l] Herodot. l. 1. c. 26.
[m] Nat. Hist. l. 16. c. 40. & l. 36. c. 14.
[n] Achaica sive, l. 7. p. 399.
[o] Polyhistor. c. 53.
[p] A. Gell. Noct. Attic. l. 2. c. 6.
[q] De natura Deorum, l. 2. p. 1913.
[r] Plin. l. 16. c. 40. & l. 36. c. 14. Alex. ab Alex. l. 6. c. 2. Gant Chronolog. par. 2. fol. 9. 2.
[s] Corinthiaca sive, l. 2. p. 88. & Messenica, sive, l. 4. p. 275.

Ver. 28. *And when they heard* these sayings, &c.] Both the masters and the workmen; *they were full of wrath;* against Paul and his doctrine: *and cried out, saying, great is Diana of the Ephesians;* this goddess is frequently called in Heathen writers, Diana of the Ephesians, or the Ephesian Diana, because of her famous temple at Ephesus; and to distinguish her from all other Dianas: Pausanias makes mention of sixty Dianas at least, and yet seems not to have taken notice of them all; all of them had different epithets, by which they were distinguished from one another; the images were in different shapes, and they were worshipped with different rites: what seems most of all to distinguish the Ephesian Diana from others, is her having many paps; hence she is called *multi mammia;* so Minutius Felix observes [t], that Diana is sometimes girt about on high as an huntress, and the Ephesian Diana is *mammis multis & uberibus extructa;* just as the Isis of the Egyptians, which, Macrobius [u] says, signifies the earth; hence the whole body of the deity is covered with paps, because the whole universe is nourished by it: the priest of Diana of the Ephesians was an eunuch, and was obliged to abstain from all company; neither bathed, nor ate, nor drank with others, nor might he enter into the house of a private person; there was a feast kept every year in honour of her, at which young men in the flower of their age, and virgins well dressed, used to go to the temple in great pomp, keep the feast, and marry with each other. The temple was a sort of an asylum, as Heathen temples commonly were; and it had this particular privilege, that those that fled to it were freed from servitude [w]. This goddess is called *great,* agreeably to her name, for, דיאנא, *Diana,* signifies *great* and venerable; because of her birth, being the daughter of Jupiter; and because of her great service, she was supposed to be of in assisting at births; and because of her magnificent temple and worship; and because she was worshipped by great persons: and here greatness is ascribed unto her, and a loud cry made of it, to animate one another, to gather a mob together, and to incense them and stir them up against the apostle and his companion: sin the Arabic version, instead of Diana, it is Venus, both here and elsewhere, but wrongly.

Ver. 29. *And the whole city was filled with confusion,* &c.] For the workmen that made the silver shrines very likely ran up and down in the city, crying out, great is Diana of the Ephesians, which brought the people out of their houses to inquire what was the matter; and the mob gathering and increasing, as they went along, threw the whole city into confusion and disorder: *and having caught Gaius and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia;* the latter of these was of Thessalonica in Macedonia, as appears from ch. xx. 4. but of what place the former was, is not certain; however, being a Macedonian, he could not be the Gaius of Derbe, mentioned in the same place, nor the Gaius of Corinth, 1 Cor. i. 14. but some third person. They are both Greek names; Aristarchus signifies the chief of princes, or the prince of chiefs; and Gaius is a name taken from the joy of parents, and is the same with the Roman name, Caius; they are both reckoned among the seventy disciples; the former is said to be bishop of Apamea in Phrygia, and the latter bishop of Ephesus; see the note on Luke x. 1. *Paul's companions in travel;* whom he brought with him out of Macedonia, and who had been with him to Jerusalem and Antioch, and were now returned with him to Ephesus, where they had been with him for the space of two years, or more: it is very much that this mob had not seized on Paul himself: it may be Paul was within doors, and these were without in the streets, and so were laid hold upon and carried away in a most forcible and violent manner by them: who having got them, *they rushed with one accord into the theatre;* where the public plays were acted in honour of the goddess Diana, and where, among other things, men were set to fight with wild beasts; and very likely the intention of the mob, in hurrying Paul's companions thither, was to throw them to the wild beasts. A theatre is a spectacle or shew, so called, because in them fights were shewn, plays were acted, games exercised, and battles fought between men and men, and between men and beasts, and between beasts and beasts; concerning which, take the following account [x]: "Theatre, among the ancients, "is a public edifice for the exhibiting of scenic spectacles, or shews to the people—under the word theatre "was comprehended not only the eminence, whereon "the actors appeared, and the action passed, but also "the whole area, or extent of the place common to the "actors and spectators: in this sense the theatre was a "building encompassed with porticos, and furnished "with seats of stone, disposed in semicircles, and "ascending gradually over one another, which encompassed a space called the *orchestra;* in the front "whereof was the *proscenium* or *pulpitum,* whereon the "actors performed the *scena,* a large front adorned with "orders of architecture; behind which was *postscenium,* or the place where the actors made themselves ready, retired, *&c.* so that the *scena,* in its "full extent, comprehended all the part belonging to "the actors. In the Greek theatres, the *orchestra* made "a part of the *scena;* but in the Roman theatres, "none of the actors ever descended into the *orchestra,* "which was taken up by the seats of the senators." For the better understanding the terms used, and the several parts of the theatre, let it be observed, that the *scena,* according to others [y], was the place from whence the actors first went out; and it reached from one corner of the theatre to the other, and was threefold; *tragical,* which was adorned in a royal manner with pillars and signs; *comical,* which represented private buildings; and *satirical,* which exhibited trees, caves, mountains, *&c.* Likewise, the *scena* was either *versile,* when on a sudden the whole scene was turned by some machines; or *ductile,* when by drawing away the boards the inward face of the scene appeared, or by drawing curtains. The *proscenium* was a place lower than the scene, in which the actors chiefly spoke and acted: the *postscenium* was a place in which

[t] In Octavio, p. 22.
[u] Saturnal. l. 1. c. 20.
[w] Pausanias in Arcadicis, sive, l. 8. p. 476. Alex. ab. Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 5. c. 20. & l. 6. c. 2. & c. 12.

[x] Chamber's Cyclopædia in the word *Theatre.*
[y] Nieupoort. Compend. Antiqu. Roman. p. 285, 286. Vid. Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 5. c. 16.

these things were done, which could not be done fitly, and with decorum in the scenes: the *pulpitum* was a higher place in the *proscenium*, in which those that recited stood: the *orchestra* was the last place, in which they danced, and near which the senators sate. Tarquinius Priscus was the first who introduced plays among the Romans; and the temple of Bacchus at Athens was the first theatre in the world, the remains of which are still to be seen. Of this theatre at Ephesus I have not met with any account; whether it was in the temple, or without, is not certain; very likely it might be a part of it, or adjoin unto it.

Ver. 30. *And when Paul would have entered in unto the people*, &c.] In the theatre, in order to have preached to the people, and to have removed their prejudices against him, and the Gospel preached by him, and to have shewn them the error and evil of their idolatrous ways and worship, and to have reconciled them to him, and his friends, and to have persuaded them to do them no hurt; which shews the apostle's greatness of soul, his firmness, constancy, and intrepidity, and his great concern and affection for his companions, to risk his life in this manner: but *the disciples suffered him not*: the believers, the members of the church at Ephesus would by no means agree to it, but dissuaded him from it; who hereby, on their part, shewed great love to him, and what a value they had for him, and how much they esteemed the life of so great an apostle, and faithful preacher of the Gospel. The Ethiopic version renders it, *the apostles prohibited him*: but there were none of that office with him.

Ver. 31. *And certain of the chief of Asia*, &c.] Or the Asiarchs; these were not princes of Asia, rulers or governors of provinces, or cities, or civil magistrates; but priests who presided over the games and diversions at the theatre, and had the management and command of things there. Such an one was Philip the Asiarch, the church of Smyrna makes mention of in their account of the sufferings and martyrdom of Polycarp[z], whom the people entreated that he would send out the lion to Polycarp; that is, out of the theatre which he had the command of; but he replied he could not do it, because he had finished the theatrical exercises: from whence it appears that he was the governor of the theatre, and had his title of Asiarch from thence, as these men had, wherefore this word should not be rendered, *the princes of Asia*, as by the Vulgate Latin; nor *the chief of Asia*, as by the Syriac and Arabic versions, and by ours, but rather the *Asian priests*. The Ethiopic version not knowing who should be meant by them, only reads, *and some of Asia*. *Which were his friends*: they had a good opinion of the apostle, and a good liking of his doctrines, and wished well to his person, and were concerned for his safety; though they might not have been really converted, and truly disciples, as those in the preceding verse; for otherwise one would think they would have relinquished their office and place. These *sent unto him*, messengers or letters, *desiring* him *that he would not adventure himself into the theatre*; they observed to him the danger he would expose himself to, and entreated he would shew a greater regard to his life than to risk it in such a manner, a life that might be so useful to many; and though they were the governors at the theatre, yet such was the rage and fury of the mob, that it was not in their power to restrain them from doing mischief, till such time as they were appeased.

Ver. 32. *Some therefore cried one thing, and some another*, &c.] Not in the church at Ephesus among the disciples, and friends of the apostle, as if they were divided in their sentiments about his going into the theatre, some being for it, and others against it; but the people that were gathered together in the theatre, these were not agreed about the reason of this tumult, some said it was on account of one thing, and some another: *for the assembly was confused*: the multitude of people that were gathered together were made up of different persons, of different employments and sentiments, and were in no manner of form or order: *and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together*: there was a noise and a hubbub in the city; but what was the reason and meaning of it, they were ignorant of; they were got together into the theatre in great numbers, but what was to be done there they knew not. And this is too often the case in religious assemblies, that the majority, at least many, can give no account of the reason, end, and design of their assembling together.

Ver. 33. *And they drew Alexander out of the multitude*, &c.] Or *some of the multitude brought forth Alexander*: into the theatre, in order to kill him, by casting him to the wild beasts. Some think this is the same with Alexander the coppersmith, who apostatized upon this danger he was exposed to, and became a blasphemer, and a great enemy of the apostle, and did him much evil, 1 Tim. i. 20. 2 Tim. iv. 14. This man, though his name was a Greek name, yet was a Jew, as is expressed in ver. 34. and from the times of Alexander the great, who was at Jerusalem, this name became common among the Jews; see the note on Acts iv. 6. *The Jews putting him forward*: being equally enemies to him, as being under a profession of Christianity, as the Heathens were; or as the Syriac version reads, *the people of the Jews*, that were there, out of themselves, pitched upon him as a proper person to still the uproar; and they brought him out of the multitude, to a convenient place, where he might be heard; and they the rather were forward to this, that he might lay all the blame of this confusion and uproar upon Paul and his companions, whom the Jews had an aversion to, as well as the Gentiles: *and Alexander beckoned with the hand*; for silence, that he might be heard: *and would have made his defence unto the people*: which looks as if he was a Christian, or at least was charged with being one, and was in danger of his life on that account; and therefore was desirous of being heard, that he might make an apology for the Christians, or remove such an imputation from himself, if he was not.

Ver. 34. *But when they knew that he was a Jew*, &c.] And so equally an enemy to their idolatry, as Paul and his companions were, whether he was a Christian or no. *All with one voice about the space of two hours cried out*; all that were in the theatre lift up their voices at

[z] Apud Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. 4. c. 15.

once to prevent Alexander's apology, or at least its being heard; and which they continued about two hours, which was a long time to keep hallooing out, *great is Diana of the Ephesians*; see the note on ver. 28.

Ver. 35. *And when the town-clerk had appeased the people*, &c.] Caused them to cease their loud out-cry, so as that he could be heard. This person seems to have been more than a *town-clerk*, as we render it; or a common *scribe*, as the Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions render it; rather as the Syriac version, *a chief man of the city*; the Septuagint interpreters in Exod. v. 6. use the word for the Egyptian officers that were over the Israelites; and the Babylonians used to call the priest of [a] Isis by this name; and according to some learned men, this man's office was to register the conquerors' names, and their rewards in the theatre; and who was chosen into this office by the people, and was a man of some considerable authority, as it is very apparent by what follows that this man was: *he said, ye men of Ephesus, what man is there that knoweth not how that the city of the Ephesians is a worshipper of the great goddess Diana?* the word *Neocorus*, translated *worshipper*, signifies an officer in the temple, one that looked after it, beautified and adorned it; for *Neocorus* is from κορεω, which signifies to beautify [b]; though some etymologists would have the word to signify to sweep and clean, as if this officer was a sexton; rather, he answered to a church-warden, and to this agrees the Syriac version; though this office belonged not to a single person, but to a city. Now to be a worshipper of Diana, was not peculiar to the city of Ephesus, as appears from ver. 27. but to be *Neocorus*, a sacrist to the goddess, was a favour granted to some cities, and accounted a great honour; some had it twice, some thrice, some four times: *and of the image which fell down from Jupiter;* or *of Diopetes;* so the Palladium, or image of Pallas, was called, because it was supposed to fall down from heaven, which Diomedes and Ulysses are said to take away from Troy; and here it seems to be something distinct from the goddess Diana, and her image, and may design another deity worshipped along with her, and by them, since they make mention of more gods, ver. 26. The Vulgate Latin version takes it to be the same with Diana, reading the words in connexion with the preceding, *and the offspring of Jupiter;* she being said to be his daughter by Latona, as before observed; and the Ethiopic version understands it of her image, rendering them thus, *and of that molten image which was sent from Jupiter the great god;* and more expressly the Syriac version, which reads, *and of her image which fell from heaven;* and so was not made with the hands of men, and could not be objected to on that account, or denied to be a deity; and this the people might be the rather induced to believe, since it had been in the temple before the memory of any man. The Arabic version, reading these words in connexion with the beginning of the next verse, gives a very different sense, *but neither indeed they that fell from heaven contradict the faith of this thing;* as if it was to be understood of the fallen angels, of which it can hardly be thought Demetrius had any knowledge. This image, Pliny says [c], it was doubted of what it was made; some said of the vine-tree, others of ebony; but Athenagoras says, the old image of Diana of the Ephesians was made of olive [d].

Ver. 36. *Seeing then that these things cannot be spoken against*, &c.] This officer intimates, in order to quiet the mob, and make them easy, that these things were so certain, and well known, that nobody would pretend to contradict them, and therefore they must be mistaken in the men, whom they had hurried into the theatre; it was impossible that they, or any men, should be capable of saying any thing against the truth of these things: therefore *ye ought to be quiet and do nothing rashly;* to these men, to their hurt, but sit down, and compose yourselves, and think again, and consider of this matter, and not go into any hasty measures, which may, in the issue, be prejudicial to yourselves.

Ver. 37. *For ye have brought hither these men*, &c.] The Arabic version reads, *these two men;* that is, Gaius and Aristarchus, whom they had brought by force into the theatre to fight with wild beasts: *which are neither robbers of churches;* or *temples;* or, as the Arabic version renders it, *robbers of the vessels of the temple*, sacrilegious persons; they have not stolen any thing out of the temple of Diana, nor any other: *nor yet blasphemers of your goddess;* they have not made mention of her name, much less said any thing against her, at least this officer did not know that they had; and if he had, he did not stick to tell an officious lie to screen them, as did the Egyptian midwives in favour of the Hebrew women.

Ver. 38. *Wherefore if Demetrius, and the craftsmen which are with him*, &c.] Who were the ringleaders and encouragers of this tumult: *have a matter against any man;* any accusation, or charge, any crime to accuse him of, and charge him with: *the law is open;* or court-days are kept; there are certain times fixed for the hearing and trying of causes, where and when such an affair should be regularly brought; and not use such disorderly methods, and throw a city into confusion, and break the peace as these men had done: the Syriac version renders it, *they are artificers;* that is, Demetrius and the craftsmen with him; they are tradesmen, and it does not belong to them, nor should they take upon themselves to judge and determine what is right or wrong: *and there are deputies;* or *proconsuls;* the proconsul and his deputy, to whom such matters appertain, and who are judges in such cases, and to whom application should be made, and before whom such cases should be brought, and heard, and tried: the Syriac version reads in the singular number, *and there is a proconsul in the city;* a Roman governor and judge, whose province it is to determine such matters: *let them implead one another;* let the plaintiff bring his accusation, and charge, and let the others defend themselves, and let things proceed in a due course of law, and so issue.

Ver. 39. *But if ye inquire any thing concerning other matters*, &c.] Than what belongs to the craft and bu-

[a] Alex. ab Alex. l. 2. c. 8.
[b] Scholiast. Aristoph. ad Nubes, p. 125. col. 2.

[c] Nat. Hist. l. 16. c. 40.
[d] Legatio pro Christianis, p. 17.

siness of Demetrius, and the artificers: *it shall be determined in a lawful assembly;* that is, called together according to law, and who have a right to hear, try, and judge causes, which such a confused lawless assembly as this in the theatre had not.

Ver. 40. *For we are in danger of being called in question,* &c.] Or are liable to be called to an account, reproved, and punished by the Roman proconsul, appointed over this city, or by the Roman emperor, or the Roman senate: *for this day's uproar:* it being capable of being interpreted as a riot, tumult, and sedition: *there being no cause whereby we may give an account of this concourse:* or no reason can be assigned, why such a number of people should gather together; none can be given that will justify it, or that can be alleged in favour of it.

Ver. 41. *And when he had thus spoken,* &c.] Or delivered this oration, made use of the above arguments, reasonings, and expostulations: *he dismissed the assembly;* he ordered them to break up, and every one to return home in peace, and go about his own business; and thus Paul, and his companions, were delivered from an imminent danger they were exposed to.

CHAP. XX.

Ver. 1. *AND after the uproar was ceased,* &c.] Which Demetrius, and the craftsmen, had raised at Ephesus, and which was put an end to by the speech of the town-clerk, or register-keeper of the theatre: *Paul called unto him the disciples;* the members of the church at Ephesus, whom he convened, either at his own lodgings, or at their usual place of meeting: *and embraced* them; or *saluted* them; that is, with a kiss, which was sometimes done at parting, as well as at meeting; see ver. 37. and so the Syriac version renders it, and *kissed* them, and so took his leave of them, and bid them farewell; the Alexandrian copy, and some other copies, and the Syriac and Vulgate Latin versions before this clause insert, *and exhorted,* or *comforted* them; that is, exhorted them to continue steadfast in the faith, and hold fast the profession of it without wavering, and comforted them under all their tribulations, and in a view of what afflictions and persecutions they must expect to endure for the sake of Christ, with the exceeding great and precious promises of the Gospel: *and departed to go into Macedonia;* to visit the churches at Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berœa, and to establish them in the faith of the Gospel: he did not choose to leave Ephesus till the tumult was over, partly on his own account, that he might not bring upon himself an imputation of fear and cowardice; and partly on the account of the church at Ephesus, that he might not leave them in distress, and add to it; but now it was over, he judged it proper to take his leave of them, and visit other churches, the care of which equally lay upon him.

Ver. 2. *And when he had gone over those parts,* &c.] Of Macedonia, and the cities in it before mentioned; *and had given them much exhortation;* to abide by the doctrines and ordinances of the Gospel, and to walk worthy of it in their lives and conversations; and this exhortation he was frequently giving, as often as he had opportunity, improving his time much this way, and continued long at it: and, having pursued it to a sufficient length, *he came into Greece;* or Hellas; which, according to Ptolomy [e] and Solinus, [f], is properly true Greece; the former makes it to be the same with Achaia, where Corinth was; and the latter says it was in his time called Attica, where Athens was; so Pliny [g], who also says, that Thessaly was so called: this Hellas included Macedonia, Epirus, Thessaly, Achaia, which is properly Greece, Peloponnesus, and the adjacent islands.

Ver. 3. *And there abode three months,* &c.] In Greece: *and when the Jews laid wait for him, as he was about to sail into Syria;* from some part of Greece, in order to go to Jerusalem; which the Jews in the parts of Greece understanding, laid wait for him, either by sea or land, with an intention either to take the money from him, which he had collected in Macedonia, and in Greece, for the poor saints at Jerusalem, or to take away his life, or both; of which lying in wait for him, the apostle had some notice, either by divine revelation, or from somebody who was in the secret, or had got knowledge of it from such as were: upon which *he purposed to return through Macedonia;* through which he came from Ephesus to Greece: this wicked design being made known to him, obliged him, in point of prudence, and both for his own safety, and the good of the churches, to alter his scheme, and steer his course another way, to the disappointment of his enemies; in which the wisdom of providence, the care of God over his ministers, and his concern for his churches manifestly appeared.

Ver. 4. *And there accompanied him into Asia Sopater of Berea,* &c.] This Sopater is thought to be the same with Sosipater in Rom. xvi. 21. and in three of Beza's copies, and in as many of Stephens's, he is so called here; the Ethiopic version calls him Peter, a citizen of Berea; and the Arabic version Sopater of Aleppo. The Alexandrian copy, Beza's most ancient copy, and others, the Complutensian edition, and the Vulgate Latin version, read, Sopater of Pyrrhus, the Berean; that is, the son of Pyrrhus. He is reckoned among the seventy disciples, and is said to be bishop of Iconium; see the note on Luke x. 1. This name was common among the Greeks; there was one of this name a native of Paphus, in the times of Alexander the great, a comical poet, and who also is sometimes called Sosipater, as this man was; there was another Sopater the sophist, who wrote the affairs of Alexander; and there was another of this name, who, among other things, collected much concerning painters and

[e] Geograph. l. 3. c. 15.
[f] Polyhist. c. 12.
[g] Nat. Hist. l. 4. c. 7.

statuaries. The name signifies *a father saved*. Pyrrhus is a Grecian name well known, being the name of a famous king of Greece who engaged in war with the Romans. This man went along with the apostle into Asia; and it seems, that of the persons here mentioned, he only accompanied him; for the verb is in the singular number, and the other six persons following did not go along with him, as Sopater did, but went before him to Troas, which was in Asia, and there waited for him; though the Syriac version reads in the plural number; but then it renders the words, *they went forth with him*, as they might do from Greece, and yet not accompany him into Asia: the phrase *into Asia* is left out in the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions. *And of the Thessalonians Aristarchus and Secundus*; the former of these is before said to be a Macedonian, ch. xix. 29. and here he appears to be of Thessalonica, and his name is a Greek one; but Secundus is a Roman name, though he might be born at Thessalonica, or at least have lived there, and so be said to be of it. His name signifies *Second*: very likely was his father's second son, and therefore so called; though the name was used among the Grecians. We read of Secundus an Athenian, the master of Herod the sophist, who flourished under the emperor Adrian, there are sentences under his name still extant; and another called Secundus the grammarian, a friend of Poleman, a philosopher at Athens, who corrected his writings; so that this man might be a Grecian, and a native of Thessalonica; mention is made of him nowhere else. *And Gaius of Derbe, and Timotheus*: the former of these is so called to distinguish him from Gaius the Macedonian in ch. xix. 29. and the latter by being joined with him should be of the same place, as he might be; see ch. xvi. 1. though the Syriac version reads, *and Timotheus of Lystra*; and so does the Arabic version used by De Dieu; and this is mentioned with Derbe in the above cited place. *And of Asia, Tychicus and Trophimus*: of the former see Eph. vi. 21. Col. iv. 7. 2 Tim. iv. 12. and of the latter see 2 Tim. iv. 20. and Acts xxi. 29. where he is called an Ephesian, as they both are here in Beza's most ancient copy; Ephesus being the metropolis of Asia, strictly so called. These are both of them said to be among the seventy disciples: Trophimus, we are told, taught at Arles in France, and suffered martyrdom with the Apostle Paul; and that Tychicus was bishop of Chalcedon in Bithynia; and that another of the same name was bishop of Colophon; see the note on Luke x. 1. Trophimus signifies *nourished*, and is a name to be found in a funeral inscription of the Romans [h], though Greek, and in the fragments of the poet Menander: and Tychicus signifies *fortunate*: whether the same with Fortunatus in 1 Cor. xvi. 17. may be inquired.

Ver. 5. *These going before*, &c.] The apostle into Asia, all but Sopater, who accompanied him: *tarried for us at Troas*: a city in Asia Minor; see ch. xvi. 8. whither they went before-hand a nearer way, to provide for the apostle, and where they waited for him, and for Sopater, and for Luke, the writer of this history, who appears from hence to be in company with the apostle, and for as many others as were along with him.

Ver. 6. *And we sailed away from Philippi*, &c.] Which was in Macedonia, from whence they came in a straight course by Samothracia, over the Hellespont, to Troas, where the above six persons were waiting for them: and they set sail *after the days of unleavened bread*; or the passover; which is mentioned only to observe the time of year when this voyage was taken; and not to suggest to us that Paul and his company staid at Philippi, and kept this feast there; for the passover was only kept at Jerusalem, and besides was now abolished, and not to be observed by Christians: *and came unto them to Troas in five days*; not that they were five days sailing from Philippi to Troas; but either they were so long in all, from their first setting out into Asia, to their arrival at Troas; or rather, they came to Troas within five days after the above six persons had got thither; so that they waited at Troas but five days for the apostle, and those that accompanied him. *Where we abode seven days*; by what follows they came into Troas on the Lord's-day evening, or early on Monday morning, and staid there till the next Lord's day, or first day of the week; for it follows,

Ver. 7. *And upon the first day of the week*, &c.] Or Lord's day, Rev. i. 10. and which Justin Martyr calls Sunday; on which day, he says [i], all, both in city and country, met in one place for religious worship; and on this day, it appears from hence, and from other places, that the apostles and primitive churches did meet together for religious exercises; see John xx. 19, 26. 1 Cor. xvi. 2. and so they did at Troas at this time, as follows: *when the disciples came together to break bread*; not to eat a common meal, or to make a feast, or grand entertainment for the apostle and his company, before they departed; but, as the Syriac version renders it, *to break the eucharist*, by which the Lord's supper was called in the primitive times; or as the Arabic version, *to distribute the body of Christ*, which is symbolically and emblematically held forth in the bread at the Lord's table. Now on the first day of the week, the disciples, or the members of the church at Troas, met together on this occasion, and the apostle, and those that were with him, assembled with them for the same purpose; the Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions read, *when we were come together*; Paul and his company, together with the church at Troas; for it is plain from hence that there was a church in this place, not only by disciples being here, but by the administration of the Lord's supper to them; and so there was in after-ages. Who was the first pastor or bishop of this church, is not certain; perhaps Carpus, of whom mention is made in 2 Tim. iv. 13. though he is said to be bishop of other places; see the note there. In the *second* century, in the times of Ignatius, there were brethren at Troas, from whence he wrote his epistles to the churches at Smyrna, and Philadelphia, and who are saluted in them by the brethren at Troas [k]: in the *third* century, several martyrs suffered here, as Andreas, Paulus, Nicomachus, and Dionysia a virgin: in the *fifth* century,

[h] Kirchman. de Funer. Roman. l. 3. c. 26. p. 425.
[i] Apolog. 2. p. 98.

[k] Ignatii Epist. p. 9. 46. Ed. Voss.

Pionius, bishop of Troas, was present at Constantinople at the condemnation of Eutyches, and afterwards he was in the council at Chalcedon; and even in the *eighth* century mention is made of Eustathius, bishop of Troas, in the Nicene council[l]. *Paul preached unto them:* to the disciples that were gathered together, either before, or after, or at the time of breaking of bread; for this ordinance was not administered without some instructions about the nature, use, and design of it. *Ready to depart on the morrow;* this seems to be mentioned as a reason for what follows, *continued his speech until midnight:* since he was about to take his leave of them, and not knowing when he should see them again, or whether ever any more, he delivered a long discourse to them: which not only shews that he was full of matter, but that his affection for these saints, and his desire of doing them good, were very great, by imparting as much spiritual light and knowledge as he could unto them; and also his great zeal for the glory of God, and the interest of Christ, though he was to set forth on a journey the next morning.

Ver. 8. *And there were many lights in the upper chamber,* &c.] Which were lighted up, both for necessary uses, to see by, to read the word, and to administer the ordinance of the supper, and for the comfort and pleasure of the whole company, both preacher and hearers; as well as to remove all ground of suspicion, or occasion of reproach, as if it was a midnight society met for wicked practices: but this no ways countenances the use of lamps and wax candles in the day-time at divine worship, since this was in the night; of the upper chamber, in which it was usual to meet for religious exercises, see Mark ii. 4. and Acts i. 13. *where they were gathered together;* the Alexandrian copy, Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions read, *where we were gathered together.*

Ver. 9. *And there sat in a window a certain young man,* &c.] In the upper room, where he placed himself, either for air and refreshment, the chamber being suffocating, through the number of people, and of lights; or for want of room, the place being full: *named Eutychus;* a Greek name, which signifies one of good fortune: *being fallen into a deep sleep:* which may be accounted for without aggravating the case; as from his youth, he was a young man, and so more subject to sleep, and more easily overcome with it, than persons in years, by reason of the humours of the body which incline to it; and also from the length of service, and the lateness of the season of the night, all which contributed to bring on this deep sleep: it can hardly be thought that he purposely composed himself to sleep, for had he, he would never have chose so dangerous a place to sit in as a window, and that at so great an height from the ground; but this sleep seemed to come upon him at an unawares; what hand soever Satan might have in it, with a view to the young man's hurt, both as to soul and body, and to bring reproach and scandal upon the church, and the Gospel, it seems evident that the providence of God was in it, and which overruled it for a good end, even the greater confirmation of the Gospel, and very probably for the spiritual good of the young man. *And as Paul was long preaching he sunk down with sleep;* being quite overcome, and bore down with it, not able to hold up his head, he either bowed down, or leaned backwards; *and fell down from the third loft;* or three story high, where the upper room was. It seems that he did not fall inward, for then he would have fallen no further than the floor of the upper room, but outward, out of the window into the street or yard; and this is the more evident from Paul's going down to him, mentioned in the next verse: *and was taken up dead;* not only for dead, or as one dead, but he really was dead, as it is no wonder he should.

Ver. 10. *And Paul went down,* &c.] From the upper room, where they were assembled, into the court, yard, or street, where he fell; or into the lower room of the house, where he was brought when taken up. The apostle might see him fall, or he might be told of it, or he might have an intimation of it from the spirit of God, by whom he might be impressed to go down, in order to work a miracle, for the confirmation of the Gospel he was preaching: *and fell on him, and embracing him;* praying over him, as Elijah and Elisha did, 1 Kings xvii. 21. 2 Kings iv. 34. and the like effect followed: *said, trouble not yourselves;* which speech perhaps was addressed to the friends and relations of the young man; or to the disciples present, who were concerned at this accident, both for the young man's sake, and lest it should be improved to the disadvantage of the Gospel by the enemies of it, *For his life,* or *soul is in him;* it being returned upon the apostle's falling on him, and praying over him; or he said this as being fully assured that it would return, in like manner as Christ said concerning Jairus's daughter, Luke viii. 52, 55.

Ver. 11. *When he therefore was come up again,* &c.] Into the upper room, where he was before, and where the disciples were gathered together: *and had broken bread and eaten;* administered the Lord's supper, and also eat for his bodily refreshment: *and talked a long while;* about the ordinance and the doctrines of the Gospel, and spiritual experience, and such like divine things: *even till break of day;* not knowing when to leave off: *so he departed;* without taking any rest; though before he departed, what follows was done; it was at this time he left his cloak, books, and parchments here, 2 Tim. iv. 13.

Ver. 12. *And they brought the young man alive,* &c.] Up into the upper room, and presented him alive to the disciples: *and were not a little comforted;* that is, the disciples, at the sight of the young man, who was taken up dead, not only for his sake, but chiefly because by this miracle the Gospel, which the apostle preached, and who was about to depart from them, was greatly confirmed to them.

Ver. 13. *And we went before to ship,* &c.] That is, Luke, the writer of this history, and the rest of the apostle's company, went before him to a ship, which lay at Troas, and went aboard it: *and sailed unto Assos:* a city of Æolia, or Mysia; and is said by Pliny to be the same with Apollonia; and which he places on the sea-shore, where it is evident this Assos was. His words are [m], " on the shore Antandros, formerly called

[l] Magdeburg. Hist. Eccles. cent. 3. c. 2. p. 11. cent. 5. c. 10. p. 603. cent. 8. c. 2. p. 4.

[m] Nat. Hist. l. 5. c. 30.

"Edonis, then Cimmeris and Assos, the same with "Apollonia." And in another place [n] he calls it Assos of Troas; and says of it, that about Assos of Troas a stone grows, by which all bodies are consumed, and is called *sarcophagus*, (a flesh-devourer,) of which he also makes mention elsewhere [o], and observes, that in Assos of Troas the stone sarcophagus is cut in the pits, in which the bodies of the dead being put, are consumed within forty days, excepting their teeth: and with him Jerom [p] agrees, as to the name and situation of this place, who says that Assos is a maritime city of Asia, the same that is called Apollonia. It is represented by Strabo [q] as a place very much fortified by art, and very difficult of ascent on that part which lies to the sea; unless another Assos in Lycia is designed by him: if this was the situation of the Assos in the text, it seems to furnish us with a reason, from the nature of the place, why the apostle chose to go on foot thither. Pausanias [r] speaks of it as in Troas, and near Mount Ida. Sodamos of Assos in Troas, which lies near Ida, was the first of the Æolians, who conquered in the Olympic race the boys. In this place was born the famous philosopher Cleanthes, a disciple and successor of Zeno; hence he is called Cleanthes the Assian [s]. No mention is made of the Gospel being preached here, or of any church until the *eighth* century, when John, bishop of Assos, is said to be in the Nicene council [t]. Some exemplars read Thassos, as the Syriac and Arabic versions seem to have done: *there intending to take in Paul;* who staid behind, willing to have a little more Christian conversation with the saints at Troas. *For so had he appointed;* that these should go before-hand to Assos, and meet him there, and take him in: *minding himself to go a-foot;* from Troas to Assos, which were not very far off from one another: hence Assos is, by Pliny, called Assos of Troas; and by Pausanias, Assos, which is in Troas; that is, in the country of Troas, as before observed: what was his reason for going a-foot thither, is not very evident; whether that he might have the opportunity of conversing with the disciples of Troas, who might accompany him thither; or whether that he might be alone, and have leisure for private meditation, and free converse with God.

Ver. 14. *And when he met with us at Assos,* &c.] According to appointment: *we took him in;* to the ship, and so sailed on: *and came to Mitylene:* a city in Lesbos [u], an island in the Ægean sea, now Metelino: sometimes the island is so called, and is about seven miles and a half from the continent: of this city Vitruvius [w] says, that it was magnificently and elegantly built, but not prudently situated; for when the south wind blew, men were sick in it, and when the north-west wind blew they had coughs, and when the north wind blew, they were restored to health. Some say it had its name from Mitylene, the daughter of Macaris or Pelops; others from Myto, the son of Neptune and Mitylene; and others from Mityle, the builder of it. [x] Hillerus inquires, whether it may not be so called from the Chaldee word, מטלנא, *Matlana*, used in the Targum on Job xl. 13. which signifies *a bar*, this city being as a bar to Lesbos, which shut it up. It was famous for being the native place of Pittacus, one of the seven wise men of Greece, a great philosopher and legislator, who, with others, conquered Melanchrus the tyrant of Lesbos, whom the inhabitants of Mitylene greatly honoured, and made him their governor; and a field, which they gave him, was called after his name Pittacius [y]: of this place was Theophanes, a famous historian, who wrote the history of Pompey the great, and was familiar with him, and honoured by him, as Cicero [z] relates: other persons of note are said to be of this place, as Alcæus a lyric poet, and Diophanes a rhetorician. It does not appear that the apostle staid and preached the Gospel here, or that any Gospel church was here by him raised; no mention is made of it in ecclesiastical history until late: in the *second* century Heathenism prevailed in the island, the Lesbians sacrificed a man to Dionysius. In the *fifth* century we read of a bishop of this island in the Chalcedon council: in the *sixth* century there was a bishop of Mitylene, in the fifth Roman synod: in the *seventh* century, Gregory, bishop of Mitylene, assisted in the sixth council at Constantinople, and Theodorus of the same place: in the *eighth* century Damianus, bishop of the same place, was present in the Nicene council [a].

Ver. 15. *And we sailed thence,* &c.] From Mitylene: *and came the next* day *over-against Chios;* which, according to R. Benjamin Tudelensis [b], was three days' sail from Mitylene; according to Pliny [c] it was sixty-five miles from it, and is an island in the Icarian or Ægean sea, and lies between Lesbos and Samos, next mentioned; and has its name from the nymph Chione, so called from the exceeding whiteness of her skin, as snow: it was famous for marble; from hence came the best mastic, and good figs, and the wine called malmsey wine [d]. And of this place Jerom says [e], Chios, an island before Bithynia, whose name in the Syriac language signifies *mastic*, because that mastic grows there; some add, he called it *Chia* from Chione the nymph: the reason of its name, as Pausanias [f] relates, was this; Neptune coming into a desert island, had carnal knowledge of a nymph, and in the time of her travail, a snow fell from heaven on the ground; and from this Neptune called his son Chius, from whom the island has its name. Others [g] conjecture, that it was called from חויא, *Chivja*, which signifies a serpent; this island having been very much terrified, as Ælianus [h] says, by the hisses of a serpent of a monstrous

[n] Nat. Hist. l. 2. c. 96.
[o] Ib. l. 36. c. 17.
[p] De locis Hebraicis, fol. 95. K.
[q] Geograph. l. 13.
[r] Eliac. 2. sive l. 6. p. 351.
[s] Laert. Vit. Philosoph. l. 7. p. 541.
[t] Magdeburg. Hist. Eccl. cent. 8. c. 2. p. 5.
[u] Plin. l. 5. c. 31. Mela, l. 2. c. 14.
[w] De Architectura, l. 1. c. 6. p. 27, 28.
[x] Onomasticum Sacrum, p. 897.
[y] Laert. Vit. Philosoph. l. 1. p. 50.
[z] Orat. 26. pro Archia, p. 814.
[a] Magdeburg. Hist. Eccles. cent. 2. c. 15. p. 193. cent. 5. c. 2. p. 6. cent. 6. c. 2. p. 6. cent. 7. c. 2. p. 4. c. 10. p. 253, 254. cent. 8. c. 2. p. 6.
[b] Itinerar. p. 29.
[c] Plin. l. 5. c. 31.
[d] Ib. l. 14. c. 7.
[e] De locis Hebraicis, fol. 96. A.
[f] Achaica, sive l. 7. p. 404.
[g] Hiller. Onomasticum Sacrum, p. 787.
[h] De Animal. l. 16. c. 39.

size, until it was consumed by fire. It was common to sail from Mitylene hither, and *vice versa:* so we read [i] of Herod seeking Agrippa, he came to Chios, and from thence to Mitylene. We read nothing of the apostle's stay and preaching here, nor of any Gospel church here, till ages after: in the *fourth* century, Heathenism prevailed to such a degree in it, that Dionysius Omadius was worshipped here with human sacrifice; and yet, in the *fifth* century, a bishop of Chios was present in the council of Chalcedon; and in the *sixth* century another assisted in the fifth Roman synod; and in the *seventh* century there was a bishop of this place at the sixth synod at Constantinople; and in the *eighth* century, Leon, bishop of Chios, was in the Nicene [k] synod. It is now called Chio or Scio, by the Turks Saches, and is inhabited by Italian Genoese. *And the next day we arrived at Samos;* another island in the Icarian sea, not a very fruitful one, unless for olives [l]; and for nothing more famous than for being the birth-place of Pythagoras [m], hence called the Samian, and of Melissus. It was ninety-three miles distant from Chios [n]; and, according to R. Benjamin, two days sail from it [o]; but Paul sailed hither in a day. Of this place Jerom [p] thus writes; Samos, an island in the Ægean sea, in which, it is reported, earthen vessels were first made. Herodotus [q] speaks of three things for which it was famous, a very high mountain in it, a bulwark about the haven in the sea, and a temple the largest of all he ever saw. Some say it has its name from the height of it, *Samos* signifying an high place. Pausanias [r], from Asius, a Samian, suggests, that it was so called from Samus, the son of Ancæus and Samia; and observes, that the inhabitants of it affirm, that Juno was born here; and here was a famous temple, said to be dedicated to her by the Argonautes. One of the Sybils dwelt here, called from hence Samia, and Polycrates, a noted tyrant. Lycurgus, the famous lawgiver, died in this place, as did also Pherecydes, the Syrian [s]. It is now called Samo. The apostle staid not here to preach the Gospel; nor do we read of its being preached here by any: idolatry greatly prevailed in this place in the *second* century; and so it did in the *fourth*; though in the same we also read of some Christians here that suffered persecution; and so low as the *eighth* century, Heraclius, bishop of this place, was in the Nicene synod [t]. *And tarried at Trogyllium:* which, according to Ptolomy [u], was a promontory in the Icarian sea: it was about forty furlongs distant from Samos, according to Strabo [w]. It was a promontory of Mycale; and Trogilias, called also Trogilia, is mentioned with Mycale and Samos by Pliny [x], as near to Miletus. It follows here, *and the next day we came to Miletus;* which was once the chief city of Ionia: it was famous for being the birth-place of Thales, one of the seven wise men of Greece, and of Timotheus the musician, and of Anaximander, and Anaximenes, and the famous Democritus, philosophers [y], and of Cadmus, the first inventor of prose [z]. Pliny says [a], it was formerly called Lelegeis, Pityusa, and Anactoria; and it seems it had its name Miletus from Miletus, the son of Apollo, who is said to build it [b]; and Apollo himself is sometimes called Apollo Milesius, and who had a famous temple in this place [c]. Though rather it was so called from מילתא, *Milata*, or *Melote*, which signifies pure, white, fine, soft wool, for which this place was famous; which was used for carpets, but chiefly for cloth, which being dyed purple, was sent into divers parts: *Melote* in Greek signifies the same; it is used in Heb. xi. 37. and translated *sheepskin*. Ptolomy [d] places this city in Caria, by the sea; and certain it is from this account, that it was a sea-port: it is said to have four ports or havens, one of which would hold a fleet. Of it Jerom [e] says; Miletus, a maritime city in Asia, distant ten furlongs from the mouth of the river Mæander: by the apostle's sending from hence to Ephesus, for the elders of the church there to meet him at this place, as is afterwards related, and taking no notice of any brethren, elders, or church here, it looks as if there were none at this time: and in the *second* century, Gentilism was embraced at Miletus; and in the *fourth* century Licinius consulted the oracle of Apollo Didymæus in this place, concerning the event of the war against Constantine; but in the *fifth* century we read of a church here, a bishop of this place being in the Chalcedon council; in the *seventh* century a bishop of this church assisted at the *sixth* council at Constantinople, whose name is said to be George; and in the *eighth* century Epiphanius, bishop of Miletus, was present in the Nicene council [f].

Ver. 16. *For Paul had determined to sail by Ephesus,* &c.] That is, to sail by it, without calling at it, as he did, for it lay by the shore before he came to Miletus; but he chose not to stop there, fearing he should be detained by the brethren there: *because he would not spend the time in Asia;* of which Ephesus was the metropolis: *for he hasted, if it were possible, for him to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost;* which was near at hand; for it was but fifty days from the second day of the passover, which feast was over when he sailed from Philippi; and at Troas he staid seven days, and he had been several days sailing already; see ver. 6, 13—15. And his great desire to be at the feast of Pentecost was not in order to keep that feast, according to the usage of the Jews; but that he might have an opportunity of preaching the Gospel to a great number of Jews, out of all countries, whom he knew would come to that feast.

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[i] Joseph. Antiqu. l. 16. c. 2. sect. 2.
[k] Magdeborg. Hist. Eccles. cent. 4. c. 15. p. 865. cent. 5. c. 2. p. 6. cent. 6. c. 2. p. 6. cent. 7. c. 2. p. 4. cent. 8. c. 2. p. 6.
[l] Apulei Florida, sect. 15.
[m] Solin. c. 21. Laert. Vit. Philosoph. l. 8. p. 568. l. 9. p. 643.
[n] Plin. l. 5. c. 31.
[o] Itinerar. p. 30.
[p] De locis Hebraicis, fol. 96. I.
[q] Thalia, l. 3. c. 60.
[r] Achaica, sive l. 7. p. 402, 403.
[s] Heraclides de Politiis, p. 422, 444.
[t] Magdeburg. Hist. Eccl. cent. 2. c. 15. p. 193. cent. 4. c. 3. p. 19. c. 15. p. 665, 884. cent. 8. c. 2. p. 6.
[u] Geograph. l. 5. c. 2.
[w] Ib. l. 14.
[x] Nat. Hist. l. 5. c. 29, 31.
[y] Mela, l. 1. c. 17. Laert. Vit. Philosoph. l. 1. p. 15. l. 2. p. 88, 89. l. 9. p. 650.
[z] Plin. l. 5. c. 29. Solin. c. 53.
[a] Ib.
[b] Apollodorus de Orig. Deor. l. 3. p. 130.
[c] Alex. ab Alex. l. 6. c. 2.
[d] Geograph. l. 5. c. 2.
[e] De locis Hebraicis, fol. 96. F.
[f] Magdeburg. Hist. Eccles. cent. 2. c. 15. p. 192. cent. 4. c. 15. p. 865. cent. 5. c. 2. p. 3. cent. 7. c. 2. p. 3. c. 10. p. 254. cent. 8. c. 2. p. 4.

Ver. 17. *And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus*, &c.] Which is said, by some, to be about four hundred furlongs from Miletus, and, by others, ten German miles. *And called the elders of the church*: that is, at Ephesus; not the ancient members of the church, but the officers of it; the pastors, bishops, and overseers, as they are called, ver. 28. and are so styled from their office, and not their age. The twelve disciples the apostle found in this place, and the numerous converts made by him here, first composed this church, which doubtless was formed into Gospel order by himself; to which he afterwards wrote an epistle, when at a distance from them, called the Epistle to the Ephesians; and in the latter end of the *first* century, another epistle was sent from Jesus Christ himself, by the Apostle John, to this church, Rev. ii. 1. and which had an angel, pastor, or bishop over it; but who he was, is not certain; Caius, who is reckoned among the seventy disciples, is said to be bishop of it; see the note on Luke x. 1. Some say Timothy was the first bishop of this church, and after him Onesimus; but these accounts are uncertain, and not to be depended on: but certain it is, that the Apostle John dwelt here, and in the parts adjacent, unto his death, and was a superintendent and overseer in common of this church, and others near it; concerning whom Irenæus[g], a very ancient writer near his time, says, the church at Ephesus was founded by Paul; but John remained with them to the times of Trajan. In the *second* century Ignatius[h] wrote an epistle to this church, in which he speaks highly of it, saying, there was no heresy in it; and makes mention of Onesimus as bishop of it: in the *third* century there was a church in this place, and a very memorable affair happened here in the times of Decius; he having obliged all to sacrifice to the idols in the temple, seven persons, by name Maximianus, Malchus, Martinianus, Dionysius, Johannes, Serapion, and Constantine, were accused of Christianity, which they owned; but being soldiers, they had space given them to repent until the return of the emperor, who was going elsewhere: whilst he was gone they fled and hid themselves in the caves of Mount Cælius; upon the emperor's return they were inquired after, and found to be there; who, being provoked, ordered the mouth of the caverns to be shut up with stones, that they might be famished; and it is said, that what through fear and grief they fell asleep, and slept to a great age; some pretend to say to the times of Theodosius, and then awaked; and these are they that are called the seven sleepers: in the beginning of the *fourth* century there was a bishop of this church at the council of Nice: in the *fifth* century Ephesus was famous for a general synod, convened in it against Nestorius; and in this age we read of several bishops of this place: at the time of that synod, Memnon was bishop of it, and before him Antonius and Heraclides, and after him Basil, Bassianus, Stephen, and Paul: in the *sixth* century there was a bishop of this church present at the synod of Rome and Constantinople; and in the same age Ruffinus was bishop at Ephesus, who flourished under Mauritius the emperor: in the *seventh* century a bishop of this place assisted at the sixth council at Constantinople; in this century it was a metropolitan church, and Theodorus was archbishop of it: in the *eighth* century, one Theodosius presided over the church here; to which church the emperor Constantine gave a hundred pounds of gold[i]: so far down Christianity is to be traced in this place.

Ver. 18. *And when they were come to him*, &c.] That is, when the elders or pastors of the church at Ephesus were come to the apostle at Miletus: *he said unto them, ye know, from the first day I came into Asia*: to Ephesus the chief city in it: *after what manner I have been with you at all seasons*: what was his conduct, conversation, and constant manner of life; which the apostle takes notice of, not to commend himself, or to obtain applause of men; but either in vindication of himself, against those that were ready to charge and censure him; or to recommend the doctrine which he taught; and chiefly for the imitation of these elders, he had sent for, and convened in this place; and he appeals to themselves, as eye-witnesses of what he was going to say.

Ver. 19. *Serving the Lord with all humility of mind*, &c.] Meaning, in the ministration of the Gospel, being conscious to himself of his own weakness and insufficiency in himself for such service; no ways elated with those excellent and extraordinary gifts bestowed upon him; ascribing all his success to the power, grace, and spirit of God; treating no man with contempt and disdain; nor lording it over God's heritage, or claiming a dominion over the faith of men; nor seeking honour nor riches for himself, nor even what he had a just right unto, a maintenance from the people; but laboured with his own hands, and ministered to his own and the necessities of others: *and with many tears*: at the obstinacy and unbelief of some, and at the distresses and afflictions of others, both corporeal and spiritual; as well as on account of the unbecoming walk of some professors: *and temptations which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews*: who were hardened against his ministrations, and believed not the Gospel preached by him, but spoke evil of it, and lay in wait to take away his life; by reason of which, his afflictions, which he calls *temptations*, because they were trials of his faith and patience, were very great.

Ver. 20. And *how I kept back nothing that was profitable* unto you, &c.] The Syriac version supplies, *to your souls*: to lead them into a true knowledge of the doctrines of the Gospel, and to confirm them in the same, and to preserve them from errors in principle, and immoralities in practice, and to encourage the exercise of every grace, and to instruct them in every branch of duty; nothing of this kind, or which had this tendency, did the apostle dissemble, conceal, or drop, either through sloth and indolence, or through fear of men, or for the sake of reputation, wealth, and friends. The things the apostle may have chiefly in view are the truths of the Gospel, which are very profitable to the souls of men; such as relate to the know-

[g] Adv. Hæres. l. 3. c. 3.
[h] Epist. p. 16, 17.

[i] Magdeburg. Hist. Eccles. cent. 3. c. 2. p. 2. c. 12. p. 212. cent. 4. c. 2. p. 3. cent. 5. c. 2. p. 3. c. 10. p. 590, &c. cent. 6. c. 2. p. 4. c. 10. p. 342. cent. 7. c. 2. p. 3. c. 7. p. 111, 115. cent. 8. c. 2. p. 4.

ledge of God, his being, perfections, and persons; as that there are three persons in the Godhead, Father, Son, and Spirit, which is profitable to be known, in order to understand the economy of salvation, in which each person has his distinct concern; and that both the Son and Spirit are equally God with the Father, which accounts for the virtue and efficacy of the blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ, and how safely he may be depended upon for salvation, and how equal the Holy Spirit is to his work and office: likewise such doctrines as relate to the sin of Adam and his posterity in him, to the imputation of the guilt of that sin unto them, and the derivation of a corrupt nature from him, and which respect the impurity and impotence of human nature; all which is profitable, since it accounts for the origin of moral evil, and many of the dispensations of providence in involving those that don't know the right hand from their left in public calamities; and since it shews the necessity of regenerating grace, tends to the humiliation of men, and makes for the magnifying the riches of God's grace: also such doctrines as express the grace of God in man's salvation as the doctrines of God's everlasting love, of election, redemption, justification, pardon, reconciliation, union to Christ, and final perseverance; all which are exceeding profitable, for the peace, comfort, and refreshment of the souls of God's people. Moreover, the ordinances of the Gospel, baptism, and the Lord's supper, which are the privileges of believers, and the means of their spiritual profit, may be included, together with all the duties of religion; which though not profitable by way of merit, yet contribute to the peace and pleasure of the mind; and none of these things did the apostle withhold from the elders and church at Ephesus, as his epistle to that church does abundantly shew, in which, doctrines, ordinances, and duties are taken notice of: now to keep back these, is either to keep them back wholly, to say nothing of any of them, but in the room of them to deliver out morality and legal righteousness; or in part, to mix the truths of the Gospel with the doctrines of men, and not give out the sincere milk of the word; or to draw and fetch back what has been delivered through the fear of men, and in order to gain reputation and applause: but so did not the apostle, nor should any minister of the Gospel; and that for the reason in the words, because they are profitable; as also because they are the counsel of God; and because it is the will of Christ that nothing should be hid, but every thing should be published, which he has signified to his servants; and this is enforced by his own example, who whatever he heard of his father, he made known to his disciples; and for the ministers of Christ to do otherwise, would argue unfaithfulness in them both to Christ and to the souls of men: *but have shewed you*; all the doctrines of the Gospel, and pointed to every path of duty, and declared, as he says hereafter, the whole counsel of God: *and have taught you publicly*; first in the Jewish synagogue, then in the school of Tyrannus, ch. xix. 8, 9, 10. and in whatsoever place the church, when formed, might meet together for public worship; there the apostle taught them the truths of the Gospel openly, and without any reserve, before all the people, as Christ ordered his apostles to do, and as he himself did, Matt. x. 27. John xviii. 20. *and from house to house*: as he visited the saints at their own houses, to know their personal cases, and the state of their souls, he instructed them privately and personally one by one; he taught the same publicly as privately, and privately as publicly: and took every opportunity of instilling Gospel truths into them, and of enriching them with a larger knowledge of them; which shews his affection and zeal, his laboriousness, industry, and indefatigableness in the ministry.

Ver. 21. *Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks*, &c.] To the Jews first in their synagogue, and then to both Jews and Greeks, or Gentiles, in the school of Tyrannus; opening and explaining to both the nature and use, urging and insisting upon, and proving by undeniable testimonies the necessity, of *repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ*: the former of these is not a legal repentance, but an evangelical one; which flows from a sense of the love of God, and an application of pardoning grace and mercy, and is always attended with hope, at least of interest in it, and as here with faith in Christ Jesus: it lies in a true sight and sense of sin, as exceeding sinful, being contrary to the nature and law of God, and a deformation of the image of God in man, as well as followed with dreadful and pernicious consequences; and in a godly sorrow for it, as it is committed against a God of infinite purity and holiness, and of love, grace, and mercy; and it shews itself in shame for sin, and blushing at it, and in an ingenious confession of it, and forsaking it: and the latter of these is not an historical faith, or an assent of the mind to whatsoever is true concerning the person, office, and grace of Christ; but is a spiritual act of the soul upon him; it is a looking and going out to him, a laying hold and leaning on him, and trusting in him, for grace, righteousness, peace, pardon, life, and salvation. Now these two were the sum of the apostle's ministry; this is a breviary or compendium of it; a form of sound words held fast and published by him: and as these two go together as doctrines in the ministry of the word, they go together as graces in the experience of the saints; where the one is, there the other is; they are wrought in the soul at one and the same time, by one and the same hand; the one is not before the other in order of time, however it may be in order of working, or as to visible observation; repentance is mentioned before faith, not that it precedes it, though it may be discerned in its outward acts before it; yet faith as to its inward exercise on Christ is full as early, if not earlier; souls first look to Christ by faith, and then they mourn in tears of evangelical repentance, Zech. xii. 10. though the order of the Gospel ministry is very fitly here expressed, which is first to lay before sinners the evil of sin, and their danger by it, in order to convince of it, and bring to repentance for it; and then to direct and encourage them to faith in Christ Jesus, as in the case of the gaoler, Acts xvi. 29, 30. and this is, generally speaking, the order and method in which the Holy Spirit proceeds; he is first a spirit of conviction and illumination, he shews to souls the exceeding sinfulness of sin, causes them to loath it and themselves for it, and humbles them under

a sense of it; and then he is a spirit of faith, he reveals Christ unto them as God's way of salvation, and works faith in them to believe in him. Moreover, these two, repentance and faith, were the two parts of Christ's ministry, Mark i. 15. and are what he would have published and insisted on, in the preaching of the word, Luke xxiv. 47. Mark xvi. 16. so that the ministry of the apostle was very conformable to the mind and will of Christ.

Ver. 22. *And now behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem*, &c.] Not in his own spirit, though the Ethiopic version reads, *in my spirit*; as if he was pressed and straitened, and troubled within himself, at what afflictions and bonds he was to endure at Jerusalem; for this is not consistent with what he says in ver. 24. nor is the sense, that he was bound in conscience and duty to go to Jerusalem, to carry the collections of the churches made for the poor saints there, which the Gentile churches importuned him to take upon him, and which he undertook, and promised to perform, and so was under obligation to do it; but rather that he was resolved and determined in his own mind, within himself, or he purposed in his spirit, as in ch. xix. 21. to go to Jerusalem: but it is best to understand it of the spirit of God; as that either the apostle, by the revelation of the spirit of God, knew that when he came to Jerusalem he should be laid in bonds, and under a deep impression of that upon his mind, he went thither, as though he was bound already; or rather that he was under such a strong impulse of the spirit of God, by which he was moved to such a vehement desire to go thither, that the bonds and afflictions he saw waited for him there, could not deter him, and all the entreaties of his friends could not dissuade him from it: *not knowing the things that shall befall me there*: that is, the particular things he should suffer there, nor how they would issue with respect to life or death; and if the latter, whether he should suffer death, there or elsewhere; these things were not as yet revealed to him; he only in general knew, that bonds and afflictions would be his lot and portion, and which therefore he excepts in the next verse: after this it was revealed to him by Agabus a prophet, in the name, and under the influence of the Holy Ghost, that he should be apprehended at Jerusalem, and should be bound and delivered to the Gentiles; which was signified by the prophet's taking his girdle and binding his hands and feet with it, but still he knew not whether he should die there or no, though he was ready for it, Acts xxi. 10, 11, 13. afterwards when he was come to Jerusalem, and had been bound, and was in prison, the Lord himself appeared to him, and told him that he must bear witness at Rome, as he had testified of him at Jerusalem, Acts xxiii. 11. so that he was not to suffer death there, only bonds and imprisonment.

Ver. 23. *Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city*, &c.] As he passed along, where there was a church, or any number of saints: in the churches of those times there were prophets who foretold things to come, and by these the Holy Ghost testified to the apostle, as he travelled along, and called upon the churches in every city, what would befall him when he came to Jerusalem; this sense the natural order of the words requires, unless there should be a transposition of them, thus, *save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth, saying, that bonds and afflictions abide me*, or *wait for me in every city*; that is, this in general was only made known to him by the spirit of God, that whereever he came, affliction and persecution would attend him, and he must expect bonds and imprisonment; these were ready for him, and he must prepare for them, as he did: and therefore, whenever they came, he was not surprised at them, they were no other than what he looked for; but the other sense seems best, for such a transposition is not very easy, and, besides, can by no means be admitted, if the sense is, as the words are read in Beza's ancient copy, and in others, and in the Vulgate Latin version, *that bonds and afflictions abide me at Jerusalem*: however, since the Holy Ghost testified before-hand of the afflictions and bonds of the apostle, whether in every city or in Jerusalem, or both; it is no inconsiderable proof of the proper deity of the spirit of God, and is an instance of his affectionate regard to the apostle, to give him previous notice of these things.

Ver. 24. *But none of these things move me*, &c.] From the hope of the Gospel, nor from the ministry of the word, nor from his journey to Jerusalem; they did not shake his faith, nor inject fear into him, nor cause him to alter his purpose and design: *neither count I my life dear unto myself*; life is a very valuable thing, no outward or temporal enjoyment can be dearer to a man than life; all that he has he'll give for his life: this therefore must not be understood in an absolute sense, as if the apostle despised his life, and esteemed of it meanly, when it was the gift of God, and had been not only so eminently preserved in providence, but had been so useful in a way of grace to so many valuable purposes; but it must be taken in a comparative sense, with respect to Christ and his Gospel, and when it should be called for to be laid down for him; and that, in such circumstances, and under such considerations, he made no account of it at all, but preferred Christ and his Gospel to it: this sense appears by what follows, *so that I might finish my course with joy*; the course and race of his life, ending it by suffering cheerfully and joyfully for Christ; or his Christian course and race, which began at his conversion, ending that with a joyful prospect of being with Christ in an endless eternity; or else the course of his ministry, sealing that with his blood, and rejoicing that he was counted worthy to suffer for the name of Christ, and so he did finish his course, 2 Tim. iv. 7. *and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus*; which seems to be explanative of the former, or of what is meant by his course, namely his ministry, the ministry of the Gospel: Beza's ancient copy, and the Vulgate Latin version read, *the ministry of the word*; this he had received from Christ, both the Gospel which he ministered, and gifts qualifying him for it, and a mission and commission to minister it; and which he was desirous of fulfilling in such a manner, as to give up his account with joy to him from whom he had received it, and to whom he was accountable; namely, *to testify the Gospel of the grace of God*; to profess and preach it, to bear a constant and public testimony to it at death, as in life, and faithfully to declare it, and assert it to the last; which he calls not only the *Gospel*, or good news

of salvation by Christ; but the Gospel *of the grace of God:* which brings the account of the free grace, love, and mercy of God, displayed in the scheme of salvation; of the grace of God the father, in pitching his love upon any of the sons of men; not because they were better and more deserving of his favour, than others, but because of his sovereign will and pleasure, who will be gracious to whom he will be gracious; and in choosing them in Christ unto salvation, before they had done good or evil, and without any consideration or foresight of, or motive from good works hereafter done by them; in drawing the scheme and model of their salvation in Christ, appointing him to be the author of it; and in making a covenant of grace with him, stored with all the blessings and promises of grace; and in sending him, in the fulness of time, to suffer and die for them, not sparing him, but delivering him up for them all, and giving all things freely with him; and in accepting the sacrifice, satisfaction, and righteousness of his son on their account, as if done by themselves. It also gives an account of the grace of Christ in undertaking the salvation of men; in assuming their nature, and becoming mean and low in it; in dying for their sins; in his intercession for them at the right hand of God; and in the care he takes of them in this world, until he has brought them safe home to himself. Likewise it gives an account of the grace of the spirit in regeneration and sanctification; in working faith in the hearts of men; in being a comforter to them, a witnesser of their adoption, the earnest of their inheritance, and the sealer of them unto the day of redemption. And the Gospel may be so called, because all the doctrines of it are doctrines of grace; it asserts election to be of grace, and not of works; and ascribes the justification of a sinner to the free grace of God, through the righteousness of Christ, imputed without works and received by faith, which faith is the gift of God, and it denies it to be of the deeds of the law; it represents the pardon of sin to be according to the riches of God's grace, though it is through the blood of Christ, and not owing to humiliation, repentance, confession, and new obedience, as causes of it; it attributes regeneration and conversion to the abundant mercy, the free favour of God, and to the efficacy of his grace, and not to the will of the flesh, or the will of man; and in a word, as the great doctrine of it is salvation, whence it is called the Gospel of salvation, it declares that the whole of salvation, from first to last, is all of grace. And it may also bear this name, because it is a means of conveying grace unto, and implanting it in the hearts of men; regenerating grace comes this way; God begets men by the word of truth, they are born again of incorruptible seed by it; the spirit of God, as a spirit of sanctification, is received through it, and faith comes by hearing it; and both that and hope, and every other grace, are quickened, encouraged, and drawn forth into exercise by it; all which is, when it is attended with the spirit of God and power: and this being the nature and use of the Gospel, made it so precious and valuable to the apostle, and made him so intent upon testifying it, and fulfilling the ministry of it, and to prefer it to life and every thing in this world; and it cannot but be highly valued and greatly desired by all those who have tasted that the Lord is gracious. Beza's ancient copy, and some others, read, *to testify to Jews and Greeks the Gospel of the grace of God.*

Ver. 25. *And now behold,* &c.] This is not only a note of asseveration, but of attention, stirring up to observe what is here asserted: *I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more:* the sense is, that none of them should ever see him again, none of the churches of Asia, or the members of them; among whom he had been some years preaching the Gospel, the things concerning the Messiah, his kingdom and glory, and the meetness of the saints for, and their right unto the heavenly inheritance, prepared by God, and given by him to all that love him: Beza's ancient copy reads, *the kingdom of Jesus:* this the apostle knew by divine revelation, by the same spirit in which he was going bound to Jerusalem, though he knew not whether he should die there or elsewhere; however, he knew, and was persuaded, he should visit these parts no more.

Ver. 26. *Wherefore I take you to record this day,* &c.] This is a solemn appeal to the elders of the church at Ephesus, who knew his doctrine and manner of life for a considerable time among them: *that I am pure from the blood of all men;* or *of you all,* as some copies, and the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read; which seems most natural, since they could only bear a testimony for him with respect to themselves, and the people at Ephesus, where he had so behaved both in the faithful discharge of his ministry, and in his exemplary life and conversation; as that the ruin and destruction of no one of them could be laid to his charge, or any one perish for want of knowledge, or through any negligence of his; see Ezek. xxxiii. 6.

Ver. 27. *For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.*] By which is meant, not the purposes and decrees of God, latent in his own breast, these the apostle could not declare; but his revealed will in the Gospel, concerning the salvation of men by Jesus Christ, even the whole of the Gospel, every truth and doctrine of it, necessary to salvation, and to the peace, joy, and comfort of the saints; together with all the ordinances of it, and every thing that had any tendency to promote the glory of God, and the good of souls; see Luke vii. 30. none of these things did the apostle withhold from the knowledge of the church at Ephesus, but freely imparted and communicated them to them; see the note on ver. 20.

Ver. 28. *Take heed therefore unto yourselves,* &c.] Since the blood of men may be required of those, who are negligent or partial in their office, and shun to declare the whole counsel of God: this exhortation is given them not merely as men, to take care of their bodily health, the outward concerns of life, and provide for themselves and families; nor merely as Christians, but as ministers of the Gospel; that they would take heed to their gifts, to use and improve them, and not neglect them; to their time, that they spend it aright, and not squander it away; and to their spirit, temper, and passions, that they are not governed by them; and to their lives and conversations, that they be exemplary to those who are under their care; and to their doctrine, that it be according to the Scriptures; that it be the doctrine of Christ, and the same with the apostles; that it be according to godliness, and that it tends to edifi-

cation; that it be sound and incorrupt, pure and unmixed, and all of a piece and consistent with itself; and that they be not infected and carried away with errors and heresies: *and to all the flock;* the church and all the members of it, which are compared to a flock of sheep, which are to be looked after and watched over by the ministers of the word, who are as shepherds to them, lest they should be infected, or any damage done them. The people of God are compared to sheep on many accounts; before conversion, for their going astray, when they are as lost sheep; after conversion, for their meek and inoffensive carriage and behaviour, and for their patience in bearing sufferings, to which they are exposed: and a church of Christ is compared to a flock of them, being in Gospel order, folded together and feeding in the same pasture, attending the word and ordinances, under the care of shepherds appointed by Christ the chief shepherd; whose business it is to take heed unto them, and care of them, to learn to know their state and condition, to watch over them, and to feed them with knowledge and with understanding, for which they are qualified by Christ; and they are to take heed unto every one in the flock, the poor of the flock as well as others, the lambs as well as the sheep, and the sick and the diseased, the torn, and straying, and driven away, as well as the fat and the strong: and this flock, though a little flock, is a holy and beautiful one, a flock of men, and of the souls of men dear to God, to Christ and the blessed Spirit; and a special regard should be had unto them, and that for reasons following: *over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers;* or *bishops;* this is said to the elders of the church, ver. 17. which shews that the office of an elder and a bishop is one and the same office; and this contains in it more than one argument why they should take heed to the flock; as because they are the overseers of it, who have the care and oversight of the flock, that is under their inspection, and is their proper province, and office; and this they were put into by the Holy Ghost, who gave them gifts to qualify them for it, and called, and inclined them to undertake it, as well as moved the people to make choice of them for this purpose; and since, therefore, this was an affair in which the Holy Ghost was so much concerned, it became them very diligently to attend it: *to feed the church of God;* with knowledge and understanding; and discharge the whole office of faithful shepherds to the flock, by feeding the flock and not themselves, strengthening the diseased, healing the sick, binding up the broken, bringing again that which was driven away, and seeking up that which was lost: and here is another argument suggested, to stir up to a diligent performance of this work; and that is, that this flock is the church of God, a set of men whom God has chosen for himself, and called by his grace out of the world, and separated for his own use and glory, and among whom he dwells; and therefore to be fed with the faithful word, with the finest of the wheat, and not with the chaff of human schemes, and with the wind of false doctrine, nor with any thing that is vain, trifling, and deceitful; but with the solid doctrines of the Gospel, with the words of faith and good doctrine, with the wholesome words of Christ Jesus, which have in them milk for babes and meat for strong men, and with and by the ordinances of the Gospel, which are the green pastures they are to be guided into, and abide in; and in all they are to be directed to Christ, the sum of the word and ordinances, who is the bread of life, and food of faith; and that the church should be thus fed, is the will of Christ, who has appointed and ordered his ministers to feed his lambs and sheep, and has furnished them with what is necessary for this work; this is the design of the ministry of the Gospel, and the administration of ordinances; and the churches of Christ are placed where food may be had, where the word is faithfully preached, and the ordinances truly administered: some copies read, *the church of the Lord;* and others, and so the Complutensian edition, *the church of the Lord and God: which he hath purchased with his own blood;* which being the blood not only of a pure and innocent man, but of one that is truly and properly God as well as man, was a sufficient ransom-price to redeem the church and people of God from sin, the law, its curse and condemnation: so that this is no inconsiderable proof of the true and proper deity of Christ; and contains a fresh argument, or reason, why the flock of God and *church of Christ,* as the Syriac version reads; or *the church of the Lord and God,* as in five of Beza's exemplars: or *of the Lord God,* as the Arabic version, should be taken heed unto and fed; because it must needs be dear to God and Christ, and precious to them, since so great a price has been paid for it. The purchaser is God, Christ who is God over all, blessed for ever, not a creature; that could never have made such a purchase, it could not have purchased a single sheep or lamb in this flock, no man can redeem his brother, or give to God a ransom for him, much less the whole flock; but Christ being God, was able to make such a purchase, and he has actually made it, and given a sufficient price for it; not to Satan, with whom these sheep were a prey, and from whom they are taken in virtue of the ransom given; but to God, from whom they strayed, against whom they sinned, and whose law they broke; and this price was not silver and gold, nor men, nor people: but Christ himself, his life and blood; and which were his *own,* the human nature, the blood of which was shed, and its life given being in union with his divine person, and was in such sense his own, the property of the son of God, as the life and blood of no mere man are theirs: and this purchase now being made in this way, and by such means, is a very proper one; it is not made without price, but with an invaluable one; and it is a legal purchase, a valuable consideration being given for it, perfectly equivalent to it; and therefore is a complete one, there is nothing wanting to make it more firm, it is a finished purchase; and it is a very peculiar one, it is a peculiar people that are purchased, called the purchased possession, Ephes. i. 14. and a peculiar price which is paid for it; there is no other of the same kind, nor any thing like it, and it is made by a peculiar person, one that is God and man in one person.

Ver. 29. *For I know this,* &c.] By divine revelation: *that after my departing;* either out of this world, or after his leaving them now, and proceeding on his journey: *shall grievous wolves enter in among you;*

false teachers, comparable to wolves, for their craft and cunning, and for their greedy, covetous, and voracious dispositions; and who would be very grievous, troublesome, and even intolerable to them; these, he knew, would enter privily, at an unawares, into their churches, and set up themselves for preachers, without being called or sent: *not sparing the flock;* fleecing it instead of feeding it, making merchandise of it, and like the Pharisees, under religious pretences, devour widows' houses, and drain the purses of men; and having as little compassion upon their souls, poisoning them with their errors and heresies, subverting their faith, and bringing them into swift ruin and destruction, as much as would in them lie.

Ver. 30. *Also of your own selves shall men arise,* &c.] Not only false teachers from abroad should come and enter among them, but some would spring up out of their own communities, such as had been admitted members of them, and of whom they had hoped well; such were Hymeneus, Philetus, Alexander, Hermogenes, and Phygellus; *speaking perverse things:* concerning God, and Christ, and the Gospel; distorted things, wresting the Scriptures to their own destruction, and that of others; things that are disagreeable to the word of God, and pernicious to the souls of men: *to draw away disciples after them:* to rend away members from the churches, make schisms and divisions, form parties, set themselves at the head of them, and establish new sects, called after their own names; see 1 John ii. 19. Jud. v. 19.

Ver. 31. *Therefore watch,* &c.] Meaning both over themselves, and the flock; to prevent, if possible, false teachers entering in, and to nip the buds of heresy and schism, as soon as they appear, and to preserve themselves, and the church, from being carried away with the error of the wicked. *And remember that by the space of three years;* reckoning from his first coming to Ephesus, unto this time, that he now called at Miletus; see ch. xviii. 19, 20. and xix. 8, 10, 22. and xx. 3, 6, 17. *I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears;* that is, he was constantly and continually cautioning them against false teachers, and their doctrines, in the most tender and affectionate manner; shedding tears at the thoughts of what mischief would be done, and how many souls would be ruined by them; which gives a lively idea of the apostle, and his ministry, of his affection, zeal, and diligence, very worthy of the imitation of all the preachers of the Gospel. Several copies, and all the Oriental versions, read, *every one of you.*

Ver. 32. *And now brethren,* &c.] So the apostle calls the elders of the church at Ephesus; though they had not the same gifts, and were not in the same high office as he was, yet he puts himself upon a level with them, as if he and they were fellow-elders, as Peter calls himself, 1 Pet. v. 1. which is an instance of the apostle's humility and affection: *I commend you to God;* to God the father; to his grace, to supply all their need; to his wisdom, to direct them in all their affairs; and to his power, to keep them from the sins and corruptions of the times, and from the errors and heresies now broaching, or to be broached. *And to the word of his grace;* either the Gospel, before called the Gospel of the grace of God, ver. 24. This is sometimes called *the word,* the word of faith, of truth, of righteousness, of reconciliation and salvation; and is *his* word, the word of God, and not of man; it comes from him, is concerning him, and is succeeded by him; and it is the word of *his grace,* since it publishes his free grace and mercy in Christ Jesus, and declares salvation to be wholly of the grace of God; to which this church is commended by the apostle as a rule of faith and practice, to attend unto, and abide by, and as a preservative from those errors and heresies which he had observed would spring up among them, and which would be for their instruction, comfort, and establishment: or else the Lord Jesus is intended, who is the eternal and essential word of God; who, as the word, inwardly conceived, is the image of the mind, equal to it, and yet distinct from it, so Christ is the image of the invisible God, equal to him, and yet a distinct person from him; and as the word expressed is the interpreter of the mind, so Christ the word, who was in the beginning with God, and lay in his bosom, has spoke all things from him, declared his mind, and explained his will: besides, he is the word who in the everlasting council and covenant spoke on the behalf of all his people, asked for every blessing for them, and engaged to be the surety of them; and is the word, who, in the beginning of time, spoke all things out of nothing; and now is the advocate, and speaks for the saints in heaven, as well as he has been the word spoken of by all the holy prophets from the beginning of the world: and he may be thought the rather to be designed, since the saints never commend themselves, or others, either in life, or in death, to any but to a divine person; nor is any but a divine person capable of taking the care and charge of the saints, and of making it good; nor will they trust any other; nor are the saints ever said to be committed or commended to the Gospel, but on the other hand, that is said to be committed to them: the written word is committed to the care and keeping of the saints, but not the saints to the care and keeping of that; nor does it appear so agreeable to put the written word upon a level with the divine Being; a commendation of the saints, equally to the written word, as to God himself, seems to be a lessening of the glory of the divine Being, and an ascribing too much to the word, but suits well with Christ the essential word: and who may be called the word of his grace, because the grace of God is greatly displayed in him; and because all fulness of grace dwells in him; and he is the author, donor, and object of all grace, and so a proper person to be commended to; and what follows is very applicable to him: *which is able to build you up:* in faith and holiness, and on himself, the sure foundation; for though the Gospel is an instrument in the hands of the spirit of God, in building up saints on their most holy faith, yet Christ is the master-builder; it is he that builds the temple, the church, and every particular believer, and must bear the glory. The saints, though they are built on Christ the foundation, against which the gates of hell cannot prevail, and so are safe; yet they stand in need of building up, or of edification; and a church may be said to be built up, or edified, when additions are made unto it of such as shall be saved; and particular members are built up, when

additions are made to their grace, or they grow in the exercise of it: when their spiritual strength increases, when their understandings are more enlightened, their judgments better informed, and their memories filled with divine truths and Gospel doctrines; when they are more and more confirmed in the faith of Christ, both as a grace, and as a doctrine; and their wills are brought to a greater resignation to the will of God, as well as their affections are set upon things in heaven, and their souls are more seeking after them: and now this is what God is able to do, and does do; for except he builds, in vain do the builders build; he causes all grace to abound; and so does his word, his essential word; he is the author and finisher of faith, and gives both grace and glory, as it follows: *and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified;* by the *inheritance* is meant the heavenly glory, which is a free-grace gift, and not obtained by the works of the law, or the industry of men. It is a distribution by lot, as the land of Canaan was, even by the lot of God's eternal purpose and decree: it is what belongs to children, to the children of God, and them only; and therefore bears this name, and comes unto them upon, and in consequence of the death of Christ the testator: it is his righteousness which entitles unto it; and it is the grace of God which makes meet for it; and the spirit of God is the earnest of it: it is an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in the heavens, and is an eternal one; it lies in light, and among the saints there. God is able to give it; it is a gift of his grace, of his sovereign will, which he gives to whom he pleases; it is an inheritance of his preparing and disposing, which he calls unto, makes meet for, and bestows: and Christ, the word of his grace, is able to give it; it is in his hands, not only the promise of it, but that itself; he is in possession of it, and it is in his power to give it; and he does give it to all that the father has given him, and who are here described from their sanctification; for this is only enjoyed by such, who are set apart by God the father, whose sins are expiated by the blood of Christ, and to whom he is made sanctification, and who are sanctified by the blessed Spirit. Now though the Gospel, the written word, may be as a map, which shews where this inheritance lies, and which is the way to it; yet it is Christ, the living word, who gives the right unto it, the meetness for it, the earnest of it, and will put into the possession of it.

Ver. 33. *I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel.*] This the apostle says, not merely in vindication of himself, and his character, from all charge or suspicion of avarice; but chiefly for the instruction of these elders, and all others of the same office, not to indulge the sin of covetousness, which is very disagreeable, and ought not to be in a minister of the word; and it may be observed, that many things which the apostle says before of himself to those elders, is said not to commend himself, nor so much in his own vindication, as for their imitation; compare with this Numb. xvi. 15. 1 Sam. xii. 3. and to point out the character of false teachers that would come in, or spring up among them, who would make merchandise of them. Beza's ancient copy, and others, read, *the silver*, &c. *of none of you;* and so the Ethiopic version.

Ver. 34. *Yea, you yourselves know*, &c.] So far was the apostle from desiring to have other men's money, or to wear their apparel, or to eat their bread, that he could appeal to these elders for the truth of it, they having been eye-witnesses of it: *that these hands have ministered unto my necessities;* meaning, that he had wrought with his hands, which he then held up, or stretched out, at tent-making, along with Aquila and Priscilla, at Ephesus, as he had done before at Corinth, ch. xviii. 2, 3, 18, 19. and therewith supplied himself with necessaries for food and clothing; for though he had a power, as a minister of the Gospel, to forbear working, and to insist upon a maintenance from the churches, yet in some cases, and in some places, he chose rather to forego that, lest he should either any ways hinder the progress of the Gospel at the first preaching of it, or be burdensome to the churches, or give the false teachers any handle against him; and he not only supported himself in this way, but assisted others also: *and to them that were with me;* as Luke, Timothy, and others; see ver. 4.

Ver. 35. *I have shewed you all things*, &c.] Both as to doctrine and practice, and had set them an example how to behave in every point, and particularly in this: *how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak;* the sense of which is, that they should labour with their hands as he did, and so support the weak; either such who were weak in body, and unable to work and help themselves, and therefore should be helped, assisted, relieved, and supported by the labours of others, that were able; or the weak in faith, and take nothing of them, lest they should think the preachers of the word sought only their own worldly advantage, and so they should be stumbled and fall from the truth: *and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus;* which the apostle had either collected as the sense of some passages of his, such as Luke vi. 30, 35, 38. and xiv. 13, 14. Matt. xxv. 34, 35, *&c.* or which though not recorded in any of the Gospels, the apostle might have received from one or other of the twelve disciples, as what were frequently used by Christ in the days of his flesh; and which the apostle had inculcated among the Ephesians, and now puts them in mind of them, they being worthy of remembrance: *how he said, it is more blessed to give than to receive;* it is more comfortable, honourable, pleasant, and profitable: the giver is in a more comfortable situation, having an abundance, at least a sufficiency, and something to spare; whereas the receiver is often in want and distress, and so uncomfortable: it is an honour to give; an honour is reflected upon the giver, both by the receiver, and others; when to receive is an instance of meanness, and carries in it, among men, some degree of dishonour: it is a pleasure to a liberal man to distribute to the necessities of others; and it cannot be grateful to a man to be in such circumstances, as make it necessary for him to receive from others, and be dependent on them; and great are the advantages and profit which a cheerful giver reaps, both in this world, and that to come: wherefore the conclusion which the apostle would have drawn from hence is, that it is much more eligible for a man to work with his own hands, and support himself, and assist others, than to receive at the hands of others.

Ver. 36. *And when he had thus spoken,* &c.] And finished his speech to the elders: *he kneeled down;* upon the floor, which was a prayer-gesture, used by Christ, and others: for, it seems, the disuse of kneeling in prayer, between the passover and pentecost, which Tertullian[k], and other writers, speak of, had not yet obtained, which was in memory of Christ's resurrection from the dead, for this was now the time: see ver. 6, 16. and *prayed with them all;* and no doubt for them all; the Syriac version renders it, *and he prayed, and all the men with him;* the apostle, and the elders, joined together in prayer.

Ver. 37. *And they all wept sore,* &c.] At the thoughts of parting with such a faithful and affectionate friend and servant of Christ; and no doubt but their affections were greatly moved by his prayers for them, as well as by his discourse to them. Christians are not Stoics, religion does not take away and destroy the natural affections, but regulates and governs them, and directs to a right use of them: *and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him;* as Esau fell on Jacob's neck and kissed him, Gen. xxxiii. 4. and Joseph on his brother Benjamin's, and his father Jacob's, Gen. xlv. 14. and xlvi. 29. And it was usual with the eastern nations, particularly the Persians[l], for friends and relations to kiss at parting, as well as at meeting; see Ruth i. 9, 14.

Ver. 38. *Sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake,* &c.] In ver. 25. it filled them with sorrow to part with him; but this was increased, and made almost intolerable by what he said, *that they should see his face no more:* could they have hoped to have seen him again, it would have made their parting with him more easy; but to be told they should never see him more in this world, it cut them to the heart; which shews what a share the apostle had in their hearts and affections, and not without good reason: however, that they might have a sight of him as long as they could, they went along with him to see him take shipping, and to see the last of him. *And they accompanied him unto the ship;* which lay at Miletus waiting for him.

C H A P. XXI.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to pass, that after we had gotten from them,* &c.] Which was with great difficulty, with many tears, and much wringing of hands: the word signifies that they were *plucked from* them; they clung about them, as husband and wife, and parents and children do; so strong were their affections; and their parting was like the parting of such near relations, or like the plucking of the flesh from the bones, or the drawing and separating one member from another; such is the cement of true Christian love: *and had launched;* the vessel into the sea, from the port at Miletus: *we came with a straight course unto Coos;* an island in the Ægean sea. Pomponius Mela[m] calls it Cos in Caria; and so Pausanias[n] reckons it a city of the Carians and Lycians, mentioning it along with Rhodes. It was famous for being the birth-place of Apelles the painter, and Hippocrates the physician. Pliny[o] places it in Caria, and calls it most noble, and says that it was fifteen miles distant from Halicarnassus, was a hundred miles in circumference, as many think, and was called Merope: and who elsewhere observes[p], that it is reported that the silk-worms are bred in this island, and that a sort of raiment called *bombycine* was first made here by Pamphila, the daughter of Latoius. And so Solinus[q], from Varro, testifies, that this island first gave a fine sort of clothing for the ornament of women: hence because silks or bombycines, from the silk-worms, were first wove here by women, some think the island had its name, for מקוה, which signifies something spun, in 1 Kings x. 28. 2 Chron. i. 16. it is by us translated *linen yarn;* but the Vulgate Latin version renders it, *from Coa.* This island was taken by Hercules, and Eurypylus, the king of it, was slain by him[r]. It is now in the hands of the Turks, by whom it is called Stancora; but by others Lango. When, and by whom the Gospel was first preached here, is not certain; it does not appear that the Apostle Paul staid to preach it now: however, in the beginning of the *fourth* century there was a church here, and a bishop of it was present at the council of Nice; and in the *fifth* century, a bishop of the church here assisted in the council of Chalcedon; and in the *sixth* century, a bishop of the same place was in the fifth synod at Constantinople[s]. Hither Paul and his company came with a good wind, a prosperous gale, and nothing to hinder them; which perhaps is rather meant than a straight or direct line, in which they ran from Miletus to this place: *and the day following unto Rhodes:* this is an island in Lycia, according to Mela[t], and had in it these three cities, Lindos, Camitos, and Jalysos: it is said of it[u], that the heavens are never so cloudy, but the sun is seen here in one part of the day, or another. R. Benjamin[w] makes this to be three days' sail from Samos; and says, he found four hundred Jews in it, and almost three hundred at Samos. It is asserted by several writers[x], that this island was once covered with the sea, and in process of time appeared out of it, and became dry land. The account which Pliny[y] gives of it is, that "it is most "beautiful and free, and was in circumference a "hundred and thirty miles; or, if Isidorus is rather "to be credited, a hundred and three: the cities in it

[k] De Corona Militis, c. 3.
[l] Xenophon. Cyropædia, l. 1. c. 20.
[m] L. 2. c. 14.
[n] Arcadica, sive l. 8. p. 526.
[o] Nat. Hist. l. 5. c. 31.
[p] Ib. l. 11. c. 22, 23.
[q] Polyhistor. c. 19.
[r] Apollodorus de Orig. Deorum, l. 2. p. 112.

[s] Magdeburg. Hist. Eccles. cent. 4. c. 2. p. 5. cent. 5. c. 2. p. 6. cent. 6. c. 2. p. 6.
[t] De Situ Orbis, l. 2. c. 14.
[u] Plin. l. 2. c. 62. Solin. c. 21.
[w] Itinerar. p. 30.
[x] Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 2. c. 87. Heraclides de Politiis, p. 456. Philo, quod mundus sit incorr. p. 959, 960.
[y] Nat. Hist. l. 5. c. 31.

"were Lindus, Camirus, Jalysus, now Rhodes: it is "distant from Alexandria in Egypt five hundred se- "venty-eight miles, as Isidorus reports; but according "to Eratosthenes, four hundred sixty-nine; and ac- "cording to Mutianus, five hundred; and from Cyprus "it was a hundred and sixty-six;" a place after-mentioned, which the apostle left on the left hand, having sailed from Petara to Phœnicia. The same writer proceeds and adds, "it was before called Ophiusa, "Asteria, Æthrea, Trinacria, Cotymbia, Pœcessa, Ata- "byria, from the king of it, afterwards Macria and "Oloessa." Jerom[z] says of it, that "it is the most "noble of the islands Cyclades, and the first from the "east, formerly called Ophiussa; in which was a city "of the same name, famous for the brazen colossus, "which was seventy cubits high: it was distant from "the port of Asia twenty miles." This statue, called the colossus of the sun, was one of the seven wonders of the world, according to Pliny[a], and was made by Chares, a disciple of Lysippus, at the expense of King Demetrius: it was twelve years in making, and cost three hundred talents: it was seventy cubits high (as Jerom before says): it fell by an earthquake, after it had stood fifty or sixty years (some say 1360); and as it lay along it was a miracle, few men with their arms stretched out could embrace the thumb, and the fingers were bigger than most statues: and from this statue the Rhodians have been sometimes called Colossians; and some have fancied, that these are the persons the Apostle Paul wrote his epistle to under that name. This island, and the city in it, were called Rhodes, as some think, from roses, with which it might abound, or because of the beautifulness of the place; and others, that it had its name from ירוד, *Jarod*, which, in the Chaldee and Syriac languages, signifies a serpent; and so it was called Ophiusa from the multitude of serpents in it[b]; though others say it took its name from Rhodia, a fair and beautiful maid beloved by Apollo. This island, in the *seventh* century, about the year 653, was taken by Mauvia, king of the Saracens, who sold the colossus, which lay on the ground ever since the earthquake, to a merchant, who is said to load nine hundred camels with the brass of it: it afterwards came into the hands of the Christians, and in the year 1522 was taken by Solyman the Turk, after a siege of six months, being betrayed by Andreas Meralius, a Portuguese knight[c]. When the Gospel was first preached here, and a church-state formed, cannot be said; but in the beginning of the *fourth* century there was a bishop of this place in the council of Nice; and in the *fifth* century there was a church here, and it was a metropolitan; and in the *sixth* century a bishop of this place was in the fifth Roman synod under Symmachus; and in the *seventh* century a bishop of Rhodes assisted in the sixth council at Constantinople; and in the same century it was taken by the Saracenes, as before observed, when the church here was the metropolitan of the Cyclades; and yet in the *eighth* century, Leo, bishop of this place, was in the Nicene synod; and even though in the *ninth* century it was grievously harassed by the Saracens, yet its church-state was not quite destroyed[d]. *And from thence to Patara*: Beza's ancient copy adds, *and Myra*: see ch. xxvii. 5. a city of Lycia: hence it is called by Herodotus[e], and Pliny[f], Patara of Lycia, and mentioned with Rhodes: it was famous for the temple of Apollo, which was in it, in which answers were given six months in the year, and were on equal credit with the oracle at Delphos[g]; the Arabic version here calls it Sparta. According to Pliny[h] it was first called Sataros. Some say it had its name Patara from Patarus, the son of Apollo; Ptolomy Philadelphus, king of Egypt, having enlarged it, called it after his sister's name, Arsinoe. How long the apostle staid in this place is not known, nor whether he preached here, nor if he did, what success he had: in the *second* century, the statues of Jupiter and Apollo were in this place: in the *fourth* century, there was a church here, and a bishop of it: and in the *sixth* century, a bishop of the church at Patara was in the fifth synod at Rome and Constantinople: and in the *eighth* century, Anastasius, bishop of this place, was in the Nicene synod[i].

Ver. 2. *And finding a ship sailing over unto Phœnicia, &c.*] For it seems that the ship they went aboard at Assos, ch. xx. 13. went no further, at least in the way the apostle was going, than Patara; but lighting on another ship, which was bound for Phœnicia, for the city of Tyre, which bordered on the land of Israel, and indeed originally belonged to Canaan; see ch. xi. 19. *we went aboard*: the said ship: *and set forth*; on the voyage.

Ver. 3. *Now when we had discovered Cyprus, &c.*] An island, as the Syriac version here calls it, which lay between Syria and Cilicia: see the note on ch. iv. 36. and was, according to R. Benjamin[k], four days' sail from Rhodes, before mentioned: *we left it on the left hand, and sailed into Syria*; that part of it called Phœnicia: *and landed at Tyre*; the chief city of Phœnicia, famous for navigation and commerce: it stood about four furlongs distant from the shore, and was joined to the continent by Alexander the great[l]. The account Jerom[m] gives of it is this, "Tyre, the metro- "polis of Phœnicia, in the tribe of Nephthalim, is "near twenty miles from Cæsarea Philippi: this was "formerly an island, but made continent-land by "Alexander:—its chief excellency lies in shell-fish "and purple." It was a very ancient city, though it seems not so ancient as Sidon, from whence it was distant about two hundred furlongs. Herodotus[n] says,

[z] De locis Hebraicis, fol. 96. G.
[a] Nat. Hist. l. 34. c. 7.
[b] Heraclides de Politiis, p. 456. ad Calcem Ælian. Var. Hist. Vid. Hilleri Onomasticum Sacrum, p. 918.
[c] Petav. Rationar. Temp. par. 1. l. 4. c. 5. p. 153. & l. 9. c. 11. p. 500.
[d] Magdeburg. Hist. Eccles. cent. 4. c. 2. p. 5. cent. 5. c. 2. p. 6. c. 7. p. 453. cent. 6. c. 2. p. 6. cent. 7. c. 2. p. 4. c. 3. p. 20. c. 7. p. 118. c. 15. p. 369. cent. 8. c. 2. p. 6. cent. 9. c. 2. p. 4. c. 3. p. 13.
[e] Clio, l. 1. c. 182.

[f] L. 2. c. 108. & l. 6. c. 34.
[g] Pausan. l. 9. p. 607. Mela, l. 1. c. 15. Alex. ab Alex. l. 6. c. 2.
[h] Nat. Hist. l. 5. c. 27.
[i] Madgeburg. Hist. Eccles. cent. 2. c. 15. p. 192. cent. 4. c. 2. p. 3. cent. 6. c. 2. p. 4. cent. 8. c. 2. p. 4.
[k] Itinerar. p. 30.
[l] Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 5. c. 19. Mela, l. 1. c. 12.
[m] De locis Hebraicis, fol. 96. K.
[n] Euterpe, l. 2. c. 44.

that in his time it had been inhabited two thousand three hundred years; Hiram was king of it in Solomon's time; yea, mention is made of it in Joshua's time, if the text in Josh. xix. 29. is rightly translated: some say it was built seventy-six years before the destruction of Troy. It is to be distinguished into old Tyre, which was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, and the island of Tyre, which was conquered by Alexander, and new Tyre annexed by him to the continent. In the Hebrew language it is called צור, *Tzur*, or Tzor, which signifies a *rock*, being built on one; though some think it has its name from צחור, *Tzchor*, which signifies *brightness*; it is now called Sur or Suri, and is quite desolate, being only a receptacle of thieves and robbers: though R. Benjamin says, in his time, new Tyre was a very good city, and had a port within it, into which ships go between two towers; and that there were in it four hundred Jews, and some of them skilful in the Talmud;—who further observes, that if any one ascended the walls of new Tyre, he might see Tyre the crowning city, Isa. xxiii. 8. which was a stone's cast from the new; but if a man would go in a boat on the sea, he might see towers, streets, and palaces in the bottom[p]: *for there the ship was to unlade her burden*; which she had taken in, in the ports where she had been, but where is not certain; for that she had been at Ephesus, and took in her lading there, as Grotius thinks, does not appear; since this was not the ship the apostle and his company sailed in from Miletus, but which they went aboard at Patara, ver. 1, 2.

Ver. 4. *And finding disciples*, &c.] At Tyre, for the Gospel had been preached in Phœnicia by the ministers of the word, who were scattered by the persecution raised at the death of Stephen; and here were brethren, such as had believed in Christ, embraced and professed his Gospel, and were baptized in his name; see ch. xi. 19. and xv. 3. and who also had extraordinary gifts, as appears by what follows; and there was no doubt a Gospel church founded in this place, though who presided over it in the *first* century, we have no account; in the *second* century there was a church here, and Cassius was bishop of it[q]; in the *third* century there were some martyrs in this place, who suffered under Dioclesian, and bore innumerable stripes with great courage and constancy, and after that fought with beasts, as bears, leopards, boars, and bulls, and at the same time Tyrannio, bishop of this church, also suffered martyrdom[r]; in the *fourth* century there was a synod at Tyre under Constantine, to which he wrote a letter[s]. There was a bishop of this church present at the council of Nice, in the times of the said emperor; in this age Paulinus and Dorotheus were bishops of Tyre; in the *fifth* century Irenæus was bishop of Tyre, and then it was the metropolitan of Phœnicia; and in the *sixth* century, there was a bishop of the same church present at the fifth council of Rome and Constantinople[t]. Of the bishops of Tyre in the several centuries, the learned Reland[u] gives a more particular account; according to him, Cassius, bishop of this church, was in the synod held at Cæsarea, about the year 198. Paulinus, another bishop of Tyre, was in another council held at the same place, in the year 318. Zeno subscribed in the council of Nice, in the year 325, the first among the bishops of Phœnicia; Vitalis was in the council at Sardica, in the year 347. Uranius subscribed in the council held at Seleucia by the Semiarians, in the year 359; another Zeno bishop of this church was present at the second council at Constantinople, in the year 381; and mention is made of Photius bishop of Tyre, in the acts of the Chalcedon council, held in the year 451, as is also Eusebius in the acts of the council at Constantinople, in the year 553: *we tarried there seven days*; either waiting for a ship to proceed on further; or in choice, to enjoy the conversation of the disciples, which was very delightful, and to confirm them in the faith: *who said to Paul through the spirit, that he should not go up to Jerusalem*; not that the spirit of God in these persons contradicted his own impulse in the apostle, by which he was moved to go to Jerusalem, ch. xx. 22. The sense is, that these disciples, by the spirit of prophecy, knew that if the apostle went to Jerusalem, many evil things would befall him; wherefore of their own spirit, and out of love to him, they advise him not to go.

Ver. 5. *And when we had accomplished those days*, &c.] The seven days before mentioned: *we departed and went our way*; from their quarters where they lodged, or from some one house of the disciples, where they met, and had conversed together: *and they all brought us on our way, with wives and children, till we were out of the city*; that is, the disciples, even all of them that dwelt in that city, with their whole families, their wives and children, accompanied the apostle and those that were with him, through the streets of the city of Tyre, till they came out of it to the shore, where lay the ship they were to go aboard; and which was a mark of their affection and respect to the apostle, as well as a token of their public spirit, that they were not ashamed of Christ and his ministers, nor of their profession of the Gospel: *and we kneeled down on the shore and prayed*; which was agreeably to the custom of the Jews, who had, as Tertullian observes[w], their *orationes littorales*, their prayers at the sea-shore; see the note on ch. xvi. 13.

Ver. 6. *And when we had taken our leave one of another*, &c.] The Alexandrian copy reads, *having prayed, we saluted one another*; with a kiss, as in ch. xx. 37. and so parted: *we took ship*; or went aboard the ship, *and they returned home again*; to their own houses, as the Syriac version renders it; for by *their own*, as it is in the Greek text, cannot be meant their families, their wives, and children, for these were along with them, but their habitations; see John xvi. 32. and xix. 27.

Ver. 7. *And when we had finished our course from Tyre*, &c.] Or sailed from thence, *we came to Ptolemais*; the Syriac version calls it *Aco or Acu*; and the Arabic version, *Aco*; and Ptolemais, according to

[p] Itinerar. p. 35, 36.
[q] Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. 5. c. 25.
[r] Ib. l. 8. c. 7, 13.
[s] Ib. de Vita Constantin. l. 4. c. 41, 42.
[t] Magdeburg. Hist. Eccl. cent. 4. c. 2. p. 2. c. 10. p. 553, 554. cent. 5. c. 2. p. 3. c. 7. p. 417. cent. 6. c. 2. p. 3.
[u] Palestina Illustrata, l. 3. p. 1054, 1055.
[w] Ad nationes, l. 1. c. 13.

Pliny[x] and Harpocratian[y], was called Ace. Frequent mention is made of Aco in the Jewish writings, and which according to them was a sea-port, for they speak of נמלה דעכו, *the port of Aco*[z], and of כיפי דעכו, *the banks of Aco*[a], or its rocks: it was upon the borders of the land of Israel, and in the tribe of Asher to the north of it; part of it they say was without the land, and part of it within[b]: according to R. Benjamin, it was one day's sail from Tyre, and who also says, it was upon the borders of Asher, and had a very spacious port[c]; it is said to be about two-and-thirty miles from Tyre; between that and Tyre, the shore was full of heaps of sand, from whence the sand that glass is made of was fetched; it is mentioned with Tyre, Sidon, and Galilee, in 1 Maccab. v. 15. it had the mountainous part of Galilee on the east, the ladder of Tyre on the north, and Mount Carmel on the south, and thus it is described by Josephus[d]: "Ptolemais is "a city of Galilee on the sea-coast, built in a large "champaign country, but is surrounded with moun-"tains, on the east with the mountains of Galilee, "sixty furlongs off; on the south with Carmel, dis-"tant a hundred and twenty furlongs; on the north "with a very high mountain called the Climax, or "ladder of the Tyrians, which is a hundred furlongs "from it; two miles from the city runs a very small "river called Beleus, near which is the sepulchre of "Memnon, taking up the space of an hundred cubits, "and is worthy of admiration; it is round and hollow "(*i. e.* the river), casting up glassy sand, which ships "in great numbers come and take up, and the place "is filled up again." The account Jerom[e] gives of it is, "Ptolemais, a maritime city in Judea, near Mount "Carmel, which was formerly called so from one "Ptolomy;" from Ptolomy king of Egypt: it was called Ace or Aco, from its being a city of merchandise; though some say it was so called from Hercules being healed of the bite of a serpent, by an herb which grew near the river Beleus. It is now called St. John de Acra or Acri: *and saluted the brethren;* that were at Ptolemais or Aco; for the Gospel had been preached here with success; some had believed and professed it, and very likely were in a church-state: for there was a church here in the *second* century, and Clarus was bishop of it; and in the beginning of the *fourth* century, there was a bishop present in the synod at Nice; and in the *fifth century* there was a church here; in the time of Arcadius, the Emperor Antiochus was bishop of Ptolemais, a very eloquent man, called therefore by some Chrysostom; in the *sixth* century there was a bishop of this church, who assisted at the synod held both at Rome and Constantinople[f]. The bishops of this church are reckoned up, as Reland[g] says, as he found them thus; Clarus, who was in the council at Cesarea, held in the year 198; Æneas, who was in the council at Nice, in the year 325, and in another at Antioch, in the year 341; Nectabus, who subscribed in the first council at Constantinople, held in the year 381; Paulus, who was present in the Chalcedon council in the year 451: and Joannes, who was in the council at Jerusalem, in the year 536: and perhaps these brethren might be Jews, since those who first preached the Gospel in Phœnicia preached only to Jews; and certain it is that there were many in this place; we often read of Jewish doctors here, as R. Tanchum the son of R. Chaja a man of Caphar Aco[h], and R. Simeon ben Judah a man of Caphar Aco[i], and R. Aba of Aco[k], and R. Judah ben Gamdah[l]; and in R. Benjamin's time, there were about two hundred Jews in this place[m]: these brethren Paul and his company visited, and saluted them; *and abode with them one day:* conferring together about spiritual things, and employing their time, no doubt, in religious exercises.

Ver. 8. *And the next* day *we that were of Paul's company departed,* &c.] From Ptolemais, as Sopater, Aristarchus, Secundus, Timotheus, Tychicus, Trophimus, and Luke, the writer of this history: see ch. xx. 4. *and came unto Cæsarea;* not Cæsarea Philippi, mentioned in Matt. xvi. 13. but that Cæsarea which was formerly called Strato's tower, and was a very good sea-port; see ch. viii. 40. and ix. 30. and x. 1. and xviii. 22. *and we entered into the house of Philip the evangelist;* not a writer of a Gospel, but a preacher of the Gospel, and perhaps not an ordinary one, but was one of those spoken of in Ephes. iv. 11. which was an office inferior to an apostle, and yet above an ordinary pastor and teacher; this man, very likely, was the same that taught in Samaria, and baptized the eunuch, and who after that settled at Cæsarea; see ch. viii. 40. *which was* one *of the seven;* of the seven deacons of the church at Jerusalem, ch. vi. 5. *and abode with him;* so long as they continued at Cæsarea.

Ver. 9. *And the same man had four daughters,* &c.] So that he was a married man, which may be observed against the Papists, who forbid marriage to ecclesiastics: and they were, *virgins;* not under any vow of virginity, but they had not as yet changed their state of life, and were pure and incorrupt: *which did prophesy;* not explain and interpret Scripture, or preach in public assemblies; for these were not allowed women, neither in the Jewish synagogues, nor in Christian assemblies; but they were endowed with a gift of foretelling future events, as was promised such should have in Gospel times, Joel ii. 28.

Ver. 10. *And as we tarried* there *many days,* &c.] How many days is not said, it could not be very many, if the apostle got to Jerusalem by Pentecost, as he desired, ch. xx. 6, 15, 16. and xxi. 4, 7. *there came down from Judea a certain prophet named Agabus:* of whom mention is made in ch. xi. 28. who is there said to come from Jerusalem, to Antioch, and here from

[x] L. 5. c. 19.
[y] Lexic. Decem Orator. p. 12.
[z] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 38. 1.
[a] T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 112. 1.
[b] T. Hieros. Gittin, fol. 43. 3. Sheviith, fol. 35. 3. & Challa, fol. 60. 2. & Juchasin, fol. 71. 1. Misna Gittin, c. 1. sect. 2.
[c] Itinerar. p. 36.
[d] De Bello Jud. l. 2. c. 10. sect. 2.
[e] De locis Hebraicis, fol. 96. G.

[f] Magdeburg. Hist. Eccles. cent. 4. c. 2. p. 2. cent. 5. c. 2. p. 2. c. 10. p. 550. cent. 6. c. 2. p. 3.
[g] Palestina Illustrata, l. 3. p. 542.
[h] T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 7. 2. & Moed. Katon, fol. 16. 2. Yebamot, fol. 45. 1.
[i] Juchasin, fol. 68. 2. & T. Bab. Sota, fol. 37. 2.
[k] T. Bab. Sota, fol. 40. 1. Juchasin, fol. 71. 1.
[l] T. Bab. Sota, fol. 43. 2.
[m] Itinerar. p. 36.

Judea to Cæsarea; he had been many years going about from place to place prophesying, for between that and this account must be a space of about sixteen or seventeen years.

Ver. 11. *And when he was come unto us,* &c.] In Philip's house: *he took Paul's girdle and bound his own hands and feet;* and so prophesied by types and symbols, and gestures, as the prophets of old did; as Isaiah in ch. xx. 2, 3. and Jeremiah in ch. xiii. 1—9, and xxvii. 2, 3. and Ezekiel in ch. iv. 1—13. and xii. 3, 7. and Hosea in ch. i. 2, 3. some understand this of his binding Paul's hands and feet, but it seems rather to design his own: *and said, thus saith the Holy Ghost;* who was in Agabus, and spoke by him, and foretold some things to come to pass; and which did come to pass, and is a proof of the fore-knowledge, and so of the deity of the blessed Spirit: *so shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owns this girdle;* meaning Paul, and who accordingly was bound in like manner, a very little time after this; see ver. 33. *and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles;* the Romans, as they afterwards did.

Ver. 12. *And when we heard these things,* &c.] These prophecies, concerning the binding of the apostle by the Jews, and the delivery of him to the Romans, and saw the symbolical representations of these things: *both we;* the companions of the apostle, Luke and the rest: *and they of that place;* of Cæsarea, Philip and his daughters, and the disciples that lived there: *besought him not to go up to Jerusalem;* which was an instance of weakness in them, though an expression of their affection to the apostle; in the disciples of Cæsarea it might arise from pure love to him, and a concern for his safety, and the continuance of his useful life; and in his companions it might be owing partly to their sincere love to him, and partly to the fear of danger which they themselves might conclude they should be exposed to; and this request was made with tears, as is evident from what follows.

Ver. 13. *Then Paul answered, what mean ye to weep,* &c.] For they were crying about him, both his companions and the disciples of Cæsarea; which affected him, and gave him great uneasiness, even more than the prophecies of Agabus did: *and to break my heart?* for though he was resolved to go to Jerusalem, and nothing could move him from it, his heart was firm as a rock; there was no shaking him, or making impressions upon him that way; yet their tears and importunity greatly afflicted him, and the more because he could by no means comply with their request: *for I am ready not to be bound only, but to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus;* for as yet, he knew not but he should die there; it was revealed to him that he should be bound there, but it was not yet suggested to him where he should suffer death, whether there or elsewhere; and since he knew not but it might be there, he was ready for it; bonds were so far from distressing his mind, and deterring him from his intended journey, that death itself could not do it; which shewed great intrepidity, courage, and firmness of mind.

Ver. 14. *And when he would not be persuaded,* &c.] But was determined to go to Jerusalem at all events: *we ceased;* both from tears and arguments: *saying, the will of the Lord be done;* which was right, and to which they ought to have submitted, and acquiesced in at first, without using any arguments to have dissuaded the apostle from going to Jerusalem; since they might have concluded from Agabus's prophecy, that it was the will of the Lord he should go thither, and be bound; and the revelation was made to him, not to deter him from it, and to take methods for his own safety, which his friends would have put him upon, but to acquaint him with the will of God, and make him still more certain of it, and to prepare for it, and this effect it had upon him. This will of the Lord, is not the will of the Lord revealed in his word, either respecting the salvation, sanctification, and final perseverance of the saints, which is always accomplished; *for who hath resisted his will,* or can resist it, so as to frustrate his designs, or hinder these things taking place? or the duty which is to be performed by them, the good, perfect, and acceptable will of God, which every gracious soul desires may be perfectly done, even as it is done in heaven: but here the secret will of God relating to the events of providence is designed, and which is the rule of all the divine proceedings; and though it is unknown to men, until facts make it appear, it is ever fulfilled, and sometimes by persons who have no regard to the revealed will of God; and should be continually thought of; and every thing that is determined, or attempted to be done, should be resolved upon, and undertaken in submission to it; and whilst it is performing should be patiently bore, even in things not so agreeable to the minds and wills of men: it becomes saints to be still and acquiesce in it, when things are not so well with them in spiritual affairs as to be wished for; and when their worldly circumstances are not so thriving and flourishing; yea, though they may be attended with much poverty and meanness, and be reduced to so low a condition as Job was; as also when they part with their near and dear friends and relations by death, and with the ministers of the Gospel, who have been their spiritual fathers, instructors, and comforters; and even when they are called to suffer in the severest manner, for the sake of Christ and his Gospel; not that they are to be indolent, unconcerned, and unaffected, with things of this nature; nor should they neglect the means of having things otherwise with them; but it becomes them to exercise patience, faith, and courage, under every dispensation of providence; as knowing that what is done by the Lord is done well and wisely, and is for the good of them; and when the people of God are helped to act such a part, they are the most comfortable in themselves, and to all that are about them; such a spirit and disposition is very commendable, and what makes men like to Christ, who in the most disagreeable circumstances submitted his will to his father's. Beza's ancient copy reads, *the will of God;* and so the Arabic and Ethiopic versions.

Ver. 15. *And after those days we took up our carriages,* &c.] Or prepared themselves, both for their journey, and for whatever trials and exercises they were to meet with; they took up their bundles, which hitherto were brought by sea, and now put them upon beasts, going by land from Cæsarea: *and went up to Jerusalem;* which stood on higher ground, and was, as Jo-

sephus[a] says, six hundred furlongs, or seventy-five miles distant.

Ver. 16. *There went with us also* certain *of the disciples of Cæsarea*, &c.] Members of the church at Cæsarea; of the church here, see the note on ch. x. 48. To which may be added the account of the pastors or bishops of this church, as given by Reland[b]; Theophilus, who was in the council held at Cæsarea, in the year 198; Agricola, who subscribed in the council at Ancyra, in the year 314; though some, he says, do not acknowledge this Agricola, but give the order of them after Theophilus thus; Theoctistus, Domnus, Theotecnus, Agapius, Eusebius; which last was in the council at Palestine, in the year 318, and in the council at Nice, in the year 325. Acacius succeeded him, and was in a little council at Seleucia, in the year 359, and in another at Antioch, in the year 363. Thalassius subscribed in the council at Constantinople, in the year 381. Eulogius, or perhaps Euzoius, was in the council at Diospolis, in the year 415. Glyco, bishop of this church, subscribed by Zozimus in the Chalcedon council, held in the year 451. Mention is made of Irenæus, who presided over it in the acts of the same council; and Elias, another bishop of it, subscribed in the council at Jerusalem, in the year 536; and there is an account of John bishop of this church, in the acts of the council at Constantinople, in the year 553. *And brought with them one Mnason of Cyprus*; the name of Mnason is Greek; there was one of this name among the disciples of Aristotle, who was of Phocea, or Phocis, a place in Greece[c]; and another called Mnaseon, which seems to be the same whom Ammonius[d] makes mention of; and we frequently read of Mnaseas, the name of an author in Greek writers, and Mnestheus, in 2 Maccab. iv. 21. all which are so called from remembrance, and signify one that has a memory, is mindful of, and remembers things; so Zachariah with the Jews, is a name that is taken from remembrance, as this: some copies read Jasson, for Mnason. This Mnason was an *old disciple*; not of Aristotle, or of his sect of philosophers, or any other, but of Jesus Christ; probably he might have seen Christ in the flesh, and he is by some thought to be one of the seventy disciples; or at least he might be one of those who became disciples and followers of Christ, through the ministry of Paul and Barnabas in that island, ch. xiii. 4. though that seems scarcely long enough ago, being but fifteen years before this time, to denominate him an old disciple: *with whom we should lodge*: when come to Jerusalem; for though he was of the island of Cyprus, as Barnabas was, ch. iv. 36. yet he dwelt at Jerusalem; and if he was one of the seventy disciples, it should seem that he had not sold his house at Jerusalem, when others did; nor did all that had houses and land, nor were they obliged to do it; or he might have bought or hired one since; however, he had one at Jerusalem, and here the apostle and his company were fixed to lodge, during their stay there; and there was the more reason to provide for a lodging at this time, because of the feast of Pentecost, when the city was full of people: unless this is to be understood of any place by the way, where they should lodge; since Beza's ancient copy adds, *and coming to a certain village, we were with one Mnason*.

Ver. 17. *And when we were come to Jerusalem*, &c.] That is, Paul and his companions, attended with the disciples of Cæsarea, and Mnason the old disciple with them: *the brethren received us gladly*: readily, willingly, and cheerfully; they did not treat them with an air of coldness and indifference, or look shy on them, or shew any resentment to them, notwithstanding the various reports which had been brought them, concerning the ministry of the apostle among the Gentiles.

Ver. 18. *And the day following*, &c.] After they were come into Jerusalem: *Paul went in with us to James*; not the son of Zebedee and brother of John, for he was killed by Herod some years ago; but James the son of Alpheus, and brother of our Lord, who presided over this church; it seems there were no other apostles now at Jerusalem, but they were all dispersed abroad that were living, preaching the Gospel in the several parts of the world: Paul took the first opportunity of paying a visit to James, very likely at his own house, to give him an account of his success among the Gentiles, and to know the state of the church at Jerusalem, and confer with him about what might be most proper and serviceable to promote the interest of Christ; and he took with him those who had been companions with him in his travels, partly to shew respect to James, and partly to be witnesses of what he should relate unto him: *and all the elders were present*; by whom are meant, not the ancient private members of the church, but the ministers of the word in this church: who hearing of the coming of the apostle, and of his visit to James, assembled together to see him, and converse with him.

Ver. 19. *And when he had saluted them*, &c.] James and the elders with him; which was either done by a kiss, as the Arabic version adds; or by asking of their health, and wishing a continuance of it, and all prosperity to attend them: the Ethiopic version reads, *they saluted him*: and no doubt the salutations were reciprocal: *he declared particularly what things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry*; it is very likely that this account begins where that ends, which he had delivered in the presence of James, and others, some years ago, ch. xv. 12. and takes in all his travels and ministry, and the success of it; not only in Syria, Cilicia, and Lycaonia, after he had set out from Antioch again, but in Macedonia, Achaia, and Asia; as at Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, Athens, Corinth, Ephesus, and elsewhere: he declared what multitudes of souls were converted, and what numbers of churches were planted; and this he ascribes not to himself, but to the power and grace of God, which had attended his ministry: he was only an instrument, God was the efficient, and ought to have the glory.

Ver. 20. *And when they heard it*, &c.] The narrative of the wonderful spread of the Gospel among the Gentiles, and the numerous conversions of them: *they glorified the Lord*; or *God*, as the Alexandrian copy,

[a] De Bello Jud. l. 1. c. 3. sect. 5.
[b] Palestina Illustrata, l. 3. p. 676, &c.

[c] Ælian. Var. Hist. l. 3. c. 19.
[d] Περι ομοιων in voce Nereides.

the Vulgate Latin, and Ethiopic versions read; as Paul ascribed all to God, so they give the glory of it to him, and in this they were both agreed: *and said unto him:* perhaps James in the name of them all, and as their mouth: *thou seest, brother;* for so he was to James, both as a believer, and a minister of the word, and as an apostle: *how many thousands of Jews there are which believe;* there were many thousands converted at Jerusalem upon the first preaching of the Gospel, after Christ's ascension; see ch. ii. 41, 47. and iv. 4. and v. 14. and vi. 7. and the number might be much increased since; though it may be, that reference is had not only to the number of the members of the church at Jerusalem, but to all the believing Jews in Judea, who were now come up to Jerusalem, to keep the feast of Pentecost; since it is in the Greek, *how many myriads* there are, and one myriad contains ten thousand: *and they are all zealous of the law:* of the law of Moses, of the ceremonial law, as Paul might see by their being at Jerusalem, to keep this feast; for though they believed in Jesus of Nazareth as the true Messiah, yet they had not light enough to see, that he was the sum and substance of all the ceremonies of the law, and that they all ended in him; and therefore were zealous in the observance of them, and could not bear to hear of their abrogation.

Ver. 21. *And they are informed of thee,* &c.] By persons that came from the several parts of the Gentile world, where the apostle had been preaching; and by letters which came from the Jews in those parts, who were no friends to the apostle's ministry: *that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles, to forsake Moses:* or *apostatize from Moses:* that is, the law of Moses; that he taught the Gentiles not to regard the rituals of the law of Moses gave them no uneasiness; but that he should teach the Jews that were scattered among the Gentiles, and as many of them that believed in Christ, to disregard and drop the observance of them, who had been always brought up in them, this they could not bear; and that the apostle so taught, they had credible information: particularly, *saying, that they ought not to circumcise their children:* though this does not appear; it is true the apostle taught that circumcision was abolished, and that it was nothing; yea, that to submit to it as necessary to salvation, was hurtful and pernicious; but as a thing indifferent, he allowed of it among weak brethren; and in condescension to their weakness, did administer it himself; in which he became a Jew to the Jew, that he might gain some: *neither to walk after the customs:* either of the law of Moses, meaning other rites there enjoined, besides circumcision; or of their fathers, and their country, the traditions of the elders, which as yet they had not got clear of; the disuse of old customs is not easily brought about, or it is not easy to bring persons off of them.

Ver. 22. *What is it therefore?* &c.] Is it true or no? or what must be done in this case? what method must be taken to remove these objections, and reconcile the minds of the people? *the multitude must needs come together:* either the whole church at Jerusalem, or the great confluence of people, even of believing Jews, that were come from all parts thither; there's no hindering of their coming together, to see the apostle, and to hear what he has to say to the objections against him, and complaints of him: *for they will hear that thou art come:* this can never be kept a secret, and as soon as they hear it, they'll flock in great numbers; they'll come open-mouthed, and be loud in their complaints, and it will be difficult to pacify them; there is danger in the case, the consequence may be bad; and therefore something must be done, to remove the opinion they had formed of the apostle, and the prejudice they had entertained against him; and therefore what follows is advised to.

Ver. 23. *Do therefore this that we say to thee,* &c.] This is said not as commanding, but as advising; and not to what was a duty, and necessary to be done as such, but as a point of prudence: *we have four men which have a vow on them;* that is, there were four men who were of the church at Jerusalem, believers in Christ, but weak ones, who were zealous of the law, and bigots to it, and who had voluntarily vowed a vow of the Nazarites; see Numb. vi. 2.

Ver. 24. *Them take, and purify thyself with them,* &c.] That is, join thyself to them, make one of their number, and attend to the rules prescribed to a Nazarite, who is to be holy to the Lord; and in case of any ceremonial uncleanness, is to be cleansed, or purified in the manner directed, Numb. vi. 5, 8, 9. *And be at charges with them;* join with them in the expense, for the offerings to be made at the end of the vows, or when the days of separation are fulfilled, Numb. vi. 13, 14, 15. *That they may shave their heads;* according to the law in Numb. vi. 18. This was done in לשכת הנזירים, *the chamber of the Nazarites*[r]; for there the Nazarites boiled their peace-offerings, and shaved their hair, and put it under the pot, in the fire that was under it: Maimonides says[s], "if he shaved in "the city it was excusable; but whether he shaved "in the city or in the sanctuary, under the pot his "hair must be cast; and he did not shave until the "door of the court was opened, as it is said, *at the door* "*of the tabernacle of the congregation,* Numb. vi. 18. "not that he shaved over-against the door, for that "would be a contempt of the sanctuary." Moreover, it may be observed, that a person who had not made a vow, or fulfilled a Nazariteship himself, which was the apostle's case, yet he might join in bearing the expenses of others, at the time of their shaving and cleansing: for so run the Jewish canons[t]; "he that "says, upon me be the shaving of a Nazarite, he is "bound to bring the offerings of shaving for purification, and he may offer them by the hand of what "Nazarite he pleases; he that says, upon me be half "the offerings of a Nazarite, or if he says, upon me "be half the shaving of a Nazarite, he brings half the "offerings by what Nazarite he will, and that Nazarite perfects his offerings out of that which is his." *That all may know that those things whereof they were informed concerning thee are nothing;* that there is no truth in them; that they are mere lies and calumnies;

[r] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 16. 1.
[s] Hilchot Nezirut, c. 8. sect. 3.
[t] Hilchot Nezirut, c. 8. sect. 18.

as they will easily judge by this single instance, in complying with the law concerning a Nazarite's vow: *but that thou thyself walkest orderly, and keepest the law*; and therefore can never be thought to teach others to walk disorderly, or to neglect the law, the rites and customs of it.

Ver. 25. *As touching the Gentiles which believe,* &c.] This is said, to shew that the Jews were not offended with Paul, for not insisting upon the circumcision of the believing Gentiles, and their conformity to the ceremonial law; and to remove an objection that Paul might make, that should he comply with this advice, and the believing Gentiles should hear of it, it might be a stumbling-block and a snare to them; who by his example, might think themselves obliged to regard the law: Beza's ancient copy adds, *they have nothing to say to thee; for* as it follows, *we have written and concluded*; some years ago, at a meeting of the apostles, elders, and brethren at Jerusalem, when Paul was present; and of which he reminds him, to prevent any objection of this kind; where it was unanimously agreed on and determined, *that they observe no such things*; as circumcision, and other rites and customs of the law, and particularly the vow of the Nazarite, which Gentiles are free from: hence it is said [a], "Gentiles have no Nazariteship;" upon which one of the commentators says [w], if a Gentile vows Nazariteship, the law of the Nazarite does not fall upon him, he is not obliged to it: *save only that they keep themselves from things offered to idols, &c.* see Acts xv. 19, 20, 28, 29.

Ver. 26. *Then Paul took the men,* &c.] The four men that had the vow on them; he joined himself to them, and put himself in the same condition, and under a like vow: this he did, not as what he thought himself bound to do in obedience to the law, and much less as necessary to salvation; but to satisfy weak minds, and remove their prejudices, that he might gain them, and be useful to them; and in such a case he would very easily and readily condescend; but when such like things were insisted upon as points of duty, and especially when urged as necessary to salvation, no one more stiffly opposed them: *and the next day purifying himself with them*; that is, not separating himself along with them, from what they were obliged by the vow of the Nazarite, as from drinking of wine and shaving, and from every thing that was unclean by the law; for this was now done, but cleansing himself afterwards with them: he *entered into the temple, to signify the accomplishment of the days of the purification*; the sense is, that when the days of separation were fulfilled, which the four men had vowed, as every one might vow what time he pleased, he went to the priests in the temple, to signify it to them, that the time of their purification was expiring: *until that an offering should be offered for every one of them*; as the law directs in Numb. vi. 13—20. when he proposed to pay the charges of it, or at least part of it.

Ver. 27. *And when the seven days were almost ended,* &c.] The Syriac version renders it, *when the seventh day was come*: from the time that Paul came to Jerusalem: some understand this of the seven weeks from the passover to Pentecost, and that it was when they were almost ended, and the day of Pentecost was at hand, for which Paul came up to Jerusalem; but rather, the seven days of purification of the Nazarites are meant: *the Jews which were of Asia*; and it may be chiefly of Ephesus, the metropolis of Asia; who knew Paul there, and were his implacable enemies; for this is to be understood of the unbelieving Jews, who were come up to the feast of Pentecost: *when they saw him in the temple*; where he was come to bring his offering, on account of his vow: *stirred up all the people*; against the apostle; incensed them with stories about him, how that he was an opposer of Moses and his laws, and was now defiling the temple, by bringing in Heathens into it: *and laid hands on him*; in a violent manner, and dragged him out of the temple.

Ver. 28. *Crying out, men of Israel, help,* &c.] The Arabic and Ethiopic versions read, *help us*; to hold Paul, on whom they had laid their hands, and to assist in beating him: but why such an outcry for help against a single man, and he but little of stature, and weak in body, and so easily held and overpowered? it may be they chose to engage others with them, to give the greater countenance to their actions, and for their own security and protection, should they be opposed or called to an account; *this is the man that teacheth all men everywhere against the people*; the people of the Jews, saying that they were not the only people of God; that God was the God of the Gentiles, as well as of the Jews; that God had chosen, and called, and saved some of the one, as well as of the other; that the Gentiles shared in the favour of God, and the blessings of the Messiah; that the Gospel was to be preached to them, and a people taken out of them for his glory; and that the people of the Jews would be rejected for their unbelief and impenitence, and in a little time utterly destroyed as a nation; which, and the like, these Asiatic Jews interpreted as speaking against them; whereas no man had a stronger natural affection for his countrymen, or a more eager and importunate desire for their spiritual and eternal welfare, than the apostle had; *and the law*; the law of Moses, both moral and ceremonial; for they not only were displeased with him for asserting the abrogation of the latter, but traduced him as an enemy to the former; representing him as an Antinomian, because he denied justification to be by the works of the law, and asserted Christ to be the end of the law for righteousness; whereas he was so far from making void the law hereby, that he established it, and secured the rights and honours of it; yea, they went further, and represented him as a libertine, saying, let us do evil that good may come; but this was all calumny: *and this place*; meaning the temple, in which they then were; the Alexandrian copy reads, *this holy place*; as it is expressed in a following clause; the reason of this charge was, because that he had taught, that the sacrifices of God were the sacrifices of prayer and of praise, and that these were to be offered up in every place; and that divine service and religious worship

[a] Misna Nazir, c. 9. sect. 1.

[w] Bartenora in Misn. Nazir, c. 9. sect. 1.

were not tied to the temple at Jerusalem, but that, agreeably to the doctrine of Christ, men might worship the father anywhere, and lift up holy hands in every place; and perhaps he might have asserted, that the temple of Jerusalem would be destroyed in a short time, as Christ had predicted: *and further, brought Greeks also unto the temple, and hath polluted this holy place;* that part of the temple, which they supposed Paul had brought Greeks or Gentiles into, could not be the most holy place, for into that only the high-priest went once a year; nor that part of the holy place called the court of the priests, for into that only priests went, and other Israelites were not admitted, unless on some particular occasions; as to lay hands on the sacrifice, for the slaying of it, or waving some part of it[x]; but it must be either the court of the Israelites, or the court of the women, into which Paul, with the four men that had the vow, entered; and as Dr. Lightfoot thinks, it was the latter; for in the south-east of this court was the Nazarite's chamber, in which they boiled their peace-offerings, shaved their heads, and put the hair under the pot[y]: now though Gentiles might come into the mountain of the house, which was all the outmost circumambient space within the wall, which encompassed the whole area, yet they might not come into any of these courts, no, nor even into what they call the *Chel:* for they say, that the Chel is more holy than the mountain of the house, because no Gentile, or one defiled with the dead, enters there[z]; now the Chel was an enclosure before these courts, and at the entrance into it pillars were erected, and upon them were inscriptions in Greek and Latin, signifying that no strangers should enter into the holy place[a].

Ver. 29. *For they had seen before with him in the city,* &c.] Not of Ephesus, but of Jerusalem: *Trophimus an Ephesian;* the same that is mentioned in ch. xx. 4. whom these Jews of Asia, and who very probably were inhabitants of Ephesus, knew very well to be a Gentile: *whom they supposed Paul had brought into the temple;* for seeing him walk with the apostle very familiarly through the streets of Jerusalem, they concluded from thence, that he took him with him into the temple, which was a very rash and ill-grounded conclusion; and which shews the malignity and virulence of their minds, and how ready they were to make use of any opportunity, and take up any occasion against him, even a bare surmise, and which had no shew of probability in it; for it can never be thought, that while Paul was using methods to remove the prejudices of the Jews against him, he should take such a step as this, to introduce a Gentile into the holy place, which he knew was unlawful, and would greatly irritate and provoke them.

Ver. 30. *And all the city was moved, and the people ran together,* &c.] The outcry in the temple reached the ears of some that were without, and these alarmed others; so that the report of a disturbance in the temple soon went through the whole city, and brought people out of their houses, who ran together in great numbers, to see what was the matter: *and they took Paul and drew him out of the temple;* as unworthy to be in that holy place; and that it might not be defiled with his blood; for their intention was nothing less than to take away his life: *and forthwith the doors were shut;* not of themselves, as if there was something miraculous in it, as some have thought, but by the door-keepers, the Levites; and which might be done, partly to prevent Paul's returning into it for refuge at the horns of the altar, and partly to keep out the Gentiles from coming in, they were alarmed with.

Ver. 31. *And as they went about to kill him,* &c.] In the manner as zealots did, without bringing him before any court of judicature, without any charge, trial, and condemnation: *tidings came unto the chief captain of the band;* the Roman band of soldiers, who were placed near the temple, to keep the peace of the city, and persons in order; and who were more especially needful, at such a time as the feast of Pentecost, when there was such a great concourse of people in the city, and indeed always were in arms at such times[b]: this chief captain was Claudius Lysias, as appears from ch. xxiii. 26. to him the report of the disturbance was brought; or as it is in the Greek text, the *fame ascended* to him; who very likely might be in the tower of Antonia, which joined to the temple: *that all Jerusalem was in an uproar;* or in confusion, and therefore it became him, as a Roman officer, to take care to quell it, lest it should issue in sedition and rebellion.

Ver. 32. *Who immediately took soldiers and centurions,* &c.] A very large number of soldiers, for they are called an army, in ch. xxiii. 27. with a sufficient number of officers called centurions, who were each of them over an hundred men, to command them, and put them in order: *and ran down unto them;* from the tower to the temple, the outer part of it; perhaps the mountain of the house, where they had dragged Paul, and were beating him; hither the captain, with his officers and soldiers, came in great haste; all which shews his vigilance, prudence, and quick dispatch; and in which there was a remarkable appearance of divine providence in favour of the apostle, who otherwise in all likelihood would have quickly lost his life: *and when they saw the chief captain and the soldiers;* coming down upon them in great haste, with sword in hand: *they left beating of Paul;* this beating was what the Jews call מכות מרדות, *the rebels' beating;* or beating, on account of rebellion and obstinacy; and differed from whipping or scourging, which was done by the order of the sanhedrim, and in measure with forty stripes save one; but this beating was without any order from a court of judicature, and was without measure and mercy: this was inflicted upon various offenders, particularly on such who received not admonitions given them, or transgressed by doing what was forbidden by the words of the wise men[c]; or if any defiled person entered into the court of the women; and such the people would fall upon at once, and beat them unmercifully with their fists, or with clubs and staves, and which often issued in death; so, for instance, when a priest ministered in his uncleanness, his brethren the priests did not bring him to the sanhe-

[x] Misn. Celim, c. 1. sect. 8.
[y] Misn. Middot, c. 2. sect. 5.
[z] Misn. Celim, ib.

[a] Joseph. Antiqu. l. 15. c. 14. sect. 5.
[b] Joseph. de Bello Jud. l. 2. c. 12. sect. 1. & l. 5. c. 5. sect. 8.
[c] Maimon. Hilchot Sanhedrin, c. 18. sect. 5.

drim, but the young priests brought him without the court, and dashed his brains out with clubs [d].

Ver. 33. *Then the chief captain came near*, &c.] To the place where the Jews were beating Paul: *and took him;* the Arabic version adds, *from them:* he rescued him out of their hands, as he himself says, ch. xxiii. 27. *And commanded him to be bound with two chains:* partly to appease the people, and partly to secure Paul; who, he supposed, had been guilty of some misdemeanor, which had occasioned this tumult; these two chains were put, one on one arm, and the other on the other arm; and were fastened to two soldiers, who walked by him, having hold on those chains, the one on his right hand, and the other on his left; and thus Agabus's prophecy in ver. 11 was fulfilled: *and demanded who he was;* or asked and inquired about him, who he was, of what nation he was, what was his character, business, and employment: this inquiry was made, either of the apostle himself, or of the people; and so the Arabic version renders it, *he inquired of them who he was;* also *and what he had done;* what crime he had been guilty of, that they used him in such a manner.

Ver. 34. *And some cried one thing, and some another, among the multitude*, &c.] For though they agreed to beat him, and even to kill him, yet some of them knew not for what; being led by a blind zeal for Moses, the law and temple, or rather by fury and madness: *and when he could not know the certainty for the tumult;* could not come at the truth of the matter, or any certain knowledge of it, not any thing that could be depended upon, because of the noise of the people, and the different notes they were in: *he commanded him to be carried into the castle;* of Antonio, formerly called Baris, of which Josephus [e] gives this account; "on "the north side (of the wall) was built a four-square "tower, well fortified and strong; this the kings and "priests of the Asmonæan race, who were before "Herod, built, and called it Baris; that there the "priestly robe might be laid up by them, which the "high-priest only wore, when he was concerned in "divine service:" this tower King Herod made more strong, for the security and preservation of the temple; and called it Antonia, for the sake of Antony his friend, and the general of the Romans: the description of it, as given by Dr. Lightfoot [f], which is collected by him out of Josephus and other writers, is this; "upon "the north side, and joining up to the western angle "(but on the outside of the wall), stood the tower of "Antonia, once the place where the high-priests used "to lay up their holy garments; but in after-times a "garrison of Roman soldiers, for the awing of the "temple: when it served for the former use, it was "called Baris (it may be from בר, *ad extra*, because "it was an outer building), but when for the latter, it "bare the name of Antonia; Herod the great having "sumptuously repaired and called it after the name "of the Roman prince Antony: it stood upon the "north-west point of Moriah, and was a very strong "and a very large pile; so spacious a building with "all its appurtenances, that it took up two furlongs' "compass; the rock it stood upon was fifty cubits "high, and steep, and the building itself was forty "cubits above it; it was four-square, encompassed "with a wall of three cubits high, which enclosed its "courts, and had a turret at every corner, like the "white tower at London; but that it was more spacious, and that the turrets were not all of an height; "for those at the north-east and north-west corners "were fifty cubits high, but those on the south-east and "south-west were seventy cubits high, that they might "fully overlook the temple: it had cloisters or walks "about it, and baths and lodgings, and large rooms "in it; so that it was at once like a castle, and like a "palace. There was a passage out of it, into the "north and west cloisters of the mountain of the "house, and by that the Roman garrison soldiers "went down at every festival of the Jews, to take "care against tumults and seditions, in those great "concourses of the people." And it was by this passage that the chief captain, with the centurions and soldiers, came down so quickly and suddenly upon the Jews, while they were beating Paul in the temple; and this castle being on such an eminence as described, hence he with the soldiers is said to *run down*, ver. 32, and it was in this way that the apostle was had up to the castle.

Ver. 35. *And when he came upon the stairs*, &c.] Or steps, which led up to the castle; for it was built upon a very high place, as appears from the account of it in the preceding verse; to which agrees what Aristæas [g] says of it in the following words; "in order "to have knowledge of all things, we went up to a "castle adjoining to the city, which is situated in a very "high place, fortified with very high towers, built "with large stones, as we supposed for the preservation of the places about the temple, if there should "be any lying in wait, or tumult, or enemies should "enter; so that none might be able to make way in "at the walls about the temple; for in the towers of "the castle lay very sharp darts and various instruments, and the place was upon a very great eminence." *So it was that he was borne of the soldiers for the violence of the people;* the sense is, either that the crowd of the people was so great, and they so pressed upon Paul and the soldiers that conducted him, that he was even thrown upon them, and bore up by them; or else such was the rage of the people against him, that the soldiers were obliged to take him up in their arms, and carry him, in order to secure him from being tore in pieces by them.

Ver. 36. *For the multitude of the people followed after*, &c.] The captain and the soldiers, who had taken away Paul from them, and were carrying him to the castle: *crying, away with him;* or *take him away*, that is, by death; or *lift him up*, upon the cross, crucify him, crucify him, as they said concerning Christ.

Ver. 37. *And as Paul was to be led into the castle*, &c.] Just as he was got up to the top of the steps, or stairs, that led up to the castle, and was about to go

[d] Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 9. sect. 6.
[e] Antiqu. l. 15. c. 11. sect. 4. Vid. ib. l. 18. c. 5. sect. 3. & de Bello Jud. l. 1. c. 3. sect. 3. c. 5. sect. 4. & c. 21. sect. 1.
[f] The Temple described, c. 7. p. 1060.
[g] Hist. de 70 Interpret. p. 26. Ed. Oxon.

into the door of it: *he said unto the chief captain, may I speak unto thee?* the apostle was one that had had a good education, and was a man of address, and this his modest and respectful way of speaking to the chief captain shews; and the question he put to him, was in the Greek language: hence it follows, *who said to him, canst thou speak Greek?* or *dost thou know* the *Hellenistic* language? which the Jews who were born and lived in Greece spoke; hence such were called Hellenists; see ch. vi. 1. of this language we read in the Talmud[h]; "*R. Levi bar Chajethah* went to "Cæsarea, and heard them reading *Shema*, (*hear O* "*Israel*, &c. Deut. vi. 4.) אלוניסתין, in the Hellenistic "language; he sought to hinder them; R. Rose heard "of it, and was angry; and said, he that knows not "to read in the Hebrew language, must he not read "at all? yea, he may read in whatsoever language he "understands." The nearest to this language spoken by the Jews dispersed in Greece, must be the Greek language, in which Jews have written; as the books of the Old Testament translated by the *seventy* interpreters, who were Jews; and indeed it was this Bible which the Jews called Hellenists made use of; and the writings of Josephus, and Philo the Jew of Alexandria, and even the books of the New Testament, which are written by Jews; and Paul being a Jew of Tarsus, and so an Hellenist, could speak this language; as he did, when he disputed against the Hellenists, in ch. ix. 29. This the chief captain said, either as wondering to hear him speak Greek, when he thought he had been a Jerusalem Jew, or rather an Egyptian, as in the next verse; or it may be he put this question to him, as choosing rather that he should speak in Greek, it being the language he might best understand himself, and was the least known to the people, who he might not care should hear what he had to say; since if he took him for the Egyptian, the Greek tongue was what was chiefly spoken by such.

Ver. 38. *Art thou not that Egyptian, which before these days madest an uproar*, &c.] Josephus speaks[i] of one that came out of Egypt to Jerusalem, and gave out that he was a prophet, and deceived the people, whom he persuaded to follow him to the Mount of Olives, where they should see the walls of the city fall at his command, and so through the ruins of it they might enter into the city; but Felix the Roman governor fell upon them, killed four hundred, and took two hundred prisoners, and the Egyptian fled: the account which he elsewhere[k] gives of him, and Eusebius[l] from him, is this; a certain Egyptian false prophet did much more mischief to the Jews; for he being a magician, and having got himself to be believed as a prophet, came into the country (of Judea), and gathered together about thirty thousand persons, whom he had deceived: these he brought out of the wilderness to the Mount of Olives, from thence designing to take Jerusalem by force, and seize the Roman garrison, and take the government of the people—but Felix prevented his design, meeting him with the Roman soldiers, assisted by all the people; so that when they engaged, the Egyptian fled with a few, and most of those that were with him were destroyed or taken: now it was some little time before this, that this affair happened; and by these accounts of Josephus, though the Egyptian was discomfited, yet he was not taken; he had made his escape, so that he might be yet in being; and therefore the captain could not tell but Paul might be he, who had privately got into the city, and was upon some bad designs: *and leddest out into the wilderness four thousand men that were murderers?* Josephus says, that he brought them out of the wilderness, or led them through it to the Mount of Olives, from thence to rush into Jerusalem, when the walls should fall down at his command; but he says, the number of men that he led out were about thirty thousand; it may be at first there were no more than four thousand, but afterwards were joined by others, and increased to thirty thousand; or among these thirty thousand, he had four thousand *murderers*, or *sicarii*; so called from the little swords which they carried under their clothes, and with them killed men in the day-time, in the middle of the city, especially at the feasts, when they mingled themselves with the people[m].

Ver. 39. *But Paul said, I am a man which am a Jew of Tarsus*, &c.] And not that Egyptian; he was not of that country, much less that man; but a Jew, both by birth and religion; he was born of Jewish parents, and brought up in the Jewish religion; though his native place was Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, where it is placed by Pliny[n], Ptolomy[o], and Mela[p]; and is by some thought to be the same with the Tarshish of the Old Testament: *a citizen of no mean city*: Pliny[q] calls it a free city, and Solinus[r] says it is the mother, or chief of cities, and Curtius[s] speaks of it as a very opulent one; which when Alexander drew near to with his army, the inhabitants of it set fire to, that he might not possess their riches; which he understanding, sent Parmenio to prevent it: through this city, as the same historian, in agreement with Pliny and others, observes, ran the river Cydnus; and it being summer-time when Alexander was here, and very hot weather, and being covered with dust and sweat, he put off his clothes, and cast himself into the river to wash himself; but as soon as he was in, he was seized with such a numbness of his nerves, that had he not been immediately taken out by his soldiers, and for the extraordinary care of his physician, he had at once expired. Josephus[t] calls this city the most famous of the cities in Gallicia; and derives it, and the whole country, from Tarshish, the grandson of Japhet, Gen. x. 4. his words are, "Tharsus gave name to the Tharsians, for so "Cilicia was formerly called, of which this is an "evidence; for the most famous of the cities with "them, and which is the metropolis, is called Tarsus; "Thetá being changed into Tau for appellation-sake."

[h] T. Hieros. Sota, fol. 21. 2.
[i] Antiqu. l. 20. c. 7. sect. 6.
[k] De Bello Jud. l. 2. c. 13. sect. 5.
[l] Eccl. Hist. l. 2. c. 21.
[m] Joseph. de Bello Jud. l. 2. c. 13. sect. 3.
[n] Nat. Hist. l. 5. c. 27.
[o] Geograph. l. 5. c. 8.
[p] De orbis situ, l. 1. c. 13.
[q] Ib, ut supra.
[r] Polyhist. c. 51.
[s] Hist. l. 3. c. 4.
[t] Antiqu. l. 1. c. 6. sect. 1.

Though some say it was built by Perseus, the son of Jupiter and Danae, and called Tharsus, of the hyacinth-stone, which is said to be found about it: others think it was so called, παρα το τερσανθηναι, because the places of this country were first dried up after the flood: it was not only a city of stately buildings, as it was repaired by Sardanapalus, and increased after the times of Alexander; but there was a famous academy in it, which, for men of learning, exceeded Athens and Alexandria [u]; though these exceeded that in number of philosophers: here it is thought lived Aratus the poet, from whom the apostle cites a passage, in ch. xvii. 28. and of this place was the famous Chrysippus, who is called Ταρσευς, *a Tarsian* [w], as the apostle is here. Hermogenes, a very celebrated rhetorician, some of whose works are still extant, came from hence [x]. Jerom [y] reports it as a tradition, that the parents of the Apostle Paul were of Giscalis, a town in Judea; which with the whole province being destroyed by the Romans, they removed to Tarsus, a city of Cilicia, whither Paul when a young man followed them; but certain it is, that the apostle was born there, as he himself says, in ch. xxii. 3. Ignatius, in [z] the *second* century, writing to the church at Tarsus, calls them citizens and disciples of Paul; citizens, because he was of this city; and disciples, because of the same faith with him; and very likely the first materials of the church in this place were converts of his; since it is evident that he went hither after he was a preacher; see ch. ix. 30. and xi. 25. *And I beseech thee suffer me to speak unto the people:* first he desired to speak with the captain, and that was in order to obtain leave to speak to the people; and which he asks in a very handsome and submissive manner, and hopes to have his request granted him, since he was not the person he took him for, but was a Jew by birth, and a citizen of a very considerable Roman city; and was not a mean, sordid, vagabond creature, nor need he fear that he would sow any discord and sedition among the people.

Ver. 40. *And when he had given him licence,* &c.] To speak to the people, which he could not well deny him, after he had so freely declared who he was, and in so courteous a manner addressed him, and asked leave of him: *Paul stood on the stairs:* on the steps of the ascent to the castle, on the top of them: *and beckoned with the hand unto the people:* to desire silence, which he might be able to do, notwithstanding his chains; for his being bound with a chain to a soldier, did not hinder the moving and lifting up of his hand: *and when there was made a great silence:* either through the authority of the captain, who might command it, or through the desire of the people, to hear what he could say for himself: *he spake unto them in the Hebrew tongue:* which the people he spoke to best understood, and was his own mother-tongue; the Alexandrian copy reads, *in his own dialect;* this was not pure Hebrew that was spoke in common in those times, but the Syro-Chaldean language: *saying,* as in the following chapter.

C H A P. XXII.

Ver. 1. *MEN, brethren, and fathers,* &c.] A common form of address used by the Jews; see ch. vii. 2. but that the apostle should introduce his speech to these people in this manner, after they had treated him so inhumanly, as to drag him out of the temple, and beat him so unmercifully, is remarkable, and worthy of observation, when they scarcely deserved the name of *men:* and yet he not only gives them this, but calls them *brethren,* they being his countrymen and kinsmen according to the flesh; and *fathers,* there being some among them, who might be men in years, and even members of the sanhedrim, and elders of the people, that were now got among the crowd: this shews how ready the apostle was to put up with affronts, and to forgive injuries done him: *hear ye my defence,* which I make *now unto you;* in opposition to the charges brought against him, of speaking ill of the people of the Jews, the law of Moses, and of the temple, and in order to clear himself of these imputations, and vindicate his character and conduct.

Ver. 2. *And when they heard that he spake in the Hebrew tongue to them,* &c.] See the note on ch. xxi. 40. *they kept the more silence;* it being their mother-tongue, and which they best understood; and which the captain and the Roman soldiers might not so well understand; and chiefly because the Hellenistic language was not so agreeable to them, nor the Hellenistic Jews, who spoke the Greek language, and used the Greek version of the Bible; and such an one they took Paul to be, besides his being a Christian; wherefore when they heard him speak in the Hebrew tongue, it conciliated their minds more to him, at least engaged their attention the more to what he was about to say: *and he saith:* the Syriac and Ethiopic versions add, *to them,* as follows.

Ver. 3. *I am verily a man which am a Jew,* &c.] By birth, a thorough genuine one; an Hebrew of the Hebrews, both by father and mother side, both parents being Jews, and so a true descendant from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: *born in Tarsus,* a city *in Cilicia;* see the note on ch. xxi. 39. yet *brought up in this city;* the city of Jerusalem; though Tarsus was the place of his birth, he had his education at Jerusalem: *at the feet of Gamaliel:* of whom see ch. v. 34. it was the custom of scholars among the Jews, to sit at the feet of their masters, when instructed by them; see Deut. xxxiii. 3. hence that saying of Jose ben Joezer [a]; "let "thy house be an house of resort for the wise men, "and *be thou dusting thyself,* בעפר רגליהם, *with the* "*dust of their feet:*" which by one of their commenta-

[u] Strabo, Geograph. l. 14.
[w] Laert. Vit. Philosoph. l. 7.
[x] Vid. Fabricii Bibl. Græc. l. 4. c. 31. sect. 4. 5.

[y] Catalog. Script. Eccles. sect. 15. fol. 90. G. & Comment. in Philemon. ver. 23. Tom. 9. fol. 116. L.
[z] Ep. ad Tarsenses, p. 73.
[a] Misn. Pirke Abot, c. 1. sect. 4.

tors[b] is interpreted two ways, either, "as if it was said "that thou shouldst walk after them; for he that walks "raises the dust with his feet, and he that goes after "him is filled with the dust which he raises with his "feet; or else that thou shouldst sit at their feet upon "the ground, for so it was usual, that the master sat "upon a bench, and the scholars sat at his feet upon "the floor." This latter sense is commonly understood, and adapted to the passage here, as illustrating it; though it may be, that the sense may only be this, that the apostle boarded in Gamaliel's house, ate at his table, and familiarly conversed with him; which he modestly expresses by being brought up at his feet, who was a man that was had in great reverence with the Jews; and this sense seems the rather to be the sense of the passage, since his learning is expressed in the next clause; and since; till after Gamaliel's time, it was not usual for scholars to sit when they learned; for the tradition is[c], that "from the times of Moses to Rabban "Gamaliel, they (the scholars) did not learn the law "but standing; after Rabban Gamaliel died, sickness "came into the world, and they learned the law sit-"ting; and hence it is said, that after Rabban Gama-"liel died, the glory of the law ceased." It follows, and *taught according to the perfect law of the fathers*; not the law which the Jewish fathers received from Moses, though Paul was instructed in this, but in the oral law, the *Misna*, or traditions of the elders, in which he greatly profited, and exceeded others, Gal. i. 14. *And was zealous towards God*; or *a zealot of God*; one of those who were called *Kanaim*, or zealots; who in their great zeal for the glory of God, took away the lives of men, when they found them guilty of what they judged a capital crime; see Matt. x. 4. John xvi. 2. The Vulgate Latin version reads, *zealous of the law*; both written and oral, the law of Moses, and the traditions of the fathers: *as ye all are this day*; having a zeal for God, and the law, but not according to knowledge.

Ver. 4. *And I persecuted this way unto the death*, &c.] That is, the Christian religion, and the professors of it; whom the apostle breathed out threatenings and slaughter against, haled out of their houses, and committed to prison; consented to their death, as he did to Stephen's; and whenever it was put to the vote, whether they should die or no, he gave his voice against them; so that he was a most bitter enemy, and an implacable persecutor of them; which shews how very averse he was to this way, and how great his prejudices were against it; wherefore it must be a work of divine power, and there must be the singular hand of God in it, to reconcile him to it, and cause him to embrace and profess it: *binding and delivering into prisons, both men and women*; see Acts viii. 3. and ix. 2.

Ver. 5. *As also the high-priest doth bear me witness*, &c.] Either Annas, or Caiaphas, who was at that time high-priest; and it should seem by this, that he was still in being; or else that the apostle had preserved his letter, written with his own hand, which he was able to produce at any time, as a testimony of the truth of what he had said, or was about to say; since he speaks of him (as now) bearing him witness, or as one that could: *and all the estate of the elders*; the whole Jewish sanhedrim, for this character respects not men in years, but men in office, and such who were members of the high court of judicature in Jerusalem; *from whom also I received letters unto the brethren*; some render it *against the brethren*, as if the Christians were meant; whereas the apostle intends the Jews of the synagogue at Damascus, whom the apostle calls brethren; because they were of the same nation, and his kinsmen according to the flesh; and, at that time, of the same religion and principles with him; and this is put out of doubt, by the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, which render it, *the brethren that were at Damascus*; and these letters were to recommend him to them, and to empower him to persecute the Christians, and to demand and require their assistance in it; the Ethiopic version calls them, *letters of power*; and it seems from hence, that these letters were received from the whole sanhedrim, as well as from the high-priest, and were signed by both: *and went to Damascus to bring them which were there bound unto Jerusalem, for to be punished*: with stripes, or with death, as they should be judged worthy; see Acts ix. 2.

Ver. 6. *And it came to pass, that as I made my journey*, &c.] And had almost made an end of it: *and was come nigh unto Damascus*; about a mile from it, as some say, *about noon*: this circumstance is omitted in the account in Acts ix. 3. and is mentioned here, not so much to inform what time of day it was, that Saul came to Damascus, as to observe how extraordinary that light must be, which then appeared, as follows: *suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me*: and not only about him, but those that were with him, Acts xxvi. 13. This must be a great light indeed, to be distinguished at noon, and to be above the brightness of the sun, and to have such effect upon the apostle and his company as it had; see the note on Acts ix. 3.

Ver. 7. *And I fell unto the ground*, &c.] And so did those that were with him, Acts xxvi. 14. *And heard a voice, saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* see the note on Acts ix. 4.

Ver. 8. *And I answered, who art thou, Lord?* &c.] See the note on Acts ix. 5.

Ver. 9. *And they that were with me saw indeed the light*, &c.] For it shone about them, as well as Saul: *and were afraid*; the Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin, and Syriac versions, have not this clause; but it stands in the Arabic and Ethiopic versions; the suddenness, greatness, and extraordinariness of the light suprised them, for it was even miraculous: *but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me*: they heard the voice of Saul, but not the voice of Christ; at least they did not hear it so as to understand it; see the note on Acts ix. 7.

Ver. 10. *And I said, what shall I do, Lord?* &c.] See the note on Acts ix. 6.

Ver. 11. *And when I could not see for the glory of that light*, &c.] Which was above the brightness of the sun, and so dazzled his eyes, that he could not see his way into the city, some of his company took him by the hand, and led him: and *being led by the*

[b] Bartenora in Misn. Pirke Abot, c. 1. sect. 4.

[c] T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 21. 1. Vid. Misn. Sota, c. 9. sect. 15.

hand of them that were with me, I came into Damascus: but not with the same view he set out with: he took his journey thither, and pursued it, in order to persecute the saints there; but now he enters into it, to be informed by one of them what he must do for Christ, whom he had persecuted.

Ver. 12. *And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law,* &c.] The Alexandrian copy, and Vulgate Latin version, read only, *a man according to the law:* one whose walk, life, and conversation, were agreeable to it: a strict observer of the law of Moses, both moral and ceremonial: he not only lived a holy life and conversation, according to the moral law, but he religiously and devoutly attended to the rituals of the ceremonial law; and this part of his character the apostle chose to mention, as what would recommend him to the notice of the Jews he now addressed: for though he was a disciple, a believer in Christ, yet as many of the believing Jews did, so he strictly observed the rituals of the law. The Ethiopic version adds, *who was of the apostles:* one of that number, and in that office, which is nowhere said that he was; and had he, it would not have been agreeable to the apostle's design to have mentioned it; and he is said to be one of the seventy disciples, and bishop or pastor of the church at Damascus; see the note on Luke x. 1. Of this Ananias, his name and character, see the note on Acts ix. 10. *Having a good report of all the Jews that dwelt there:* that is, at Damascus, as the Ethiopic version reads; and so do the Complutensian edition, the Alexandrian copy, and several other copies; for though he was a Christian, yet being not only a man of an unblemished life and conversation, but zealous and devout in the observance of the ceremonial law, was very much interested in the affections and esteem of the Jews.

Ver. 13. *Came unto me,* &c.] Being at the house of Judas, in that street of Damascus called Straight, Acts ix. 11. *and stood:* at the side of him, or by him, putting his hands on him: *and said unto me, brother Saul;* see the note on Acts ix. 17. *receive thy sight,* or *look up, and the same hour I looked up upon him:* that is, immediately, directly: for so the phrase, *that same hour,* is frequently used by the Jews: the words in Numb. xvi. 21. *that I may consume them in a moment,* are rendered by Onkelos, *that I may consume them in an hour;* for an hour is used for a moment with them.

Ver. 14. *And he said, the God of our fathers hath chosen thee,* &c.] From all eternity, in his everlasting purposes and decrees; or he *hath taken thee into his hand:* in order to form, and fit, and qualify him for his service; and may design both his call by grace, and to apostleship. The apostle represents Ananias as speaking of God, as the God of the Jewish fathers, of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to shew that the Christian doctrine was not contrary to the faith of the one God of Israel; nor did it introduce any other, or any new deity. The ends of this choice or separation were, *that thou shouldst know his will;* his revealed will, concerning the salvation of men by Jesus Christ, which is no other than the Gospel, of which the apostle had been entirely ignorant; for though he knew the will of God, as revealed in the law, or his will of command, yet not spiritually; and he was altogether a stranger, till now, to God's will, way, and method of saving sinners by Christ, of justifying them by his righteousness, and of pardoning their sins through his blood, and of giving them eternal life by him; and the knowledge of this he came at by the spirit of wisdom and revelation, in consequence of his being chosen and called: *and see that just One:* Jesus Christ the righteous, who is so both as he is God, and as he is man, and also as he is Mediator, having faithfully discharged his office, and performed his engagements; him the apostle saw, both with the eyes of his body, when he met him in the way, and called unto him, and with the eyes of his understanding beholding his beauty, fulness, and suitableness as a Saviour; the former of these was what many kings, prophets, and righteous men desired: and the latter is what is inseparably connected with eternal life and salvation. *And shouldst hear the voice of his mouth:* both his human voice in articulate sounds, when he spoke to him in the Hebrew tongue, as in ver. 7. and the voice of his Gospel, of which he appeared to make him a minister; which is a voice of love, grace, and mercy, of peace, pardon, righteousness, and salvation, and is very powerful when accompanied by the spirit, and is soul-charming, alluring, and comforting.

Ver. 15. *For thou shalt be his witness unto all men,* &c.] Gentiles as well as Jews, an eye and an ear witness to them; *of what thou hast seen and heard;* as that he saw him personally and alive, and so could witness to the truth of his resurrection; for after he had been seen by all the apostles, he was last of all seen of Paul; and also, that he heard him and received from him the Gospel, and a mission and commission to preach it; for what he preached he did not receive of man, nor was he taught it by any, but he had it by revelation from Jesus Christ.

Ver. 16. *And now why tarriest thou?* &c.] Though it might not be the apostle's case, yet it is often the case of many, to procrastinate and delay obedience to the commands of Christ, and particularly to the ordinance of baptism: the reasons of which delay are, the strength of their corruptions, and the weakness of their graces, which cause them to question whether they have any interest in Christ; as also fears of falling away, and so of dishonouring Christ, his Gospel, and ordinance: and in some the reproaches of men; and sometimes such a delay is made, waiting for more comfortable frames, or for a greater fitness; but no such delay, nor on such accounts, ought to be; for it is a command of Christ, and ought to be forthwith complied with, as soon as a man believes; and to obey it is a following of Christ, in which no time should be lost: and the consequences of a delay are very bad: it is a prevention of the glory of Christ, as well as shews ingratitude to him, and a bereaving of ourselves of that comfort, which might be hoped to be enjoyed; and it often induces a carelessness about the ordinance, and even a losing the sense of the duty: *arise, and be baptized;* this shews that Ananias was a Christian, since he directs to an ordinance of Christ, and that he was a preacher of the word, and had a right to administer baptism; for that it was administered by him, though not in express terms as-

serted, yet seems to be naturally concluded from Acts ix. 18. as also this passage shews, that baptism was not administered by sprinkling, since Saul might have sat still, and have had some water brought to him, and sprinkled on him; but by immersion, seeing he is called upon to arise, and go to some place proper and convenient for the administration of it, according to the usage of John, and the apostles of Christ. *And wash away thy sins;* or *be washed from thy sins;* not that it is in the power of man to cleanse himself from his sins; the Ethiopian may as soon change his skin, or the leopard his spots, as a creature do this; nor is there any such efficacy in baptism as to remove the filth of sin; persons may submit unto it, and yet be as Simon Magus was, in the gall of bitterness, and bond of iniquity; but the ordinance of baptism may be, and sometimes is, a means of leading the faith of God's children to the blood of Christ, which cleanses from all sin; *calling on the name of the Lord;* the name of the Lord is not only to be used by the administrator of baptism in the performance of it; but it should be called upon by the person who submits to it, both before and at the administration of it, for the presence of Christ in it; and this invocation of the name of the Lord in baptism, signifies an exercise of faith in Christ at this time, a profession of him, and obedience to him.

Ver. 17. *And it came to pass, that when I was come again to Jerusalem,* &c.] Which was three years after his conversion; for he did not immediately return to Jerusalem, but went into Arabia; and when he returned to Damascus, which was three years after he came to Jesusalem; see Gal. i. 17, 18. *even while I prayed in the temple;* the temple was an house of prayer; hither persons resorted for that purpose; and as the apostle had been used to it, he continued this custom, and during the time of prayer he fell into an ecstacy: *I was in a trance;* and knew not whether he was in the body, or out of the body: whether this was the time he refers to in 2 Cor. xii. 2. is not certain, though probable.

Ver. 18. *And I saw him saying unto me,* &c.] That is, the Lord Jesus Christ, that just One, whom he had seen in his way to Damascus, and whose voice he had heard, and whose name he had called upon at his baptism: *make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem;* not because his life was in danger, but because Christ had work for him to do elsewhere, which required haste; and that he might not continue here useless and unprofitable, as he would have been, had he staid; *for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me:* Christ the omniscient God, and the searcher of the hearts, knew the hardness and unbelief of the Jews; and that they would continue therein, notwithstanding the ministry of the apostle; and that they would give no credit to any testimony of his, that he saw him, as he went to Damascus, and heard words from his mouth. The Ethiopic version renders it without the negative, *for they will receive thee, my witness concerning me;* as if Christ sent the apostle away in all haste from Jerusalem, lest he preaching there, the Jews should believe and be healed; compare with this Matt. xiii. 14, 15. Very likely this interpreter might be induced to leave out the negative, as thinking that the apostle's reasoning in the following words required such a sense and reading.

Ver. 19. *And I said, Lord, they know that I imprisoned,* &c.] Men and women, that made a profession of the Christian religion, Acts viii. 3. *and beat in every synagogue them that believed on thee;* in Jerusalem there were many synagogues, and in these scourging and beating of offenders were used; see the note on Matt. x. 17.

Ver. 20. *And when the blood of thy martyr Stephen was shed,* &c.] Stephen was a martyr for Christ, both by confession with his mouth, and by the effusion of his blood; he was the protomartyr, or *the first martyr* that suffered for Christ; and there are copies, as one of Stephens's, and the Complutensian edition, which so read in this place; his blood was shed by stoning: *I also was standing by;* to see the inhuman action performed; nor was he an idle and indifferent spectator; *and consenting unto his death;* being pleased and delighted with it, and rejoicing at it; see Acts viii. 1. *and kept the raiment of them that slew him;* the accusers of him, and witnesses against him, whose hands were first on him, and cast the first stones at him, and continued to stone him, until they killed him: these laid their garments at the feet of Saul, who looked after them, that nobody stole them, and run away with them, whilst they were stoning Stephen; which shews how disposed he was to that fact, and how much he approved of it: and these things he mentions to suggest that surely the Jews would receive his testimony, since they knew what a bitter enemy he had been to this way: and therefore might conclude, that he must have some very good and strong reasons, which had prevailed upon him to embrace this religion against all his prejudices, and so might be willing to hear them; and it also shews what an affection the apostle had for the Jews, and how much he desired their spiritual welfare, for which reason he chose to have staid, and preached among them.

Ver. 21. *And he said unto me, depart,* &c.] At once from Jerusalem, and out of the land of Judea: *for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles;* to the nations afar off, even as far as Illyricum, Pannonia, or Hungary, where the apostle went and preached, Rom. xv. 19. and so by a divine mission and commission he became the apostle of the Gentiles, and preached the Gospel among them with great success, to the conversion of many thousands of them, and to the planting of many churches in the midst of them.

Ver. 22. *And they gave him audience unto this word,* &c.] The Ethiopic version reads, *and I heard him so speaking unto me;* as if it was to be understood of the apostle hearing Christ speaking to him concerning his mission to the Gentiles; whereas the words refer to the Jews attending quietly to the apostle, till he came to that part of his oration. They heard him patiently, and did not offer to molest him, or hinder his speaking, and being heard, till he came to mention his mission to the Gentiles: all the rest they either did not understand, or looked upon it as an idle tale, as the effect of madness and enthusiasm, at least as containing things they had nothing to do with; but when he came to speak of the Gentiles, and to pretend to a divine mission to them, this they could not

hear; for nothing was more offensive, irritating, and provoking to them, than to hear of the calling of the Gentiles, whom they were for depriving of all blessings, and for engrossing all to themselves; see Rom. x. 20. *and* then *lift up their voices:* in a very loud and clamorous manner, as one man: *and said, away with such a fellow from the earth:* take away his life from the earth: this they said either to the chief captain, to do it, or as encouraging one another to do it: *for it is not fit that he should live;* he does not deserve to live, he is unworthy of life; it is not agreeable to the rules of justice that he should be spared; it is not convenient, and it may be of bad consequence should he be continued any longer; he may do a deal of mischief, and poison the minds of the people with bad notions, and therefore it is not expedient that he should live.

Ver. 23. *And as they cried out,* &c.] In this furious manner: *and cast off their clothes;* either like madmen, that knew not what they did, or in order to stone him; see Acts vii. 57, 58. *and threw dust into the air;* either with their hands, or by striking the earth, and scraping it with their feet, through indignation and wrath, like persons possessed, or mad.

Ver. 24. *The chief captain commanded him to be brought into the castle,* &c.] Into the inside of it; for till now he was upon the top of the stairs, or steps, which led up to it; which might be done in order to save him from the rage of the people, and that he might privately examine him, and get the true state of his case, though he took a very wrong and unjustifiable method to do it in, as follows: *and bade that he should be examined by scourging;* he gave a centurion, with some soldiers, orders to scourge and whip him, and to lay on stripes more and harder, until he should tell the whole truth of the matter, and confess the crime or crimes he was guilty of, which had so enraged the populace: *that he might know wherefore they cried so against him:* for though he had rescued him out of their hands, when they would in all likelihood have beat him to death; and though he took him within the castle to secure him from their violence; yet he concluded he must be a bad man, and must have done something criminal; and therefore he takes this method to extort from him a confession of his crime, for which the people exclaimed against him with so much violence.

Ver. 25. *And as they bound him with thongs,* &c.] To a pillar, in order to be scourged, according to the Roman manner[d]. Nor was the Jewish form of scourging much unlike, and perhaps might be now used, which was this; when they scourge any one they bind both his hands to a pillar, here and there —and they don't strike him standing nor sitting, but inclining[e]; for the pillar to which he was bound was fixed in the ground, and so high as for a man to lean upon[f]; and some say it was two cubits, and others a cubit and a half high[g]: and the word here used signifies an extension, or distension; perhaps the stretching out of the arms to the pillar, and a bending forward of the whole body, which fitly expresses the stooping inclining posture of the person scourged, and was a very proper one for such a punishment: now as they were thus fastening him with thongs to the pillar, and putting him in this position, *Paul said unto the centurion that stood by;* to see the soldiers execute the orders received from the chief captain: *is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and uncondemned?* Though the apostle puts this by way of question, yet he knew full well what the Roman laws were in such cases; he did not put this through ignorance, or for information, but to let them know who he was, and to put them in mind of these laws, and of their duty; for, according to the Porcian law, Roman citizens were not to be beaten[h]. Hence, says[i] Cicero, "it is a "heinous sin to *bind* a Roman citizen, it is wicked-"ness to *beat* him, it is next to parricide to kill him, "and what shall I say to crucify him?" And, according to the Valerian law, it was not lawful for magistrates to condemn a Roman without hearing the cause, and pleading in it; and such condemned persons might appeal to the populace[k].

Ver. 26. *When the centurion heard* that, &c.] The question put by Paul, which strongly suggested that he was a Roman: *he went and told the chief captain;* what Paul had said: *saying, take heed what thou dost;* or *art about to do;* lest some bad consequences should follow; lest he should affront the Roman people and senate, and lose his place, if not incur some corporeal punishment: *for this man is a Roman;* and it can never be answered to bind and beat a Roman.

Ver. 27. *Then the chief captain came, and said unto him,* &c.] To Paul: *tell me, art thou a Roman?* he had told him before that he was a Jew of Tarsus, and which was true, and had said nothing of his being a Roman; wherefore the chief captain desires that he would tell him the whole truth of the matter, whether he was a Roman or no: *he said yea;* that he was one.

Ver. 28. *And the chief captain answered, with a great sum obtained I this freedom,* &c.] For, it seems, he was not a Roman born, but very likely a Grecian, or Syrian, by his name Lysias; and as all things were now venal at Rome, the freedom of the city was to be bought with money, though a large sum was insisted on for it: this the chief captain said, as wondering that so mean a person, and who he understood was a Jew by birth, should be able to procure such a privilege, which cost him so much money: *and Paul said, but I was free born;* being born at Tarsus; which, as Pliny says[l], was a free city, and which had its freedom given it by Mark Antony, and which was before the birth of Paul; and therefore his parents being of this city, and free, he was born so.

[d] Lipsius de Cruce, l. 2. c. 4.
[e] Misna Maccot, c. 3. sect. 12, 13.
[f] Bartenora in ib.
[g] Yom Tob in ib.

[h] Cicero pro Rabirio Orat. 18.
[i] In Verrem Orat. 10.
[k] Pompon. Lætus de Legibus, p. 157.
[l] Nat. Hist. l. 5. c. 27.

Ver. 29. *Then straightway they departed from him, which should have examined him,* &c.] By scourging; namely, the soldiers, who under the inspection of the centurion, and by the order of the chief captain, were binding him with thongs to scourge him, and thereby extort from him his crime, which was the cause of all this disturbance; but hearing that he was a Roman, either of their own accord, or rather at the order of their officers, either the centurion or chief captain, or both, left binding him, and went their way: *and the chief captain also was afraid after he knew that he was a Roman;* lest he should be called to an account for his conduct, and his commission should be taken from him: chiefly, *and because he had bound him;* not only had commanded him to be bound with thongs to a pillar, in order to be scourged, but he had bound him with two chains, when he first seized him; and, as before observed on ver. 25. it was a heinous crime to bind a Roman.

Ver. 30. *On the morrow,* &c.] The next day; so that Paul was kept in the castle all night: *because he would have known the certainty wherefore he was accused of the Jews;* which, as yet, he could not come at, some saying one thing, and some another; and which he ought to have known before he had bound him, and ordered him to be scourged: *he loosed him from his bands;* not from his being bound with thongs to the pillar, that he had been loosed from before, but from the two chains with which he was bound, and held by two soldiers; see ch. xxi. 33, 35. *and commanded the chief priests, and all the council to appear;* the whole Jewish sanhedrim, which was now very much under the direction and influence of the Romans: and this he the rather did, because, though he could not come at the certainty of the charge and accusation, he perceived it was a matter of religion, and so belonged to them to examine and judge of: *and brought Paul down;* from the castle of Antonia, into the temple, and to the place where the sanhedrim sat, which formerly was in the chamber Gazith, but of late years it had removed from place to place, and indeed from Jerusalem itself, and was now at Jabneh; only this was the time of Pentecost, and so the chief priests and sanhedrim were at Jerusalem on that account: *and set him before them;* or *among them;* in the midst of them, to answer to what charges should be brought against him.

CHAP. XXIII.

Ver. 1. *AND Paul earnestly beholding the council,* &c.] Fastening his eyes upon them, looking wistly and intently at them, and thereby discovering a modest cheerfulness, and a becoming boldness, confidence, and intrepidity, as being not conscious of any guilt, and well assured of the goodness of his cause: *said, men and brethren;* see ch. xxii. 1. *I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day;* not only from the time of his conversion, but throughout the whole of his life; for though, strictly speaking, there is no good conscience but what is awakened by the spirit of God, and is imprincipled by his grace, and is purged from sin by the blood of Christ; in which sense he could only have a good conscience, since he believed in Christ; yet whereas in his state of unregeneracy, and even while he was a blasphemer, and persecutor, he did not act contrary to the dictates of his conscience, but according to them, in which his view was to the glory of God, and the honour of his law; he therefore says he lived before God, or unto God, in all good conscience, though an erroneous and mistaken one; he thought he ought to do what he did; and what he did, he did with a zeal for God, though it was not according to knowledge: besides, the apostle has here respect to his outward moral conversation, which, before and after conversion, was very strict, and even blameless, at least unblemished before men; nobody could charge him with any notorious crime, though he did not live without sin in the sight of the omniscient God.

Ver. 2. *And the high-priest Ananias,* &c.] This could not be the same with Annas, the father-in-law of Caiaphas, but rather Ananus his son; though this is more generally thought to be Ananias the son of Nebedæus, whom Josephus[m] speaks of. There is one R. Ananias, the sagan of the priests, often spoken of in the Jewish writings[n], who lived about these times, and was killed at the destruction of Jerusalem; and in the times of King Agrippa, there was one Chanina, or Ananias the priest, who was a Sadducee[o]; and from the number of Sadducees in this sanhedrim, who very likely were the creatures of the high-priest, one would be tempted to think he might be the same with this: who *commanded them that stood by him;* that is, by Paul, who were nearest to him, some of the members of the sanhedrim; unless they should be thought to be some of the high-priest's officers, or servants, as in John xviii. 22. though if they were, one would think they would be so called: these he ordered *to smite him on the mouth;* or give him a slap on the face, by way of contempt, and as if he had spoken what ought not to be said, and in order to silence him; the reason of which might be, either because Paul did not directly address him, and give him such flattering titles as he expected, or because he set out with such declarations of his innocence, and spotless behaviour, and with so much courage and boldness.

Ver. 3. *Then said Paul unto him, God shall smite thee,* &c.] Which may be considered either as a prophecy of what would be, that God would smite him with some judgment here, or with death quickly, or with eternal damnation hereafter; taking up his own words, and suggesting that a retaliation would be made, and that the measure he meted, would be measured to him again; or else as an imprecation

[m] Antiqu. l. 18. c. 2. sect. 1. & l. 20. c. 8. sect. 1.
[n] Misna Shekalim, c. 4. sect. 4. & 6. 1. & Pesachim, c. 1. sect. 6. T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 8. 1. & 21. 2. & Juchasin, fol. 24. 2.

[o] Juchasin, fol. 142. 2.

upon him; for the words may be rendered, *may God smite thee*: the future tense being often used by the Jews for the imperative, and that in this very phrase; for certain it is, that this is the form of an imprecation with them: for 'tis said, if any one should say, יככה אלהים, *may God smite*, or *so may God smite*: this is אלה, *a curse*, written in the law [p]; though this instance of the apostle ought not to be drawn into example, any more than those of other saints, who might be under a direction of the Holy Ghost to deliver out such things, which would come to pass in righteous judgment: and if this was Ananias, the son of Nebedæus, as is generally thought, it is remarkable, that five years after this, in the beginning of the wars of the Jews with the Romans, this Ananias, hiding himself under the ruins of a conduit, was discovered, and taken out, and killed [q]: and no doubt but he very fitly calls him *thou whited wall*: or hypocrite, in like manner as Christ compares the hypocritical Scribes and Pharisees to whited sepulchres, Matt. xxiii. 27. *for sittest thou to judge me after the law*: the law of Moses, which was the rule of judgment in the sanhedrim, at least professed to be, and which was allowed of by the Romans, especially in matters relating to the Jewish religion: *and commandest me to be smitten contrary to law?* which condemns no man before he is heard, and much less punishes him, John vii. 51. and which is contrary not only to the Jewish laws, but to the Roman laws, and all others founded upon the law of nature and reason.

Ver. 4. *And they that stood by*, &c.] The members of the sanhedrim that were next to the apostle; or the servants of the high-priest, since they are said to stand, whereas those of that court sat: *said, revilest thou God's high-priest?* which seems to confirm that the apostle's words were not a bare prediction, but an imprecation, since they are charged with reproaching, reviling, and speaking evil of him; and the aggravation of which was not only that the person reviled was a priest, an high-priest, but an high-priest of God; though this could not have been proved, for there was now no high-priest of God but Jesus Christ; the priesthood was changed and abrogated, and there were no more high-priests among men of God's appointing and approving.

Ver. 5. *Then said Paul, I wist not, brethren, that he was the high-priest*, &c.] Or *I did not know that he was the high-priest*: and the sense is, that he did not really know him, either because he had been long absent from Jerusalem; and besides there were new high-priests made, sometimes every year, and sometimes oftener, that it is no wonder he should not know him; or because he might not sit in his usual place; or chiefly because he was not, in his habit, an high-priest; for the priests, both the high-priest, and the common priests, only wore their priestly robes, when they ministered in their office, and at other times they wore other clothes, as laymen did, according to Ezek. xliv. 19. which the Targum paraphrases thus; "when they "(the priests) shall go out of the holy court into the "outer court, to be mixed with the people, they shall "put off their garments in which they ministered, "and lay them up in the holy chamber, and shall "clothe themselves with other garments, that they "may not be mingled with the people, בלבושיהן, *in "their garments*." For as soon as they had performed their office, there were servants that attended them, who stripped them of their robes, and laid them up in chests which were in the temple [r], till they came to service again, and put them on common garments; for they might not appear among the common people in their priestly garments; which when they were off of them, they were, as Maimonides says [s], כזרים, *as strangers*, or as laymen, like the rest of the people; for which reason Paul might not know Ananias to be the high-priest: and this points to another sense of these words; for it was a rule with the Jews [t], that "at the "time the priests' garments were upon them, their "priesthood was upon them, but when their garments "were not on them, אין כהונתם עליהן, *there was no "priesthood upon them*: for lo, they were as strangers." And then the sense is, Ananias not being in the discharge of his office, nor in his habit, the apostle did not know, or own him as an high-priest, or consider him as in such a station; or rather, since the priesthood was changed, and there was no other high-priest of God but Jesus Christ, he did not own him as one; had he, he should not have spoke to him in the manner he did. Moreover, if this was Ananias, the son of Nebedæus, as is the opinion of many, he had no right to the office of the priesthood when he was first made an high-priest; after which he was sent a prisoner to Rome; during which time several succeeded in the priesthood; and at this time not he, though he had got the management of affairs in his hands, was high-priest, but Jesus the son of Gamaliel; so that the apostle's sense might be, he did not own or acknowledge him high-priest. Some take the apostle's words in an ironical sense; he an high-priest, I should not have known him to be an high-priest! he looks and acts more like a furioso, a madman, an unjust judge, and a tyrant, than an high-priest, who ought to behave in another-guise manner. But what follows shews rather that the apostle spoke seriously, unless the words can be thought to be a citation made by Luke, *for it is written*, in Exod. xxii. 28. *thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people*: which the Jewish writers generally understand of the head of the great sanhedrim, as Ananias might be, or of a king [u].

Ver. 6. *But when Paul perceived that the one part were Sadducees*, &c.] That is, that one part of the sanhedrim consisted of Sadducees, which was often the case; sometimes the high-priest was of this sect, as Ananias probably was, and sometimes the greater part of the sanhedrim were Sadducees, and even sometimes the whole; see the note on Acts v. 17. but this sanhedrim were only part of them Sadducees: *and the other Pharisees*: of both these sects, see the note on Matt. iii. 7. *he cried out in the council*: with a loud,

[p] Misn. Shebuot, c. 4. sect. 13. & Maimon. in ib.
[q] Joseph. de Bello Jud. l. 2. c. 17. sect. 9.
[r] Misna Tamid, c. 5. sect. 3. & Bartenora in ib.
[s] Hilchot Cele Hamikdash, c. 10. sect. 4.
[t] Maimon. Hilchot Cele Hamikdash, c. 10. sect. 4.
[u] Maimon. Hilchot Sanhedrin, c. 26. sect. 1. & Moses Kotsensis Mitzvot Tora, pr. neg. 209.

voice, that he might be heard by all: *men and brethren, I am a Pharisee*: he was not only brought up in that sect from his youth, and lived according to it before his conversion, but he was still a Pharisee; wherefore he does not say, I *was*, but I *am* a Pharisee; for whatever distinguished the Pharisee from the Sadducee, whether in principle, or in practice, and manner of living, which agreed with Christianity, the apostle still retained; as the belief of the immortality of the soul, the resurrection of the dead, and a future state, and strict holiness of life and conversation. *The son of a Pharisee*: the Alexandrian copy, and some others, and the Vulgate Latin version, read in the plural number, *the son of Pharisees*: his father and his mother were both Pharisees: for there were women Pharisees [w], as well as men; so that he was a Pharisee of the Pharisees, as well as an Hebrew of the Hebrews; and this is said to shew that he was by education of that sect. *Of the hope and resurrection of the dead, I am called in question*: that is, either for the hope of the resurrection of the dead, see ch. xxiv. 15. or for professing the hope of eternal life, and happiness in a future state, and the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, when the soul and body will be reunited, and enjoy endless felicity together: not that these were the particular things now charged upon him, and for which he was now trying and judging; but that these were the ground and foundation of the hatred and persecution of him, because he preached the resurrection of Christ from the dead, and the resurrection of men through him, and that there was hope of eternal life and salvation by him. And in this the apostle shewed the prudence and wisdom of the serpent, along with the innocence of the dove, hereby to divide the assembly, and free himself from them; and it was but just and right; for since they would not hear him about to make a fair and open defence of his cause, but ordered him to be smitten on the mouth, it was but justice to throw them into confusion, and save himself.

Ver. 7. *And when he had so said*, &c.] He stopped and made a pause: *and there arose a dissension between the Pharisees and the Sadducees*: about the things which he had spoken of, particularly the resurrection of the dead; and this was what the apostle intended, so that his end was answered by the speech he made: *and the multitude was divided*: that is, the members of the sanhedrim were divided, some being on one side of the question, and some on the other; for this multitude cannot design the multitude of the common people, who were not convened together on this occasion.

Ver. 8. *For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection*, &c.] Of the dead, being ignorant of the Scriptures, and the power of God; see Matt. xxii. 23, 29. *neither angel nor spirit*: the Ethiopic version reads, *nor Holy Spirit*: but the sense seems to be, that they did not believe any such species of beings as angels, nor indeed any spirits whatever, which were immaterial or immortal; for as for the spirit or soul of man, they took that to be only the temperament of the body, and that it died with it, and did not exist in any separate state after this life: for so Josephus [x] says, that they deny the permanence of the soul, and rewards and punishments in the invisible state. And, according to the Talmudic [y] writers, they denied that there was any other world than this: *but the Pharisees confess both*: the resurrection of the dead, and that there are spirits, both angels and the souls of men, which are immortal. Josephus, in the place before referred to, says, that they hold that every soul is incorruptible or immortal; and that they held the resurrection of the dead, is manifest from the Talmud [z], and other writings of theirs; the Syriac version renders it, *the Pharisees confess all these things*; to which agree the Arabic and Ethiopic versions.

Ver. 9. *And there arose a great cry*, &c.] Or noise, a loud clamour; they began to be very noisy, and to talk loud, and in high spirits, one against another: *and the Scribes that were of the Pharisees' part arose*; there were Scribes in the sanhedrim, and these were some of them on the side of the Sadducees, and some on the side of the Pharisees; though, generally speaking, they agreed with the latter, and are often in Scripture mentioned with them, and for them: however, that part in this sanhedrim that were on their side rose up from their seats, *and strove*: that is, contended, disputed, and litigated the point with the Sadducees: *saying, we find no evil in this man*; why he should be hated, persecuted, and punished: *but if a spirit or an angel hath spoken to him*; that is, if the Holy Spirit, as the Ethiopic version reads, has inspired him, or God by an angel has revealed any thing to him, who has to say any thing against it? This they said in agreement with their own principles, and more for the sake of establishing them, and in opposition to the Sadducees, than in favour of Paul: *let us not fight against God*; as in Acts v. 39. These words are not in the Alexandrian copy, nor in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions.

Ver. 10. *And when there arose a great dissension*, &c.] When that was come to a very great height, hot words were spoken, and they were ready to come to blows, and there was like to be a riot and tumult among them: *the chief captain fearing lest Paul should be pulled in pieces of them*: either of the Sadducees, whom he had greatly offended and provoked, or of both Sadducees and Pharisees, the one laying hold on him to preserve him from the fury of the other, and the other endeavouring to pluck him out of their hands; and the fears of the chief captain were not so much out of affection to Paul, but lest there should be an uproar, which might issue in sedition, and rebellion against the Roman government, of which the Roman officers were always jealous; and because that Paul was a Roman, and should he suffer him to be destroyed in an illegal manner, he must be accountable for it: wherefore he *commanded the soldiers to go down*: either from the castle of Antonia, or from a superior part of the temple, where he with his guards were, to hear this cause before the sanhedrim, to that part where it sat, and Paul was: *and take him by force from among them*; if

[w] Misna Sota, c. 3. sect. 4.
[x] De Bello Jud. l. 2. c. 10. sect. 19.
[y] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 54. 1. & Gloss. in ib. & Pirke Abot R. Nathan, c. 5.
[z] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 90. 2.

they refused to deliver him up, to make use of their arms: *and bring him into the castle;* of Antonia, where he was before.

Ver. 11. *And the night following*, &c.] The day in which Paul was brought before the sanhedrim, and pleaded his own cause before them, and had thrown them into confusion and division: *the Lord stood by him:* the Lord Jesus Christ appeared in a vision to him, and stood very near him, by the side of him, by the bed or couch on which he might lie: *and said, be of good cheer, Paul;* though he was now a prisoner in the castle; and though the high-priest, and the Sadducees especially, were enraged against him; and though a plot was about to be formed to take away his life; for this exhortation seems to be designed to prepare him for further trials, and to prevent discouragement under them; which shews the great care of Christ over him, his concern for him, and love to him: the word *Paul* is not in the Alexandrian copy, nor in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions; but the calling him by name seems to express not only singular knowledge of him, but greater familiarity and affection; it is in the Arabic version, and in other Greek copies: *for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem;* not only in the Christian church, and before the Apostle James, and the elders, but in the Jewish sanhedrim, and before the high-priest, Scribes, Pharisees, and Sadducees, where and before whom, though not particularly recorded, he bore a testimony for Jesus, that he was the true Messiah; and that though he died, he was risen from the dead, and was at the right hand of God, and was the only Saviour of men: *so must thou bear witness also at Rome;* as he had bore a public and faithful witness to the person, office, and grace of Christ at Jerusalem, the metropolis of Judea; so it was necessary, by the decree of God, and for the glory of Christ, that he should bear a like testimony at Rome, the chief city in the whole world; hereby signifying, that he should not die at Jerusalem, and giving him a hint that he should appeal to Cæsar, which he afterwards did.

Ver. 12. *And when it was day*, &c.] As soon as it was light, very early in the morning: *certain of the Jews banded together;* these very likely were of the sect of the Sadducees, who had been exceedingly irritated and provoked by what Paul had said the day before in the council; these therefore gathered together, entered into a conspiracy to take away Paul's life, and united in it, as one man: *and bound themselves under a curse:* or *anathematized themselves;* the Hebrew word חרם, which answers to *anathema*, is sometimes used for an oath, חרם היא שבועה, *Cherem* or *anathema is an oath*[a], a vow made to be punished with an anathema if not kept; so these men swore to it, bound themselves with an oath, or wished they might be an anathema, accursed of God, and cut off from his people; they imprecated the most dreadful evils upon themselves: *saying, that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul:* it was a common form of a vow or oath with the Jews[b], שלא איכל, *that I will not eat:* sometimes they only vowed abstinence from particular things, and then others were lawful; as for instance, if one vowed that he would not eat boiled meat, he might eat roast, or that he would not eat flesh, he might eat broth, or that he would abstain from milk, then he might drink whey[c]; but this oath and vow here were, that they would neither eat nor drink any thing, till they had destroyed Paul: these were a set of zealots, who in imitation of Phinehas, and pretending the glory of God, took upon them to take away the lives of men, without any judicial procedure, or the authority of the civil magistrate; of whom, see the note on Matt. x. 4. it may be asked, what became of this vow? or how did they get clear of it, since they did not accomplish the fact? to which it may be answered, that it was a pretty easy thing to be freed from oaths and vows, among the Jews, whose doctors had a power to absolve men from them; and in such cases as this, and such a vow as this, might be loosed upon more accounts than one, as on account of keeping another law, the observing the sabbath and other festivals, when men were obliged to eat and drink: and thus it is said[d], "if a man swears that "he will not drink wine, or that he will not eat flesh, "for so many days, then they say to him, if thou "hadst known at the time of the oath, that the sab- "bath or a feast-day were within these days, in which "thou art obliged to eat flesh and drink wine, as it is "said, Isa. lviii. 13. *and call the sabbath a delight;* "wouldst thou have swore at all? if he says no, they "loose his oath:" and likewise it might be loosed on account of life, which a man is bound to preserve: for so they likewise say[e], "if a man vows that he will "not eat any thing, woe be to him if he eats, and "woe be to him if he does not eat; if he eats he "breaks his vow, if he does not eat he sins against his "own soul, or life; what must he do? let him go to "the wise men, ויתירו לו את נדרו, *and they will loose* "*his vow for him*, as it is written, Prov. xii. 18. *but* "*the tongue of the wise is health;*" and no doubt but these men very easily got their vow loosed, since it was made on such a design.

Ver. 13. *And they were more than forty which had made this conspiracy.*] Who met together, formed this resolution, entered into this scheme, and bound themselves with this oath; the word rendered *conspiracy*, signifies an agreement by oath; such a number of them banded together, that they might have strength sufficient to take Paul out of the hands of the soldiers, as he was conducted by them from the castle to the temple.

Ver. 14. *And they came to the chief priests, and elders*, &c.] Who were members of the sanhedrim, to acquaint them with their designs: *and said, we have bound ourselves under a great curse, that we will eat nothing until we have slain Paul:* these chief priests and elders, had they acted according to the character they bore, on such an information, would have taken up those men, and punished them, at least would have dissuaded them from so vile an action; but they knew the men to whom they applied, and very likely they were all of them of the sect of the Sadducees, whom Paul had so much offended the day before; and there-

[a] Pirke Eliezer, c. 38.
[b] Misna Nedarim, c. 2. sect. 2, 3.
[c] Ib. c. 6. sect. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.
[d] Maimon. in Misn. Nedarim, c. 9. sect. 6.
[e] T. Hieros. Avoda Zara, fol. 40. 1.

fore were pleased with what they had done, approved of their scheme, and readily fell in with the following proposal.

Ver. 15. *Now therefore ye with the council*, &c.] The whole sanhedrim: their sense is, that they would have the sanhedrim convened by the chief priests and elders, and being met together, then to *signify to the chief captain:* or let him know that they were assembled together, upon the affair of Paul, and that they were desirous he might be brought before them: *that he bring him down unto you to-morrow;* from the castle of Antonia to the place where the sanhedrim met; the word *to-morrow* is not in the Alexandrian copy, nor in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions; and then it should seem that they desired him to be brought down forthwith, or otherwise they must propose to fast all that day, and so long on the morrow, till Paul was brought down; but that the common reading is right, appears from the chief captain's sending away Paul at the third hour of the night following, to prevent their designs on the morrow, ver. 23. The pretence formed for his being brought down is, *as though ye would inquire something more perfectly concerning him:* what he had done, which had occasioned this uproar, what it was he was charged with, and whether he was guilty or no: *and we, or ever he come near:* where the sanhedrim sat: *are ready to kill him;* lying in wait in some private place between the castle and the temple, from whence they intended to rush out at once upon him, and murder him; far enough both from the temple and the council, that both the one might not be defiled, though they did not greatly stick at that in those times, and that the other might not be charged with having any hand in his death.

Ver. 16. *And when Paul's sister's son heard of their lying in wait*, &c.] Paul might have a sister living in Jerusalem; or this her son might be there on account of his studies; he might be a pupil to one of the doctors, by which means he might come at this secret, that such a number of men were in ambush, in order to take away his uncle's life: wherefore having got intelligence of it, *he went and entered into the castle;* the Alexandrian copy reads, *the synagogue;* but Paul was not there, but in the castle of Antonia; the Ethiopic version renders it, *the prison;* though it is plain that he was not very closely confined, it was easy to have access to him; the reason might be, not only because he was a Roman, but because he was uncondemned, nor was any charge proved against him: *and told Paul;* what he had heard, that such a number of men had entered into a conspiracy to take away his life, and lay in wait for him; and this was an instance both of duty and affection to his uncle, and worthy of imitation, whether it proceeded from natural relation, or from religion, or both.

Ver. 17. *Then Paul called one of the centurions unto him*, &c.] For under this chief captain there must have been ten of them, if the company of which he was captain consisted of a thousand men, as his title chief captain or chiliarch imports; for a centurion was over an hundred men, as his title signifies; perhaps this might be the same, as in ch. xxii. 25, 26. *and said, bring this young man to the chief captain;* which was a very prudential step, not to let the centurion into the secret, but to desire him to introduce the young man to the chief captain; for had he trusted the centurion with it, he might not have acquainted his officer with it, but have informed the liers-in-wait of it: now though the apostle was assured by Christ that he should not die at Jerusalem, but should bear witness of him at Rome, and though he did not distrust the truth of Christ's words, but most firmly believed them; yet he thought it his duty to make use of the means, which providence had put in his way, for his preservation and safety; the Ethiopic version reads, *bring this young man by night to the chief captain;* that so he might not be seen, and observed to have carried any intelligence to him: *for he hath a certain thing to tell him;* which was of some moment and importance, and proper for him to know.

Ver. 18. *So he took him, and brought him to the chief captain*, &c.] Immediately, without any more to do, without curiously inquiring into the thing, or examining the young man about it; which shewed him to be a man of a good disposition, and ready to do a kind office, even to a prisoner: *and said, Paul the prisoner called me to him;* either vocally or by some gesture, beckoned him to him: *and prayed me to bring this young man unto thee, who hath something to say unto thee;* in which may be observed the apostle's manner of address to the centurion, on this occasion; it was by way of entreaty; he asked it as a favour of him, to introduce his nephew to the chief captain; and the honour and modesty of the centurion, he did not seek by any methods to get the secret out, either of Paul or the young man; but readily undertakes the affair, honourably performs it, acquaints the captain with the circumstances of it, tells him the young man had something to say to him, he could not tell what, and then departs.

Ver. 19. *Then the chief captain took him by the hand*, &c.] Some have thought that the reason of this was, that he expected that the young man had brought him a present in his hand, from Paul; but this is to represent him as a sordid mercenary man, which ought not to be said, without sufficient proof; rather this should be considered as an instance of civility and humanity, and what shewed him to be a man of breeding and good manners; and might be done partly out of respect to Paul, and partly to encourage the young man to use freedom in the account he was about to give him: *and went* with him *aside privately;* concluding by his coming from Paul, and perceiving by the account of the centurion, that he had a secret to communicate to him; wherefore it was acting a wise and prudent part to take him into a private room, and hear what he had to say: *and asked* him, *what is that thou hast to tell me?* thereby giving the young man an opportunity, and encouraging him to relate the secret to him.

Ver. 20. *And he said, the Jews have agreed to desire thee*, &c.] By the Jews are meant, the Jewish sanhedrim, for the young man had not only intelligence of the conspiracy, and lying in wait of the forty men or more; but also of the agreement which the sanhedrim at the motion of these men were come into, to make the following request to the chief captain; which seems to confirm the above conjecture, that this young man

might be a student under the president of the council, or one of the doctors, whereby he came at the knowledge of these things: *that thou wouldst bring down Paul to-morrow into the council*, &c. see the note on ver. 15.

Ver. 21. *But do not thou yield unto them*, &c.] Or be persuaded by them, to bring Paul down from the castle to the sanhedrim; this must not be imputed to the young man's pride and vanity, in taking upon him to give advice to the chief captain; but to his great affection for his uncle, which moved him to entreat, rather than to direct him, for which he gives a good reason: *for there lie in wait for him more than forty men, which have bound themselves with an oath, that they will neither eat nor drink till they have killed him*; see the notes on ver. 12, 13. *and now are they ready*; to execute their designs, being met together, and lying in ambush in some place, between the castle and the place where the sanhedrim met: *looking for a promise from thee*; that when the sanhedrim should apply to him, he would promise them to bring Paul down according to their request; and for the making and performing of this promise, these men were waiting.

Ver. 22. *So the chief captain then let the young man depart*, &c.] After he had had the account from him, and was master of the whole affair: *and charged him, see thou tell no man that thou hast shewed these things to me*; which was prudently said; it was a right and wise thing to conceal this matter, that the men might go on with their designs, and an opportunity be taken to convey Paul away, before the time came fixed by them to execute them; for otherwise, should it have been known that their plot was discovered, they would have entered upon new measures.

Ver. 23. *And he called to him two centurions*, &c.] Who had each of them an hundred soldiers under them: *saying, make ready two hundred soldiers to go to Cæsarea*; which was formerly called Strato's tower, a sea-port town, where Felix the Roman governor now was; it was six hundred furlongs, or seventy-five miles[f] from Jerusalem: these two hundred soldiers were foot-soldiers, as appears by their being distinguished from horsemen in the next clause, and were just the number that the two centurions had the command of; the making of them ready, was their seeing to it, that they were properly clothed, and accoutred with arms and ammunition, and with sufficient provision for their journey: *and horsemen threescore and ten*; the Ethiopic version reads, *a hundred*; but without support from any copy: *and spearmen two hundred*; who carried spears in their right hand; the word used signifies such who receive, lay hold on, or hold any thing in their right hand: some think it designs such who were employed in the militia, to lay hold on guilty persons, and hold them; the Alexandrian copy reads, δεξιοβόλους, those that cast with the right hand; and so reads the Syriac version, to which the Arabic agrees, which renders it *darters*; such as carried darts in their hands, and did not shoot out of a bow, but cast darts with their hands: now these being got ready, were ordered to march, *at the third hour of the night*; at nine o'clock at night, that they might go out unobserved, and before the petition from the sanhedrim was presented to him.

Ver. 24. *And provide them beasts*, &c.] Horses or mules; the Syriac version reads in the singular number, *a beast*; and one being sufficient for Paul, here may be a change of number; the Arabic and Ethiopic versions leave out these words, but the following clause makes them necessary: *that they may set Paul on*; on the beast, or on one of the beasts provided; if more than one were provided, they might be for his companions, to go along with him: *and bring him safe unto Felix the governor*; this man, of a servant, was made a freed-man by Claudius Cæsar[g], and by him appointed in the room of Cumanus governor of Judea[h]; he was the brother of Pallas, who had the chief management of affairs under the emperor; and this Felix married three persons successively, that were of royal families; hence Suetonius[i] calls him the husband of three queens; one of these was Drusilla, afterwards mentioned in ch. xxiv. 24. who was sister to King Agrippa. Tacitus calls him Antonius Felix[k], which name he had from Antonia the mother of Claudius, whose servant he was; Josephus[l] calls him Claudius Felix, which name he took from the Emperor Claudius, who from so low and mean a condition raised him to such honour and dignity; his name Felix signifies *happy*: according to Tacitus[m], when Felix was first sent into Judea, the government was divided between him and Cumanus; Felix had Samaria, and Cumanus the other part, which was called the nation of the Galileans; but Josephus takes no notice of any such division, he says[n], that Cumanus was banished; and after that Felix was sent by Cæsar, governor of Judea, of Galilee, Samaria, and Peræa; and so he seems to be governor of the whole country at this time; he was now at Cæsarea, and it is plain that Judea was under his government, since Paul, a prisoner at Jerusalem, is sent down unto him; and in this his government he continued during the life of Claudius; and when Nero became emperor, and added four cities to the kingdom of Agrippa, he constituted Felix governor of the rest of Judea[o]; which character he bore till he thought fit to remove him, and put Festus in his room, of whom mention is made hereafter: after these words the following ones are added, in the Vulgate Latin version, *for he was afraid lest perhaps the Jews should take him by force and kill him, and afterwards he should bear the reproach, as if he had took money*; but they are not to be found in any Greek copies.

Ver. 25. *And he wrote a letter after this manner*.] The chief captain wrote a letter to Felix the governor, the form and sum of which were as follow; this letter he sent by one of the centurions to him.

Ver. 26. *Claudius Lysias, unto the most excellent*

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[f] Joseph. de Bello Jud. l. 1. c. 3. sect. 5. Egesip de Excid. urb. l. 1. c. 7.

[g] Aurel. Victor. Epitome Imper. Rom. p. 324. Sueton. Vita Claudii, sect. 28.

[h] Joseph. de Bello Jud. l. 2. c. 12. sect. 8.

[i] Ut supra.

[k] Hist. l. 5.

[l] Antiqu. l. 20. c. 6. sect. 1.

[m] Hist. l. 12. & 21.

[n] Antiqu. l. 20. c. 5. sect. 3. & c. 6. sect. 1. De Bello Jud. l. 2. c. 12. sect. 7, 8.

[o] De Bello Jud. l. 2. c. 13. sect. 2.

Governor Felix, &c.] This is the inscription of the letter, and by it we learn the name of the chief captain, so often spoken of in this and the two preceding chapters, which was Claudius Lysias; the first of these names is a Roman one, and which he might take from the Emperor Claudius, for he was not a Roman born; and the latter seems to be a Greek name, and was his proper name, and he himself very likely was a Greek, since he purchased his freedom with money; one of this name was Archon of Athens [p]; and another is reckoned by Cicero [q], among the famous orators of Greece, and is often cited by Harpocratian [r]; one of Antiochus's noblemen, and who was of the blood-royal, and acted as a general against the Jews, was of this name [s]. The chief captain calls Felix the governor *the most excellent*, which was a title of honour that belonged to him as a governor; the same is given to Theophilus, Luke i. 3. sendeth *greeting;* or wishes all health and prosperity.

Ver. 27. *This man was taken by the Jews*, &c.] Meaning Paul, who was presented by the centurions to the governor, and was in his presence when the letter was opened and read, and who was taken by the Jews in the temple, and from thence dragged out and beaten by them: *and should have been killed of them;* and would have been killed, had it not been for the chief captain; he was very near being killed by them, he was nigh unto death: *then came I with an army and rescued him;* he came with the Roman band, which he had the command of, perhaps a thousand soldiers; for such a number he should have under him by his title; with these he came upon the Jews on a sudden, as they were beating Paul, and took him out of their hands, and saved him: *having understood that he was a Roman;* but this he did not know till afterwards, after he had bound him with two chains, and after he had ordered him to be bound with thongs, and examined by scourging; all which he covers and hides from the governor, and suggests that it was his great concern for the Roman name, and for a Roman citizen, which put him upon this enterprise.

Ver. 28. *And when I would have known the cause*, &c.] Or crime, he was guilty of: *wherefore they accused him;* which they charged him with, and for which they beat him almost to death: *I brought him forth into their council;* their court of judicature, the great sanhedrim.

Ver. 29. *Whom I perceived to be accused of questions of their law*, &c.] As about the resurrection of the dead, and a future state, which some in the council denied, and some asserted, which with this Heathen man were idle and foolish questions; or about the defiling of the temple, and speaking contemptibly of the law of Moses, the people of the Jews, and the holy place, which was the cry of the populace against him, and were things the captain knew little of: *but to have nothing laid to his charge worthy of death, or of bonds:* by the laws of the Romans; and yet he himself had bound him with two chains at the first taking of him, and afterwards ordered him to be bound with thongs, and scourged, of which he says nothing, being convinced of his error, and willing to hide it; however, he bears a full testimony to the innocence of the apostle.

Ver. 30. *And when it was told me*, &c.] As it was by Paul's sister's son, *how that the Jews laid wait for the man:* had formed a conspiracy to take away his life, and laid a scheme in order to it, and at least intended, if they were not actually in ambush, to seize him as he should be brought from the castle to the sanhedrim: *I sent straightway to thee;* the prisoner Paul, under a guard of soldiers; this he did directly, as soon as ever he heard of the design of the Jews; and he sent him to Felix, as being governor, to whom the judgment of this affair properly belonged, and who was best qualified for it, at least in the chief captain's account; and who doubtless consulted his own honour and safety, lest he should incur blame and disgrace, should a Roman have been slain through any neglect or want of care in him: *and gave commandment to his accusers also, to say before thee what* they had *against him;* it is reasonable to conclude, that he said nothing of this to them, though he might have determined he would, till after Paul was sent away; otherwise the affair would have been discovered, which he desired might be concealed: *farewell;* which is the conclusion of the epistle, and is a wish of health and happiness.

Ver. 31. *Then the soldiers, as it was commanded them, took Paul*, &c.] Out of the castle, and put him upon a beast, as the chief captain had ordered the centurions, and they had directed the soldiers to do: *and brought* him *by night to Antipatris;* they set out from Jerusalem at the third hour, or about nine o'clock at night, and travelled all night, and by break of day came to Antipatris; a city which lay in the road from Jerusalem to Cæsarea: it was built by Herod the great, in the best soil of his kingdom, enriched with rivers and woods [t]; and was so called by him, in memory of his father Antipater; it before went by the name of Chabar Zaba [u], or Capharsaba; the Jewish writers place it in the utmost borders of the land of Judea [w]; hence that phrase so often used by them, from Gebath to Antipatris [x], in like sense as from Dan to Beersheba, these two places being the utmost borders of the land: here it was that Simon the just, with some of the principal inhabitants of Jerusalem, met Alexander the great, who travelled all night, as these soldiers with Paul did, and came to Antipatris at sun-rising [y]. It was forty-two miles from Jerusalem. It was in the road from Judea to Galilee, as appears from the following canon of the Jews, concerning divorces [z]; "if a husband says to his wife, lo, this is "thy divorce, if I do not come thirty days hence, and "he goes from Judea to Galilee, and comes to Anti-"patris and returns, it becomes void;" the way from Jerusalem to Cæsarea lay through Nicopolis, Lydda,

[p] Fabricii Bibliograph. Antiqu. p. 213.
[q] De Claris Orator. vel Brutus, c. 82.
[r] Lex Decem Orator.
[s] 1 Maccab. iii. 32.
[t] Josephus De Bello Jud. l. 1. c. 21. sect. 9.
[u] Ib. Antiqu. l. 13. c. 15. sect. 1. & l. 16. c. 5. sect. 2.
[w] Bartenora in Misn. Gittin, c. 7. sect. 7.
[x] T. Hieros. Taanioth, fol. 69. 2. & Megilla, fol. 70. 1. & T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 62. 2. & Sanhedrin, fol. 94. 2. Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 18. 2. & Juchasin, fol. 108. 1. & Jarchi in Eccl. xi. 6.
[y] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 69. 1.
[z] Misn. Gittin, c. 7. sect. 7.

Antipatris, and Betthar; from Jerusalem to Nicopolis, according to the old Jerusalem Itinerary [a], were twenty-two miles; from thence to Lydda, ten miles; and from Lydda to Antipatris ten more (which make forty-two miles, as before observed); and from Antipatris to Betthar ten miles, and from thence to Cæsarea, sixteen more: so that when the apostle was at Antipatris, he had twenty-six miles more to go to Cæsarea; and hence it appears, that the length of the journey from Jerusalem to Cæsarea was sixty-eight miles; though Josephus [b] makes the distance to be six hundred furlongs, or seventy-five miles: and that the way from the one to the other lay through the places beforementioned, may be illustrated from what the same writer says, of some persons travelling from Cæsarea to Jerusalem; so he relates [c], concerning Quadratus governor of Syria, that from Tyre he came to Cæsarea, from Cæsarea to Lydda, and from Lydda to Jerusalem; and of Cestius the Roman general, he says [d], that from Cæsarea he came to Antipatris, and from Antipatris to Lydda, and from Lydda to Jerusalem, which clearly seems to be the same road the apostle went; and so Jerom [e], in the account he gives of the journey of Paula, says, that she came to Cæsarea, where she saw the house of Cornelius, the cottage of Philip, and the beds of the four virgin prophetesses; and from thence to Antipatris, a little town half pulled down, which Herod called after his father's name; and from thence to Lydda, now Diospolis, famous for the resurrection of Dorcas, and the healing of Æneas. Antipatris is, by Ptolomy [f], placed at the west of Jordan, and is mentioned along with Gaza, Lydda, and Emmaus; some take it to be the same with Capharsalama, mentioned in 1 Maccab. vii. 31. and others say, it is the same that is since called Assur or Arsuf, a town on the sea-coast, which is not likely, since it does not appear that Antipatris was a maritime city. The apostle could not now stay to preach the Gospel in this place, nor do we elsewhere read or hear of a Gospel church-state in it, until the *fifth* century; when it appears [g] there was a church here, and Polychronius was bishop of it, who was present at the council of Chalcedon, held in the year 451; and in the *eighth* century there were many Christians dwelt here, for in the year 744 there were many of them killed by the Arabians.

Ver. 32. *On the morrow they left the horsemen to go with him*, &c.] That is, the two hundred soldiers, and the two hundred spearmen, who were all on foot, left the seventy horsemen to conduct Paul to Cæsarea; for being come to Antipatris, all danger from the Jews was over: *and returned to the castle*; the castle Antonia in Jerusalem, from whence they set out.

Ver. 33. *Who, when they came to Cæsarea*, &c.] The seventy horsemen: *and delivered the epistle to the governor*; to Felix, governor of Judea, who was now at Cæsarea; namely, the letter which Claudius Lysias, the chief captain, sent to him; the form and contents of which are before given: these *presented Paul also before him*; concerning whom, and whose affairs, the letter was.

Ver. 34. *And when the governor had read* the letter, &c.] Which he doubtless opened and read as soon as he had received it, not knowing what important business might be contained in it, or of what dangerous consequence a neglect of reading it might be; this shewed care and diligence in him: *he asked of what province he was*; since he perceived by the letter he was a Roman, and that he might know whether he was under his jurisdiction, and whether the hearing of his case belonged to him; and it should seem that it rather belonged to the governor of Syria; but that the crimes he was charged with were committed in Judea, particularly that of profaning the temple. *And when he understood that he was of Cilicia*; which was a Roman province, in which Tarsus was, where Paul was born free; see ch. xxi. 39. and xxii. 3.

Ver. 35. *I will hear thee, said he*, &c.] The Arabic and Ethiopic versions read, *we will hear*, which is a grand courtly way of speaking: *when thine accusers are come*; which Lysias, in his letter, informed him that he had ordered them to come; which shews the governor to have some sense of justice and integrity, being desirous to hear both sides before he judged of the affair, though there was so much said in the chief captain's letter in favour of Paul's innocence, and against his enemies. *And he commanded him to be kept in Herod's judgment-hall*; or palace: this was a place built by Herod the great at Cæsarea, of whose magnificent buildings here Josephus gives a large account. For besides the famous haven or port which he made here, he adorned the place with splendid palaces, he built a theatre, and an amphitheatre, and a *forum* [h], which was either a market-place, or a court of judicature; and if the latter, perhaps the same that is here meant, in a part of which, or in a place adjoining to it, the apostle was put. Here he was kept by a guard of soldiers, but not in close confinement; he had much liberty, and his friends and acquaintance had leave to come to him; see ch. xxiv. 23. We read [i] of דימי של קיסרין, which some interpret *the chamber of the judges of Cæsarea*; or the place where they sat in judgment, and may be the same that is here meant; though others interpret it a prison; and so it seems was this judgment-hall of Herod's.

CHAP. XXIV.

Ver. 1. AND *after five days Ananias the high-priest descended with the elders*, &c.] From Jerusalem to Cæsarea: these five days are to be reckoned not from the seizing of Paul in the temple, but from his

[a] Apud Reland. Palestina Illustrata, l. 2. c. 4. p. 417.
[b] De Bello Jud. l. 1. c. 3. sect. 5.
[c] Ib. l. 2. c. 12. sect. 5, 6.
[d] Ib. c. 19. sect. 1.
[e] Epitaph. Paulæ, fol. 59. A.
[f] Geograph. l. 5. c. 16.
[g] Vid. Reland. Palestina Illustrata, l. 3. p. 569, 570.
[h] Joseph. de Bello Jud. l. 1. c. 21. sect. 5, 8.
[i] Megillat Esther, fol. 85. 1.

coming to Cæsarea: the Alexandrian copy reads, *after some days*, leaving it undetermined how many: the high-priest, with the elders, the members of the sanhedrim, with *some* of them, as the same copy and the Vulgate Latin version read, came down hither: not merely as accusers, by the order of the chief captain, but willingly, and of their own accord, to vindicate themselves and their people, lest they should fall under the displeasure of the Roman governor, for encouraging tumults and riots: the high-priest must be conscious to himself that he had acted in an illegal manner, in ordering Paul to be smitten on the mouth, in the midst of the council, in the presence of the chief captain; and if it had not been for the soldiers, Paul had been pulled to pieces in the council: and the elders knew what a hand they had in the conspiracy against his life; and they were sensible that this plot was discovered, and Paul was secretly conveyed away; and what the captain had wrote to the governor, they could not tell, and therefore made the more haste down to him, to set themselves right, and get Paul condemned: *and* with *a certain orator* named *Tertullus:* this man, by his name, seems to have been a Roman; and because he might know the Roman, or the Greek language, or both, which the Jews did not so well understand, and was very well acquainted with all the forms in the Roman courts of judicature, as well as was an eloquent orator; therefore they pitched upon him, and took him down with them to open and plead their cause. The name Tertullus is a diminutive from Tertius, as Marullus from Marius, Lucullus from Lucius, and Catullus from Catius. The father of the wife of Titus, before he was emperor, was of this name[k]; and some say her name was Tertulla; and the grandmother of Vespasian, by his father's side, was of this name, under whom he was brought up[l]. This man's title, in the Greek text, is Ῥήτωρ, *Rhetor*, a *rhetorician;* but though with the Latins an *orator* and a *rhetorician* are distinguished, an orator being one that pleads causes in courts, and a rhetorician a professor of rhetoric; yet, with the Greeks, the *Rhetor* is an orator; so Demosthenes was called; and so Cicero calls himself[m]. *Who informed the governor against Paul:* brought in a bill of information against him, setting forth his crimes, and declaring themselves his accusers; they appeared in open court against him, and accused him; for this is not to be restrained to Tertullus, but is said of the high-priest, and elders with him; for the word is in the plural number, though the Syriac version reads in the singular, and seems to refer it to the high-priest.

Ver. 2. *And when he was called forth,* &c.] Not Tertullus the orator; for this is not to be understood of him, and of his being admitted to speak, as is thought by some, but the Apostle Paul; which is put out of doubt by the Vulgate Latin version, which reads, *and Paul being cited;* he was ordered to be brought out of custody into the court, to hear his indictment, and answer for himself: *Tertullus began to accuse* him; to set forth his crimes, which he introduced with a flattering preface to Felix: *saying, seeing that by thee we enjoy great quietness, and that very worthy deeds are done unto this nation by thy providence;* very likely he might refer to his purging the country of robbers; he took Eleazar, the chief of them, who had infested the country for twenty years, and many others with him, whom he sent bound to Rome, and others of them he crucified; and whereas there arose up another set of men, under a pretence of religion, who led people into the wilderness, signifying, that God would shew them some signs of liberty; these seemed, to Felix, to sow the seeds, and lay the foundation of division and defection, which shewed his sagacity, and which Tertullus here calls *providence;* wherefore, foreseeing what would be the consequence of these things, if not timely prevented, he sent armed men, horse and foot, and destroyed great numbers of them; and particularly he put to flight the Egyptian false prophet, who had collected thirty thousand men together, and dispersed them[n]; and yet his government was attended with cruelty and avarice; witness the murder of Jonathan the high-priest, by a sort of cut-throats, who were connived at by him; particularly by the means of Dora his friend, whom he corrupted; and the pillaging of many of the inhabitants of Cæsarea[o]: so that this was a piece of flattery, used by Tertullus, to catch his ear, and gain attention, and insinuate himself into his affections.

Ver. 3. *We accept it always, and in all places,* &c.] The sense is, that the Jews observed with pleasure the provident care the governor took of their nation, and at all times spoke well of him; and wherever they came commended his conduct, and owned the favours they received from him, and the blessings they enjoyed under his government: and then giving him his title of honour, *most noble Felix:* Tertullus adds, that this the Jews did *with all thankfulness:* as sensible of the obligations they were under to him; but this was all a farce, mere artifice, and wretched flattery.

Ver. 4. *Notwithstanding, that I be not further tedious unto thee,* &c.] Suggesting, that he could say a great deal more under this head, but, for brevity-sake, should omit it; and because he would not tire his patience, and hinder business going forward: *I pray thee, that thou wouldst hear us of thy clemency a few words;* he praises him for his humanity and good nature, and for his patience in hearing causes, and promises him great conciseness in the account he should give him; and entreats that, according to his wonted goodness, he would condescend to hear what he had to lay before him; all which was artfully said to engage attention to him.

Ver. 5. *For we have found this man a pestilent fellow,* &c.] Pointing to Paul, the prisoner at the bar; the word here used signifies the *pest* or *plague* itself; and it was usual with orators among the Romans, when they would represent a man as a very wicked man, as dangerous to the state, and unworthy to live in it, to call him the pest of the city, or of the country, or of the empire, as may be observed in several places in Cicero's Orations. *And a mover of sedition among all*

[k] Sueton. in Vita Titi, l. 11. c. 4.
[l] Ib. Vita Vespasian. c. 2.
[m] De Oratore, l. 3. p. 295.

[n] Joseph. Antiqu. l. 20. c. 7.
[o] De Bello, l. 2. c. 13. sect. 7.

the Jews throughout the world: sedition was severely punished by the Romans, being what they carefully watched and guarded against, and was what the Jews were supposed to be very prone unto; and Tertullus would suggest, that the several riots, and tumults, and seditions, fomented by the Jews, in the several parts of the Roman empire, here called the world, were occasioned by the apostle: the crime charged upon him is greatly aggravated, as that not only he was guilty of sedition, but that he was the mover of it, and that he stirred up all the Jews to it, and that in every part of the world, or empire, than which nothing was more false; the Jews often raised up a mob against him, but he never rioted them, and much less moved them against the Roman government: and to this charge he adds, *and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes;* not Nazarites, as Calvin seems to understand the passage; for these were men of great repute among the Jews, and for Paul to be at the head of them would never be brought against him as a charge: but Nazarenes, that is, Christians, so called by way of contempt and reproach, from Jesus of Nazareth; which name and sect being contemptible among the Romans, as well as Jews, are here mentioned to make the apostle more odious.

Ver. 6. *Who also hath gone about to profane the temple,* &c.] By introducing a Greek into it; see ch. xxi. 28, 29. which was only a supposition and conjecture of the Asiatic Jews, and was a false and groundless one: *whom we took;* as they did in the temple, and dragged him out of it: *and would have judged according to our law;* which was another untruth, for they had him not before any court of judicature; they brought no charge in form against him, nor did they examine his case, and inquire into the truth of things, or hear what he had to say, but fell upon him, and beat him; and if it had not been for the chief captain and his soldiers, would have destroyed him, so far were they from proceeding according to their law: it seems by Tertullus calling the law, *our law,* that he was a Jewish proselyte; or else he speaks after the manner of lawyers, who call what is their clients, theirs.

Ver. 7. *But the chief captain Lysias came upon us,* &c.] Suddenly, and at unawares, immediately, and with great haste, before they could execute their designs; which were not to judge Paul according to law, but to kill him, in the manner the zealots did: *and with great violence took* him *away out of our hands;* for he came with an army, and rescued him, ch. xxiii. 27. Some copies add, *and sent him to thee;* and so the Syriac version reads.

Ver. 8. *Commanding his accusers to come unto thee,* &c.] But this was not done till after Paul had set forth his case before the people, upon the stairs leading to the castle: and after he had pleaded his own cause before the sanhedrim; and after the chief captain had had intelligence of the Jews lying in wait to kill him: Tertullus would insinuate that the captain was blameworthy, that he hindered a legal process against Paul; and that it was owing to him, that this trouble was given the governor, as well as the high-priest and elders, who by his orders came down from Jerusalem to Cæsarea; and that had it not been for him this affair might have been finished with more dispatch, and less trouble. *By examining of whom;* not the accusers, but either the chief captain, as some think, or rather Paul: *thyself mayst take knowledge of all these things whereof we accuse him;* so impudent was Tertullus, and of such effrontery and assurance, that he feared not to say, that the governor, by examining Paul himself, would easily come to the knowledge of the things he was accused of, and plainly see that he was guilty of them; so that there would be no need of their attestations, or of producing witnesses against him.

Ver. 9. *And the Jews also assented,* &c.] That is, Ananias the high-priest, and the elders that were with him, agreed to what Tertullus said, and confirmed the same. *Saying, that these things were so;* that Paul was such a person, and was guilty of the crimes he had set forth; and that the chief captain had taken the steps, and done the things he had related.

Ver. 10. *Then Paul, after the governor had beckoned unto him to speak,* &c.] Tertullus having finished his account, Paul was silent to his charge and calumnies, until the governor beckoned with his hand or head, or made some sign to him to speak for himself; which he might not do, until leave was given him; and then he *answered* as follows: *forasmuch as I know that thou hast been of many years a judge unto this nation;* some say he was in the thirteenth, others in the tenth year of his government; some copies read a *just judge;* but this does not so well agree with the character of Felix; see the note on ver. 27. *I do the more cheerfully answer for myself;* since if he had been such a mover of sedition everywhere, he must in this course of years have known or heard something of it; and seeing also he could be no stranger to the temper of the Jews, that they were given to envy, revenge, lying, and perjury, and therefore would not easily believe all they said, or rashly take their part, but rather would pity the apostle, who had fallen into such hands, and do him justice.

Ver. 11. *Because that thou mayst understand,* &c.] By what Paul now asserted, and by the witnesses which he could produce to certify the truth of it: *that there are yet but twelve days since I went up to Jerusalem for to worship;* that is, from the time that he went up from Cæsarea to Jerusalem, to the present time, in which he stood before Felix, pleading his own cause; which may be reckoned thus, he came in one day from Cæsarea to Jerusalem, ch. xxi. 16, 17. the next day he visited James and the elders, ver. 18. on the third day he purified himself in the temple, ver. 26. where he was taken and used ill by the Jews; on the fourth day, he was brought before the sanhedrim, and defended himself, ch. xxii. 30. on the fifth day forty Jews conspire to take away his life, ch. xxiii. 11, 12. on the sixth day he came to Cæsarea, being sent there by Lysias, ver. 32. and five days after this, which make eleven, Ananias, and the elders, with Tertullus, came down to accuse him; and this day was the twelfth, on which his trial came on. And of these twelve days he was a prisoner nine, and therefore could not have done so much mischief, and stirred up so much sedition as was insinuated; and in opposition to the charge of profaning the temple, he observes that he came up to Jerusalem to *worship;* namely, at the feast of Pentecost.

Ver. 12. *And they neither found me in the temple disputing with any man*, &c.] Either about civil or religious affairs: not that it was criminal to dispute in the temple; it was a common thing for the doctors to dispute about matters of religion, in the porches, and courts, and chambers of the temple, as it may be observed they often did with Christ; but the apostle mentions this to shew, that he was so far from moving sedition among the people of the Jews, that he never so much as entered into any conversation with them, upon any subject whatever: true indeed, he was in the temple, and was found there, but not disputing with any, but purifying himself according to the law of Moses: *neither raising up the people:* stirring them up to sedition, and tumult, to rebel against the Roman government: *neither in the synagogues:* where there were the greatest concourse of people, and the best opportunity of sowing seditious principles, and of which there were many in the city of Jerusalem. The Jews say[p] there were four hundred and sixty synagogues in Jerusalem; some say[q] four hundred and eighty: *nor in the city;* of Jerusalem, in any of the public streets or markets, where there were any number of people collected together; the apostle mentions the most noted and public places, where any thing of this kind might most reasonably be thought to be done.

Ver. 13. *Neither can they prove the things whereof they now accuse me.*] As that he was a pestilent fellow, a mover of sedition, and a profaner of the temple: these things they could not set forth in any clear light, and bring testimonies, or give demonstration of; they could not make them appear to be true, which it lay upon them to do, or otherwise in course he ought to be acquitted: this was challenging and defying them to make good their assertions.

Ver. 14. *But this I confess unto thee*, &c.] What was truth he was not ashamed of, but ready to own, and bear his testimony for, whatever was the consequence of it: *that after the way which they call heresy:* referring to the charge of his being a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes, ver. 5. and meaning by *the way* the Christian religion, or the doctrines of Christianity, which the Jews called heresy; and as early as this were the Christians, by them, called heretics: so we read[r] of ברכת המינים, *a prayer against the heretics*, which Samuel (the little) composed before, or in the presence of R. Gamaliel the elder, he approving of it; which R. Gamaliel was Paul's master; and some have thought, that Samuel the little, the composer of this prayer, was Saul himself; so that he knew very well that the Christian doctrine was called heresy, and the Christians heretics, for he had called them so himself in the time of his unregeneracy; but now he was not ashamed to profess that way, and walk in it, and according to it worship God, as follows: *so worship I the God of my fathers;* even Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, suggesting, that by embracing Christianity, he had not denied, and gone off from the worship of the one, only, living, and true God, the God of Israel; and that there was an entire agreement between the saints of the Old Testament, and the Christians of the New, in the object of worship; the Vulgate Latin version reads, *so serve I the father, and my God;* that is, God the father, who is the father of Christ, and the God and father of believers in him: *believing all things which are written in the law and the prophets;* which the Sadducees did not; and strictly adhering to these, and not to the traditions of the elders, as did the Scribes and Pharisees; so that since he believed whatever was contained in the sacred writings, he could not be charged justly with heresy; and as he believed, so he taught nothing but what was agreeably to the Scriptures of the Old Testament.

Ver. 15. *And have hope towards God*, &c.] Of an interest in him, and of enjoying eternal life and happiness with him in a future state: *which they themselves also allow;* that is, some of the Jews, not the Sadducees, for they denied what is afterwards asserted; but the Pharisees, who believed the immortality of the soul, and its existence in a future state: *and that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust;* agreeably to the doctrine of Christ in John v. 28, 29. In this article the Pharisees of those times were sounder than the modern Jews; for though the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead is one of their thirteen articles of faith, and is a fundamental one, which he that does not believe, cannot be said to be of the Jewish religion; yet they limit it entirely to the righteous[s], and will not allow that the wicked shall rise again: and this notion obtained also very early; for in their Talmud[t] it is reported, as the saying of R. Abhu, that "the day of rain is greater than the resurrection of the dead; the resurrection of the dead is לצדיקים, *for the righteous*, but the rain is both for the righteous, and the wicked." Though Abarbinel[u] says, that the sense of this expression is not, that they that are not just shall have no part in the resurrection, but that hereby is declared the benefit and reward to be enjoyed at the resurrection; that that is not like rain, from whence both just and unjust equally receive advantage; whereas only the reward is for the righteous, but not for the ungodly: moreover, he observes, that this saying was not received and approved of by all the wise men, particularly that R. Joseph dissented, and others agreed with him; and as for himself, he openly declares, that that assertion, that the just among the Israelites only shall rise again, is foreign from truth, since the Scripture affirms, Dan. xii. 2. that *many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake:* but if there should be no other than the righteous in the resurrection, they would without doubt be very few; besides it is said, *some to everlasting life, and some to everlasting contempt;* and Isaiah says, ch. lxvi. 24. *and they shall go forth and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me;* which shews, that the ungodly shall rise again, to receive their due punishment: and Menasseh

[p] T. Hieros. Cetubot, fol. 35. 3.
[q] Ib. Megilla, fol. 73. 4.
[r] Ganz Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 25. 2. Vid. T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 28. 2. & 29. 1. Maimon. Hilch. Tephilla, c. 2. sect. 1.

[s] Maimon. in Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 11. sect. 1. Kimchi in Isa. xxvi. 19. Aben Ezra & Saadiah Gaon in Dan. xii. 2.
[t] T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 7. 1.
[u] Prefat. in Isa. fol. 3. 1.

ben Israel [x], in the last century, argued for the resurrection of both the godly and ungodly, from the same passages of Scripture; and yet he was not of opinion, that the resurrection would be general and common to all men, only that some of all sorts, good, and bad, and middling, would rise again, and which he supposed was the sense of the ancients. It is certain the Jews are divided in their sentiments about this matter; some of them utterly deny that any other shall rise but the just; yea, they affirm [a], that only the just among the Israelites, and not any of the nations of the world shall rise; others say that all shall rise at the resurrection of the dead, excepting the generation of the flood [y]; and others [z] think, that only they that have been very bad, or very good, shall rise, but not those that are between both; but certain it is, as the apostle affirms, that all shall rise, both just and unjust: the *just* are they who are made so by the righteousness of Christ imputed to them, and who being created anew unto righteousness and true holiness, live soberly, righteously, and godly; the *unjust* are they who are destitute of righteousness, and are filled with all unrighteousness; and these latter, as well as the former, will rise again from the dead; which is clear, not only from the words of Christ, and the writings of the apostles, but from the Scriptures of the Old Testament, particularly Dan. xii. 2. and also from the justice of God, which requires that they who have sinned in the body, should be punished in the body; wherefore it is necessary on this account, that the bodies of the wicked should be raised, that they with their souls may receive the full and just recompense of reward; and likewise from the general judgment, which will include the righteous and the wicked, and who must all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ, to receive for the deeds done in the body, whether good or evil; in order to which there must be a resurrection of them; to which add, the account the Scripture gives of the punishment of the wicked in hell, which supposes the resurrection of the body, and in which the body and soul will be both destroyed. Indeed there will be a difference between the resurrection of the just and of the unjust, both in the time of their rising, the dead in Christ will rise first at the beginning of the thousand years, the wicked not until they are ended; and in the means and manner of their rising; they will be both raised by Christ, but the one by virtue of union to him, the other merely by his power; the just will rise in bodies not only immortal, and incorruptible, but powerful, spiritual, and glorious, even like to the glorious body of Christ; the wicked will rise with bodies immortal, but not free from sin, nor glorious: yea, their resurrection will differ in the end of it; the one will rise to everlasting life and glory, the other to everlasting shame and damnation.

Ver. 16. *And herein do I exercise myself*, &c.] Or *because of this*; on account of this doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, which is a doctrine according to godliness, and promotes and engages to a holy life and conversation, as the contrary tends to encourage a dissolute and sinful manner of living; see 1 Cor. xv. 32. The apostle studied, and laboured, and bent himself, and employed his thought, care, and time, *to have always a conscience void of offence toward God and toward man*: that is, to discharge every duty which God requires, and to give to every man what is due to him; so as to please God, and not offend men, neither Jew nor Gentile, nor the church of God; and so as that conscience may be clear of guilt, and may not be defiled with sin, being purged and purified by the blood of Christ. By a *conscience void of offence*, is meant a good conversation; which as it respects God, lies in a carefulness not to offend him, but to do his will; and as it respects men, a shunning what may give offence, or be a stumbling to them; and though this cannot be perfectly attained to in each of its branches, yet there is in every good man a concern to have such a conscience; and the consideration of the resurrection of the dead, the general judgment, and a future state, induce him to it.

Ver. 17. *Now after many years*, &c.] Absence from Jerusalem; it was now about five-and-twenty years since his conversion, and most of this time he spent among the Gentiles; three years after it he went up to Jerusalem, and fourteen years after that, Gal. i. 18. and ii. 1. but it had now been some years since he had been there: *I came to bring alms to my nation*; the collections which were made among the Gentile churches, particularly in Macedonia, for the poor saints at Jerusalem, Rom. xv. 25, 26, 27. 2 Cor. viii. 1—4. *and offerings*: either for the day of Pentecost, according to the usages of that feast, or the offerings on the account of the vow of the Nazarite, ch. xxi. 26. The Vulgate Latin version adds, *and vows*; unless the spiritual and evangelical sacrifices of prayer and praise can be thought to be meant, since the ceremonial law was now abrogated; though it is manifest the apostle did at some times, and in some cases, comply with the Jews in the observance of it, in order to gain some.

Ver. 18. *Whereupon*, &c.] Or *among which*: while the apostle was busy about the offerings of the Nazarites: *certain Jews from Asia found me purified in the temple*; and therefore could not be said to profane it; this he observes in answer to the charge of his attempting to profane it, and acquaints the governor how that was; as that having joined himself to four men that had a vow upon them, and being in the temple purifying himself with them, certain Jews that came from Ephesus, in Asia, who knew him there, and had a pique against him, found him here; not profaning the temple, as they pretended, but acting according to the worship and service of it: and that, *neither with a multitude*; for there were but four men with him; *nor with tumult*: making any noise and riot, or stirring up persons to sedition and rebellion.

Ver. 19. *Who ought to have been here before thee*, &c.] For they were the only persons who saw him in the temple, and what he was doing; and who by an hideous outcry raised a mob upon him, who took things upon hearsay from them: *and object, if they had ought against me*: either with respect to sedition, or blas-

[x] De Resurrectione Mortuorum, l. 2. c. 8.
[a] Vid. Pocock, Not. Miscel. in port. Mosis, p. 183.
[y] Pirke Eliezer, c. 34.
[z] Vid. Menassah ben Israel, ut supra.

phemy, error or heresy, if they were capable of proving any thing.

Ver. 20. *Or else let these same* here *say*, &c.] They that are present, the high-priest and the elders, who were come down to accuse him: *if they have found any evil-doing in me, while I stood before the council;* or *Jewish sanhedrim;* when he was brought before them by the chief captain, ch. xxii. 30. and xxiii. 1. meaning, if any evil was then done by him, or any iniquity proved upon him, let it be declared: for as for his imprecation, or prophecy, that God would smite the high-priest, he excused himself on that head, as not knowing it was the high-priest.

Ver. 21. *Except it be for this one voice*, &c.] Sentence or expression following, which declares his faith about the resurrection; not that he thought or owned that this was an evil in him, but that it was the only one, that any of them, the Jews, a part among them, namely, the Sadducees, could condemn, or judge to be evil in him: *that I cried, standing among them:* whereby they were thrown into confusion and division among themselves: and it was this, *touching the resurrection of the dead I am called in question by you this day:* see ch. xxiii. 6.

Ver. 22. *And when Felix heard these things*, &c.] Which were said on both sides, both by plaintiff and defendant, the charges brought against Paul, and his answer to them, as a judge ought to do: *having more perfect knowledge of* that *way;* the Christian religion, which the Jews called heresy, and Paul had embraced; the sense is, either that he had a more perfect knowledge of it than he had before; and by what Paul had said, he saw that it was not contrary to the law, nor had any tendency to promote sedition and tumult; or rather, when he should have more perfect knowledge of this new way, called the sect of the Nazarenes, he would determine this cause, and not before: wherefore *he deferred them;* put them off to longer time, and would make no decision in favour of one side or the other: *and said, when Lysias the chief captain shall come* from Jerusalem to Cæsarea, *I will know the uttermost of your matters:* as for the way, or religion of the Christians, he proposed doubtless to consult other persons; and as for the profanation of the temple, and especially about stirring up of sedition, he would inquire of Lysias about that; and when he had got full information of these particulars, then he promised them to bring things to an issue, and finish the cause.

Ver. 23. *And he commanded a centurion to keep Paul*, &c.] In custody, to watch and guard him, and look after him, that he went not away, since he was neither condemned nor acquitted; and therefore must be retained a prisoner, till one or other was done: *and to let* him *have liberty;* not to go where he pleased, or out of the place of confinement, for then there would have been no need of the after-direction, not to prohibit his friends from coming to him; but to free him from his bonds and close confinement; which was done, partly on account of his being a Roman, and partly because he took him to be an innocent man, and it may be because he hoped to receive money from him: *that he should forbid none of his acquaintance to minister or come unto him;* but that they should have free access to him, and the liberty of conversation with him; which favours granted shew that he was inclined to the side of Paul, both through the defence that he had made for himself, and through the letter which Lysias sent him, as well as through the knowledge he had gained by long observation and experience, of the temper and disposition of the Jews, their priests and elders.

Ver. 24. *And after certain days*, &c.] Some days after this trial: *when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, which was a Jewess;* to Cæsarea, having been to fetch her from some other place, or to meet her: this woman was the daughter of Herod Agrippa, who was eaten by worms, ch. xii. 23. and sister to King Agrippa, mentioned in the next chapter; but though she was born of Jewish parents, and so a Jewess, as she is here called, yet her name was a Roman name, and is the diminutive of Drusus; the first of which name took it from killing Drausus, an enemy's general, and who was of the Livian family; and the name of the mother of Tiberius Cæsar was Livia Drusilla; Caius Caligula, the Roman emperor, had also a sister whose name was Drusilla[a]; this name Herod took from the Romans, and gave to his daughter; though the masculine name is often to be met with in Jewish writings; we frequently read of רבי דרוסאי, *Rabbi Drusai*[b]; Herod Agrippa left three daughters, born to him of Cypris, Bernice, Mariamne, and Drusilla; and a son by the same, whose name was Agrippa; Agrippa when his father died was seventeen years of age, Bernice was sixteen, and was married to her uncle Herod; Mariamne and Drusilla were virgins, but were promised in marriage by their father; Mariamne to Julius Archelaus, son of Chelcias, and Drusilla to Epiphanes, the son of Antiochus, king of Comagene; but after Herod's death, he refused to marry her, being unwilling to embrace the Jewish religion and relinquish his own, though he had promised her father he would; wherefore her brother Agrippa married her to Azizus king of the Emesenes, who was willing to be circumcised; but this marriage was quickly dissolved; for Felix coming to the government of Judea, seeing Drusilla, was enamoured with her beauty; and by the means of one of his friends, one Simon a Jew, and a native of Cyprus, who pretended to be a magician, he enticed her from her husband, and prevailed upon her to marry him: *he sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ;* which he did, chiefly on account of his wife, who being brought up in the Jewish religion, had some notion of the Messiah the Jews expected, and could better understand what Paul talked of than he did; who at this time doubtless shewed, that Christ was come, and that Jesus of Nazareth was he; that he is truly God and man, that he died, and rose again from the dead on the third day, and that he has obtained salvation for sinners, and that whoever believes in him shall be saved; this was the faith

[a] Sueton. in Vita Tiberii, sect. 3, 4, & in Vita Caligulæ, sect. 7.

[b] Shemot Rabba, sect. 35. fol. 136. 4. & sect. 43. fol. 140. 4. Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 14. 4. & 18. 2. Juchasin, fol. 86. 1.

[c] Joseph. de Bello Jud. l. 2. c. 11. sect. 6. Antiqu. l. 19. c. 9. sect. 1. l. 20. c. 6 sect. 1, 2.

in Christ Paul discoursed of, and Felix and his wife heard; but it does not appear that it was attended with the power of God, to the conversion of either of them; it seems to have been merely out of curiosity, and as a diversion to them, and to do his wife a pleasure, that he sent for Paul and heard him.

Ver. 25. *And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come,* &c.] The apostle not only discoursed concerning the doctrine of faith in Christ, but insisted upon the duties of religion: and particularly he reasoned upon *righteousness;* not justifying righteousness, that is only the righteousness of Christ, and which rather belongs to the doctrine of faith in Christ; but the exercise of justice, or the doing of righteousness between man and man; which was agreeably to the light of nature, to the law of God, and Gospel of Christ, and is a virtue highly necessary in a judge, and was greatly wanting in Felix; who, as the historian says [d], was guilty of much cruelty and injustice throughout his government, and therefore very appositely did the apostle fall on this subject: and he might also reason concerning the necessity of a righteousness, in order to justify before God, and to appear before him with acceptance, and to enter into heaven: he might shew, that it was the loss of righteousness which was the reason of the first man being removed from his place and state of happiness, in which he was whilst innocent; and that to admit persons into heaven without a righteousness, is contrary to the pure and holy nature of God, who loves righteousness, and hates iniquity; and particularly would not be agreeable to his justice, which requires a perfect righteousness; yea, it would be uncomfortable to holy men themselves, to have ungodly and unrighteous persons with them in heaven: he might also reason upon the want of righteousness, which is in every man; how that the first man having lost his righteousness, all his posterity are destitute of one; and that they are not able to work out one acceptable to God, and which will justify in his sight; that the thing is impracticable and impossible, and that that which men call a righteousness is not one, at least is not a justifying one: he might insist upon the unprofitableness of a man's own works of righteousness for such a purpose, by observing the imperfection of them; and that justification by them is contrary to God's declared way of justifying sinners, is derogatory to his free grace, would make null and void the death of Christ, and encourage boasting in men; and all this he might reason about, in order to convince him of the necessity and suitableness of the righteousness of faith in Christ, he had before been discoursing of: and very pertinently in the next place did he insist on *temperance;* or *continence,* and chastity; since Felix had enticed away another man's wife, and now lived in adultery with her: and who was now with him, whilst hearing this discourse; which concluded with an account of *judgment to come:* how that Jesus Christ is appointed the Judge of quick and dead, and that all must appear before him, stand at his bar, and be accountable to him for all their actions, and be judged by him, which will be done in the most righteous manner: he might argue this, not only from the Scriptures of the Old Testament, of which Drusilla might have some knowledge, such as Psal. xcvi. 13. Eccles. iii. 17. and xi. 9. and xii. 14. Dan. vii. 9, 10. but from reason, from the relation which men stand in to God, as his creatures, and therefore are accountable to him for their actions; and from the justice of God, which in many instances, in the present state of things, is not manifest: good men are afflicted and suffer much, and bad men flourish and enjoy great prosperity; wherefore there must be another state in which things will have another turn, and justice will take place: he might from hence conclude the certainty of a future judgment; and the universality of it, that it would reach to all men and things; and would proceed according to the strict rules of justice, and in the most awful manner; and that a true and just sentence would be pronounced and strictly executed: upon which account of things, *Felix trembled;* his conscience was awakened, accused him of the injustice and incontinence he had been guilty of; and his mind was filled with horror, at the thought of the awful judgment he could not escape, which Paul had described unto him; nor could he bear him to discourse any longer on these subjects: *and answered, go thy way for this time, when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee;* he signifying he was not at leisure now to hear him any longer; when he had a spare hour he would send for him, and hear him out; but this was only an excuse to get rid of him now, and lull his conscience asleep, and make it quiet and easy; which he was afraid would be more and more disturbed, should he suffer Paul to go on preaching in this manner: it is a saying of R. Judah [e], "say not when I am at leisure "I will learn, perhaps thou wilt never be at leisure."

Ver. 26. *He hoped also that money would have been given him of Paul,* &c.] For he observed from his own defence, that he came up to Jerusalem to bring alms and offerings; and he perceived by Tertullus's indictment, that he was at the head of a large body of men; that he was some considerable person, at least who was in great esteem among some sort of people, and whose life and liberty were valuable: and he might hope if Paul had not money of his own, yet his friends would supply him with a sufficiency to obtain his freedom: and it may be that it was with this view that he ordered that they should have free access to him and minister to him, that so he might have to give to him: *that he might loose him:* from all confinement, and set him at entire liberty: *wherefore he sent for him the oftener, and communed with him;* but not about religious matters, but about his civil affairs; suggesting he would release him for a sum of money, which the apostle did not listen to, being unwilling to encourage such evil practices, or to make use of unlawful means to free himself.

Ver. 27. *But after two years,* &c.] Not of Felix's government, for he had been judge many years in that nation, but of the apostle's confinement at Cæsarea: *Porcius Festus came in Felix's room:* was made governor of Judea by Nero in his stead; who having had many and loud complaints against him for mal-practices, removed him: and so Josephus [f] says, that Festus suc-

[d] Tacit. Hist. l. 5.

[e] Pirke Abot, c. 2. sect. 4.

[f] De Bello Jud. l. 2. c. 14. sect. 1. & Antiqu. l. 20. c. 7. sect. 9.

ceeded Felix in the government of Judea, and calls him as here, Porcius Festus; in the Arabic version he is called Porcinius Festus, and in the Vulgate Latin version Portius Festus, but his name was not Portius, from *porta*, a gate, but Porcius, a porcis, *from hogs*: it was common with the Romans to take names from the brute creatures; so Suillius from swine, Caprarius and Caprilius from goats, Bubulcus from oxen, and Ovinius from sheep. The famous Cato was of the family of the Porcii; his name was M. Porcius Cato, and came from Tusculum, a place about twelve miles from Rome, where there is a mountain which still retains the name of Porcius; we read also of Porcius Licinius, a Latin poet, whose fragments are still extant; whether this man was of the same family is not certain, it is very likely he might: his surname Festus signifies joyful and cheerful, as one keeping a feast; this was a name common with the Romans, as Rufus Festus, Pompeius Festus, and others: *and Felix, willing to shew the Jews a pleasure, left Paul bound*: he had done many injuries to their persons and properties, he had greatly abused them, and incensed them against him; and now he was sent for to Rome, to answer for his mal-administration; wherefore, to gratify the Jews, and to oblige them, in hopes that they would not follow him with charges and accusations, at least would mitigate them, and not bear hard upon him, he leaves Paul bound at Cæsarea, when it was in his power to have loosed him, and who he knew was an innocent person: but this piece of policy did him no service, for the persons he had wronged, the chief of the Jews at Cæsarea, went to Rome, and accused him to Cæsar; and he was sent by his successor thither, to appear before Nero, and answer to the charges exhibited against him; and had it not been for his brother Pallas, who was in great authority at court, he had been severely punished [g].

CHAP. XXV.

Ver. 1. *Now when Festus was come into the province*, &c.] Of Judea, which was a Roman province, over which he was made governor by Nero, the Roman emperor, in the room of Felix; he now being landed in some part of the province, namely, at Cæsarea, and so might be said to have entered upon the government of it, as the phrase will bear to be rendered; *after three days he ascended from Cæsarea to Jerusalem*; he very likely came by sea from Italy to Judea, and landed at Cæsarea; for though Joppa was the nearest port to Jerusalem, yet Cæsarea was the safest, and most commodious port, being made so by Herod; see the note on ch. xviii. 22. and besides, it seems to have been very much the residence of the kings and governors of Judea, ch. xii. 19. and xxiii. 24, 35. here Festus stayed three days after his landing, to rest himself after the fatigue of the voyage, and then went up to Jerusalem, the metropolis of the province of Judea.

Ver. 2. *Then the high-priest*, &c.] Ananias, as in ch. xxiii. 2. and xxiv. 1. the Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin version, and all the Oriental versions, read, *the chief priests*, the whole college of the priests: *and the chief of the Jews*: their rulers and elders, the members of the Jewish sanhedrim; *informed him against Paul*; they took the first opportunity of waiting upon him, when he was come to Jerusalem; hoping it might be a favourable one to them, since he was just entering upon his government, and might be willing to gratify the chief of the nation, and gain their affection and esteem, and since as yet he was not acquainted with their wicked dispositions and artifices; and brought a bill of information against Paul, and gave a large account of him, what a wicked man he was, and what evils he had committed; they laid many things to his charge, and very heavily accused him, and endeavoured to prepossess the governor, and prejudice him against him: *and besought him*; that he would grant them the following request.

Ver. 3. *And desired favour against him*, &c.] Paul; they asked what would be a favour to them, and a prejudice to him: or *of him*, that is, of Festus; they asked a favour of him, and desired it as such, as what would be gratefully accepted and acknowledged by them; which sense is confirmed by the Syriac version; the Arabic version renders it *to*, or *upon them*; that is, they asked him to grant a favour to them, or bestow one on them, which is as follows: *that he would send for him to Jerusalem*; that his case might be heard before him, and he might be tried and judged by him, as they pretended: *laying wait in the way to kill him*: this was their design, though they concealed it, and pretended no other view than that justice might take place: their scheme was, that if they could have prevailed upon Festus to have sent for Paul to Jerusalem, from Cæsarea, they would have provided men, perhaps the same forty and upwards as before, in ch. xxiii. 12, 13. to have laid in wait for him in the way as he came, and to have killed him: the whole of this shews the malice of these men, the badness of their cause, the indefatigableness and diligence to attain their end, the danger the apostle was in, and the care of Providence over him.

Ver. 4. *But Festus answered, that Paul should be kept at Cæsarea*, &c.] Or that he was kept there, and was in proper custody, under the care of a centurion, and should continue there; nor was there any reason why he should be removed, especially since he should return thither speedily, as he adds: *and that he himself would depart shortly* thither; the answer was a very wise and prudent one, and the reasons given were just and strong; as that Paul had been sent to Cæsarea, was left bound by his predecessor there; there he found him, and there he was under a proper guard, and there it was right for him to continue; and besides, he himself should make no stay in Jerusalem, but should depart for Cæsarea in a few days, and therefore it was very improper to send for Paul thither.

[g] Joseph. Antiqu. l. 20. c. 7. sect. 9.

Ver. 5. *Let them therefore, said he, which among you are able,* &c.] Who are at leisure, can spare time, and to whom it will be convenient, without interrupting other business, to take such a journey; and who are able to bear the expenses of it, without hurting their families, and whose health and age will admit of it; and above all, who are masters of this affair, and are capable of forming charges, and of supporting them with proper proofs and evidences: *let such go down with* me; from Jerusalem to Cæsarea: *and accuse this man*: in proper form, according to the rules of law, of what he is guilty, and can be proved upon him: *if there is any wickedness in him*: or committed by him, any thing that is absurd and unreasonable, notoriously flagitious and criminal; that is, contrary to the rules of reason, the common sense of mankind, and the laws of God and men; and especially of the Roman empire, or that is blasphemous or seditious.

Ver. 6. *And when he had tarried among them more than ten days,* &c.] The Alexandrian copy, and three of Beza's copies, and some others, and the Vulgate Latin version read, *no more than eight or ten days*: and the Syriac and Ethiopic versions leave out the phrase *no more*, and read *when he had staid there*, as the former; that is, at Jerusalem; or *when he had remained among them*, as the latter; the Jews, chief priests, and others, *eight or ten days*; the historian, not being certain to a day, expresses himself in this manner: *he went down to Cæsarea*: from whence he came, and where Paul was: *and the next day sitting in the judgment-seat*; the day after he was come to Cæsarea, he sat upon the bench in the court of judicature, to try causes, and particularly the apostle's, which he was very desirous of knowing, for which reason he so soon took the bench: and *commanded Paul to be brought*; from the place where he was kept a prisoner, to the judgment-hall where Festus was.

Ver. 7. *And when he was come,* &c.] Into court: *the Jews which came down from Jerusalem*; along with Festus, perhaps the high-priest with the elders, and Tertullus the orator, as before: *stood round about*: either the Apostle Paul, or the judgment-seat; the witnesses and accusers were to stand, as well as the person accused; see the note on Mark xiv. 57. *And laid many and grievous complaints against Paul; which they could not prove*: for his moral conversation, both before and after conversion, was very strict and conformable to the laws of God and man; and yet as pure and inoffensive as he was, he was not exempt from the calumnies of men; and these many and very grievous; but it was his happiness, and to his honour through the grace of God, that his enemies could not make good any one thing against him.

Ver. 8. *While he answered for himself,* &c.] As he was allowed by the Roman laws to do, he pleaded his own cause, and shewed the falsehood of the charges exhibited against him; by observing, that as the crimes alleged against him were reducible to three heads, neither of them were just and true: *neither against the law of the Jews*; the law of Moses, whether moral, ceremonial, or judicial; not the moral law, that he was a strict observer of, both before and since his conversion; nor the ceremonial law, for though it was abolished, and he knew it was, yet for peace-sake, and in condescension to the weakness of some, and in order to gain others, he submitted to it, and was performing a branch of it, when he was seized in the temple; nor the judicial law, which concerned the Jews as Jews, and their civil affairs: *neither against the temple*; at Jerusalem, the profanation of which he was charged with, by bringing a Gentile into it; which was a falsehood, at least a mistake: *nor yet against Cæsar, have I offended at all*; for he was charged with sedition, ch. xxiv. 5. Cæsar was a common name to the Roman emperors, as Pharaoh was to the kings of Egypt; and which they took from Julius Cæsar the first of them, who was succeeded by Augustus Cæsar, under whom Christ was born; and he by Tiberius, under whom he suffered; the fourth was Caius Caligula; the fifth was Claudius, mentioned in Acts xi. 28. and xviii. 2. and the present Cæsar, to whom Paul now appealed, was Nero; and though succeeding emperors bore this name, it was also given to the second in the empire, or the presumptive heir to it: authors are divided about the original of Cæsar, the surname of Julius; some say he had it from the colour of his eyes, which were *Cæsii*, grey; others from *Cæsaries*, his fine head of hair; others from his killing of an elephant, which, in the language of the Moors, is called *Cæsar*: the more common opinion is, that he took his name from his mother's womb, being *Cæso*, cut up at his birth, to make way for his passage into the world; in which manner also our King Edward the Sixth came into the world.

Ver. 9. *But Festus, willing to do the Jews a pleasure,* &c.] As did his predecessor Felix, ch. xxiv. 27. he being just entered upon his new government, and having met with some caresses and civilities from the Jews at Jerusalem, by whom he had been much pressed and urged about the affair of the apostle: *answered Paul, and said, wilt thou go up to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these things before me?* meaning by the Jewish sanhedrim, he Festus being present: this was what the Jews had requested of him when he was at Jerusalem, that he would send for Paul thither, and there let him be judged, and which request he had denied; but having been solicited and importuned by the Jews, perhaps as they came down together, he was inclined to gratify them, and to admit of it that he should be tried at Jerusalem, before the sanhedrim, he being present; and yet he was unwilling to do this without the prisoner's consent, he being a freeman of a Roman city; fearing he should be charged with delivering up a Roman into the hands of the Jews, which might be resented by the emperor and the Roman senate, should it come to their knowledge.

Ver. 10. *Then said Paul, I stand at Cæsar's judgment-seat,* &c.] Not that here was a seat in the judgment-hall built by Herod for Cæsar himself to sit in, should he ever come there, as some have thought; but the seat on which Festus sat is called Cæsar's judgment-seat, because it was in a Roman court of judicature, and because Festus, who filled it, personated Cæsar himself: *where I ought to be judged*: being a Roman citizen, and not at Jerusalem by the sanhedrim of the Jews, who had nothing to do with him: *to the Jews*

have I done no wrong, as thou very well knowest: it may be by his predecessor Felix, who had informed him of this case; or by Lysias's letter, which might come to his hands; or by the apostle's answer and vindication of himself, which he now made.

Ver. 11. *For if I be an offender*, &c.] Against the law of Moses, or the temple at Jerusalem, or Cæsar the Roman emperor: *or have committed any thing worthy of death:* by the laws of the Romans, as sedition, murder, &c. *I refuse not to die:* signifying that he did not decline going to Jerusalem, either through any consciousness of guilt, or fear of death; for if any thing could be proved against him, that was of a capital nature, he did not desire to escape death; he was ready to die for it; this was no subterfuge, or shift, to evade or defer justice: *but if there be none of these things:* to be found, or proved, and made to appear: *whereof these accuse me;* pointing to the Jews, that came down to be his accusers, and had laid many and grievous charges against him: *no man may deliver me unto them:* not justly, or according to the Roman laws; suggesting that Festus himself could not do it legally; *I appeal unto Cæsar:* to this the apostle was induced, partly by the conduct of the governor, who seemed inclined to favour the Jews; and partly by the knowledge he might have of their intention to lie in wait for him, should he go up to Jerusalem; and chiefly by the vision he had had, which assured him that he must bear witness of Christ at Rome, ch. xxiii. 11.

Ver. 12. *Then Festus, when he had conferred with the council*, &c.] Not with the Jewish sanhedrim, or any part of it that came down on this occasion; but with Roman counsellors, which he had to assist him in judgment, when any difficult matters were before him; the Syriac and Ethiopic versions render it, *with his counsellors;* and the Arabic reads in the singular number, *with his counsellor;* with these he advised, whether it was proper to admit of Paul's appeal, or no; and having had their opinion, he *answered, hast thou appealed unto Cæsar? unto Cæsar shalt thou go:* the question is put, partly for the more certain knowledge of the thing, that there might be no mistake in it; and partly on account of the Jews, that they might see that though he was disposed to do them a favour, it was not in his power, because of this appeal; and it may be with some resentment in himself, since it carried in it a sort of reflection upon him, as if he was incapable of issuing this affair, or would not be just and faithful in it.

Ver. 13. *And after certain days*, &c.] Several days after the above appeal made by Paul: *King Agrippa and Bernice came unto Cæsarea to salute Festus:* this King Agrippa was the son of Herod Agrippa, who killed James the brother of John, and of whose death mention is made in ch. xii. the Jewish chronologer[h] calls him Agrippa the Second, the son of Agrippa the First, the fifth king of the family of Herod: he was not king of Judea, this was reduced again into a province by Claudius; and upon the death of his uncle Herod, king of Chalcis, he was by the said emperor made king of that place, who afterwards removed him from thence to a greater kingdom, and gave him the tetrarchy, which was Philip's, his great uncle's; namely, Batanea, Trachonitis, and Gaulanitis, to which he added the kingdom of Lysanias; (see Luke iii. 1.) and the province which Varus had; and to these Nero added four cities, with what belonged to them; in Peræa, Abila and Julias, and in Galilee, Tarichea and Tiberias[i]. The Jewish writers often make mention of him, calling him, as here, King Agrippa; see the note on ch. xxvi. 3. and so does Josephus[k]. According to the above chronologer[l], he was had to Rome by Vespasian, when he went to be made Cæsar; and was put to death by him, three years and a half before the destruction of the temple; though others say he lived some years after it: and some of the Jewish writers affirm, that in his days the temple was destroyed[m]. Agrippa, though he was a Jew, his name was a Roman name; Augustus Cæsar had a relation of this name[n], who had a son of the same name, and a daughter called Agrippina; and Herod the great being much obliged to the Romans, took the name from them, and gave it to one of his sons, the father of this king: the name originally was given to such persons, who at their birth came forth not with their heads first, as is the usual way of births, but with their feet first, and which is accounted a difficult birth; and *ab ægritudine*, from the grief, trouble, and weariness of it, such are called Agrippas[o]. Bernice, who is said to be with King Agrippa, is not the name of a man, as some have supposed, because said to sit in the judgment-hall with the king, but of a woman; so called, in the dialect of the Macedonians, for Pheronice, which signifies one that carries away the victory; and this same person is, in Suetonius[p], called Queen Beronice, for whom Titus the emperor is said to have a very great love, and was near upon marrying her: she was not wife of Agrippa, as the Arabic version reads, but his sister; his father left besides him, three daughters, Bernice, Mariamne, and Drusilla, which last was the wife of Felix, Acts xxiv. 24. Bernice was first married to her uncle Herod, king of Chalcis[q], and after his death to Polemon, king of Cilicia, from whom she separated, and lived in too great familiarity with her brother Agrippa, as she had done before her second marriage, as was suspected[r], to which incest Juvenal refers[s]; and with whom she now was, who came together to pay a visit to Festus, upon his coming to his government, and to congratulate him upon it.

Ver. 14. *And when they had been there many days*, &c.] Indulging themselves in pleasure, and spending their time in conversing on various subjects; and in order to carry on the conversation, and pass away time, *Festus declared Paul's case unto the king;* in the following manner: *saying, there is a certain man left in bonds*

[h] Ganz Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 26. 1.
[i] Joseph. de Bello Jud. l. 2. c. 11. sect. 5. & c. 12. sect. 1. 8. & c. 13. sect. 2.
[k] Antiqu. l. 20. c. 8. sect. 1.
[l] Tzemach David, ib. col. 2.
[m] Jarchi & Bartenora in Misn. Sota, c. 7. sect. 8.
[n] Sueton. in Vita Augusti, c. 63, 64.
[o] A. Gell. Noct. Attic. l. 16. c. 16.
[p] In Vita Titi, c. 7.
[q] Joseph. Antiqu. l. 19. c. 5. sect. 1. & c. 9. sect. 1. & de Bello Jud. l. 2. c. 11. sect. 5, 6.
[r] Antiqu. l. 20. c. 6. sect. 3.
[s] Satyr 6.

by Felix: the former governor in Cæsarea, meaning Paul.

Ver. 15. *About whom, when I was at Jerusalem*, &c.] Quickly after he came to his government: *the chief priests and elders of the Jews informed* me; brought an accusation to him, exhibited to him charges against him, presented to him a bill of information, setting forth various crimes he had been guilty of: *desiring* to have *judgment against him*; not barely to have his cause tried, but to have a sentence of condemnation passed upon him; some copies read *condemnation*, as the Alexandrian copy, and two of Beza's; and that punishment is designed, and even death itself, is manifest from the following words.

Ver. 16. *To whom I answered*, &c.] As follows: *it is not the manner of the Romans to deliver any man to die*; or *to give any man to destruction*: to pass sentence of death upon him, without hearing his cause, and purely at the request of another, and merely to gratify him: *before that he which is accused have the accusers face to face*; so as to speak to his face, or before him, what they have to charge him with: *and have licence to answer for himself, concerning the crime laid against him*; and this was also according to the law of the Jews, John vii. 51. though Festus, from such an application to him by the chief priests and elders, might conclude that their manner was different, he being ignorant of their laws and customs; but their prejudice to the apostle carried them to act such an illegal part, or at least to desire it might be acted: it is one of the Jewish canons, that it is unlawful for a judge to hear one of the contending parties, before the other is come in.

Ver. 17. *Therefore when they were come hither*, &c.] To Cæsarea, namely the chief priests and elders of the Jews: *without any delay on the morrow, I sat on the judgment-seat*; that is, the next day after they came down, Festus went into the judgment-hall, and took his place there, in order to hear this cause; which circumstance he mentions, to shew how expeditious he was: *and I commanded the man to be brought forth*; from his place of confinement, to the hall, to answer for himself.

Ver. 18. *Against whom when the accusers stood up*, &c.] As they were obliged to do, whilst they were exhibiting their charges, bearing their testimonies, and producing their proofs; see ver. 7. *They brought none accusation of such things as I supposed*: for by his being left in bonds, and by the information of the chief priests and elders, and their violence against him, he imagined he must be chargeable with some notorious capital crime.

Ver. 19. *But had certain questions against him of their own superstition*, &c.] Or religion; as about their law, which they said Paul had spoke against; and about their temple, which they pretended he had polluted; and about the resurrection of the dead, which he asserted, and some denied: *and of one Jesus which was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive*: for it seems more was said on each side, than is recorded by Luke: the Jews objected to him among other things, his belief in Jesus of Nazareth, whom they traduced as an impostor and deceiver; Paul on the other hand argued, that he was the true Messiah; and in proof of it, affirmed that though they had put him to death, he was risen from the dead, and so was declared to be the son of God with power: Festus, it is very likely, had never heard of Jesus before, and therefore speaks of him in this manner; or if he had, he had entertained a contemptible opinion of him, as well as of the Jewish religion; and which he expresses, even in the presence of the king, who had outwardly at least embraced it.

Ver. 20. *And because I doubted of such manner of questions*, &c.] Or was ignorant of them, and knew not what to make of them, or to say to them, and was at an entire loss what to do in this affair: *I asked him whether he would go to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these matters*; before the Jewish sanhedrim, who best understood them.

Ver. 21. *But when Paul had appealed to be reserved*, &c.] In custody at Cæsarea: *unto the hearing of Augustus*; to have his cause heard, tried, and judged of, by the Roman Emperor Nero, here called Augustus; for as it was usual for a Roman emperor to be called Cæsar, from Julius Cæsar, the first of them, so to be called Augustus, from Octavius Augustus, the second emperor: his original surname was Thurinus, but this being objected to him as a reproachful one, he afterwards took the name of Cæsar, and then of Augustus; the one by the will of his great uncle, the other by the advice of Munatius Plancus; when some thought he ought to be called Romulus, as if he was the founder of the city, it prevailed that he should rather be called Augustus; not only this surname being new, but more grand, seeing religious places, and in which any thing was consecrated by soothsaying, were called *Augusta, ab auctu, vel ab avium gestu, gustuve*, according to Ennius[t]: in the Greek text the name is Sebastos, which signifies venerable and worshipful. *I commanded him to be kept*; in Cæsarea, by a centurion, and not sent to Jerusalem: *till I might send him to Cæsar*; till he could have an opportunity of sending him to Rome, to take his trial before the emperor.

Ver. 22. *Then Agrippa said to Festus*, &c.] After he had given him the above account: *I would also hear the man myself*; Agrippa being a Jew by profession, and knowing more of these things than Festus did, and very likely had heard much concerning Jesus Christ; and if not of the apostle, yet however of the Christian religion; and therefore he was very desirous, not only out of curiosity to see the man, but to hear him; and get some further information and knowledge about the things in dispute, between the Jews and Christians, in which Festus was very ready to gratify him: *to-morrow, said he, thou shalt hear him*; and sooner things could not well be prepared for an affair of this kind, and for so grand a meeting.

Ver. 23. *And on the morrow, when Agrippa was come*, &c.] Into the hall, or court of judicature: *and Bernice*; his sister, along with him: *with great pomp*: in rich dress, with the *regalia*, or ensigns of royalty carried before them, and attended with a large train and retinue of servants: *and was entered into the place of hearing*; the causes that were tried in court, that particular part of the hall,

[t] Suetonius in Vit. Octav. c. 7.

which was assigned for that purpose; for as there were the proper places for the judge and council, and for the plaintiffs and defendants, so for those that came to hear: *with the chief captains;* or tribunes, who had the command of the Roman soldiers; and who had each of them a thousand men under them, as their title signifies: *and principal men of the city;* that is, of Cæsarea; the magistrates, and chief inhabitants of the place: *at Festus's commandment Paul was brought forth;* and became a spectacle to a vast number of men, as he himself says; and which in part fulfilled what Christ had foretold to his disciples, that they should be brought before kings and governors for his sake; see 1 Cor. iv. 9. Matt. x. 18.

Ver. 24. *And Festus said, King Agrippa,* &c.] He addressed himself to him in the first place, as being the principal person, and of great dignity, as well as knowledge: *and all men which are here present with us;* the chief captains, and principal inhabitants of the city: *ye see this man;* the prisoner at the bar, meaning Paul: *about whom all the multitude of the Jews have dealt with me;* applied unto him, interceded with him, and very importunately pressed and desired him to give judgment against him: *both at Jerusalem and also here;* at Cæsarea, whither they came from Jerusalem to accuse him: *crying;* in a very noisy and clamorous way: *that he ought not to live any longer;* as they did before Lysias the chief captain, ch. xxii. 22. and so in the hearing of Festus; for it was his death they sought, and nothing else would satisfy them.

Ver. 25. *But when I found that he had committed nothing worthy of death,* &c.] Which was a public testimony of the apostle's innocence, to the great mortification of his enemies, some of whom might be present; a like testimony was given of him by Lysias, ch. xxiii. 29. *And that he himself hath appealed unto Augustus;* the Emperor Nero; see ver. 21. *I have determined to send him;* having had the opinion of his council upon it.

Ver. 26. *Of whom I have no certain thing,* &c.] No certain crime, charge, or accusation; nothing of any moment or consequence, no particular thing, nothing but a heap of confused notions, of I know not who or what: *to write unto my lord;* meaning the Roman emperor, under whom he served as governor of Judea: *wherefore I have brought him before you;* the whole company then present: *and especially before thee, O King Agrippa;* as being not only a man of eminence, dignity, and authority, but of knowledge in such matters, which the Jews accused Paul of; see ch. xxvi. 2, 3. *That after examination had;* of Paul, and his case: *I might have somewhat to write;* concerning him, and the charges exhibited against him to the emperor.

Ver. 27. *For it seemeth to me unreasonable to send a prisoner,* &c.] A man bound as if he was a malefactor, and guilty of some heinous crimes, to Rome, to be tried before Cæsar: *and not withal to signify the crimes laid against him;* for which he is a prisoner, and for which he is sent to the emperor: it seemed to Festus an absurd thing, and what might be justly looked upon by his master, a foolish, silly, and stupid piece of conduct, and void of common sense and reason, mere madness and folly; to send him a prisoner, and not signify in his letter to him, what was laid to his charge: and yet this was so dark and obscure, that he could not tell what to make of it, nor what to write to his lord about it; and hoped therefore, upon this re-examination of Paul before Agrippa, he should come to a more certain knowledge of this affair, and be better furnished to give Nero an account of it, to whom the apostle had appealed.

CHAP. XXVI.

Ver. 1. *THEN Agrippa said unto Paul,* &c.] After Festus had made the above speech to him, and to all present, and had introduced the affair of Paul, who now stood before them: *thou art permitted to speak for thyself;* which a prisoner might not do, until he had leave; and this leave was granted by Festus the Roman governor, who was properly the judge, and not Agrippa, though the permission might be by both; and so the Arabic and Ethiopic versions read, *we have ordered,* or *permitted thee,* &c. *Then Paul stretched forth the hand;* as orators used to do, when they were about to speak; or else to require silence; or it may be to shew the freedom of his mind, and how ready he was to embrace the opportunity of pleading his own cause; being conscious to himself of his innocence, and relying on the ingenuity and integrity of his judge; and especially of the king, before whom he stood: *and answered for himself;* or made an apology, or spoke in vindication of himself, in order to remove the charges brought against him.

Ver. 2. *I think myself happy, King Agrippa,* &c.] This was an handsome and artificial way of introducing his defence, and of gaining the affection and attention of the king, and yet was not a mere compliment; for it had been his unhappiness hitherto, that his case was not understood; neither Lysias the chief captain, nor the governors Felix and Festus, knew any thing of the rites and customs of the Jews, and could not tell what to make of the questions of their law, of which Paul was accused: but it was otherwise with Agrippa, he was master of them, and this the apostle looked upon as a circumstance in his own favour: *because I shall answer for myself this day before thee;* not before him as a judge, for Festus was judge, but in his presence; and he being versed in things of this kind, was capable of informing, counselling, directing, and assisting the judge, in what was proper to be done; wherefore it was an advantage to the apostle to plead his own cause, and vindicate himself before such a person from the charges exhibited against him: *touching all the things whereof I am accused of the Jews;* such as violation of the law, profanation of the temple, contempt of the people of the Jews and their customs, and of blasphemy, and sedition; all which he was able to clear himself from, and doubted not but he should do it to the entire satisfaction of the king.

Ver. 3. *Especially, because I know thee to be expert in all customs,* &c.] Rites and ceremonies of the Jews, whether enjoined by the law of Moses, or by the elders, fathers, and wise men: *and questions which are among the Jews;* concerning angels, spirits, and the resurrection of the dead; which were moved and agitated between the Sadducees and Pharisees; and a multitude of others, which were disputed between the schools of Hillell and Shammai, of which their Misna and Talmud are full, and with these Agrippa was well acquainted; and to their rites and customs he conformed, of which we have some instances recorded in their writings: when they went with their first-fruits to Jerusalem [w], "a pipe sounded before them till they "came to the mountain of the house, and when they "came to the mountain of the house (the temple), "even King Agrippa carried the basket upon his shoul- "der, and went in till he came to the court." So concerning the reading of the law by a king, they give this following account [x]: "a king stands and takes "(the book of the law), and reads sitting; King "Agrippa stood and took it, and read standing, and "the wise men praised him; and when he came to "that passage, Deut. xvii. 15. *Thou mayest not set "a stranger over thee,* his eyes flowed with tears; "they said unto him, fear not, Agrippa, thou art our "brother." Some of their writers say [y], this was a piece of flattery in them: they also elsewhere commend him for his modesty and humility [z]; "accord- "ing to the tradition of the doctors, when persons "attending a funeral met a bride (with her retinue), "the former gave way, and both to a king of Israel, "when they met him; but they say concerning King "Agrippa, that he met a bride, and gave way, and "they praised him." And whereas it was forbidden to eat on the eve of the passover, before the Minchah, though ever so little, that they might eat the unleavened bread with appetite [a]; it is observed, that even King Agrippa, who was used to eat at the ninth hour, that day did not eat till it was dark [b]: so that from hence it appears, that King Agrippa was famous for his exact knowledge and observance of the customs and manners of the Jews, and which was well known, and was by the apostle: *wherefore I beseech thee to hear me patiently;* since he was charged with a breach of the laws and customs of the Jews; and his defence would proceed upon things which Agrippa was not altogether ignorant of.

Ver. 4. *My manner of life, from my youth,* &c.] That is, his conduct and deportment, his behaviour among men, from the time that he was capable of performing religious exercises, and of knowing the difference between one sect and another, and of being observed and taken notice of by men: *which was at the first among mine own nation at Jerusalem;* for though he was born in Tarsus in Cilicia, he was very early brought, or sent by his parents to Jerusalem, where he had his education under Gamaliel; so that the first part of his life was spent in Jerusalem, the metropolis of Judea, and among the Jews there; the more learned and knowing part of them, Gamaliel's pupils, and the wise men and their disciples: and his course of life must be well known to them, as he says, this *know all the Jews;* that had any knowledge of him, and conversation with him.

Ver. 5. *Which knew me from the beginning,* &c.] From his youth, from his first coming to Jerusalem: *if they would testify;* what they know, and speak out the truth of things, they must say, *that after the most straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee;* there were three sects of religion among the Jews, the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes; the first of these was the most exact, and came nearest to the truth of doctrine, and was the strictest as to outward holiness of life and conversation, and of this sect the apostle was; and according to it he lived, and that in such a manner, as not to be charged with any notorious crime; and indeed in his own, and very likely in the opinion of others, he was then blameless.

Ver. 6. *And now I stand, and am judged,* &c.] Before the Roman governor, and in the presence of Agrippa: *for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers;* either for the hope of righteousness, life, and salvation, by the Messiah; who was promised to the Jewish fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and others; see Gen. xxii. 18. and xlix. 10. or for the hope of the resurrection of the dead, and eternal life; of which there are various testimonies in the writings of the Old Testament, committed to the people of the Jews. Job. xix. 26, 27. Isa. xxvi. 19. Dan. xii. 2. and others; and both these senses may be very well joined together, for it was for asserting that the promised Messiah was come, and that Jesus of Nazareth was he; that he was risen from the dead, and that all the dead will be raised by him; and that life and righteousness, salvation, and everlasting glory and happiness, are only by him; for asserting these things, I say, the apostle was now a prisoner, and stood at the bar of a Roman judge, being accused by the Jews.

Ver. 7. *Unto which promise,* &c.] Of the Messiah, and salvation by him; and of the resurrection of the dead and eternal glory, as following upon it: *our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come;* and enjoy the Messiah, and all blessings along with him; and the happy state of the resurrection and eternal life: the people of Israel were distinguished into twelve tribes, according to the names of the twelve patriarchs, the sons of Jacob; and though ten of the tribes had been carried captive, and had not returned as tribes, yet there were many of the several tribes, who either were left in the land, or returned along with the two tribes, and were mixed with them: and this way of speaking here used by Paul, and also by James, ch. i. 1. is justified by Jewish writers: the Misnic doctors say [c], "*the twelve tribes* bring twelve "heifers, and for idolatry they bring twelve heifers "and twelve goats:" compare with this Ezra vi. 17. and viii. 35. yea, they say [d], "*twelve tribes* are called, "קהל, *a congregation,* eleven tribes are not called a "congregation." This suggests a reason of the apos-

[w] Misn. Biccurim, c. 2. sect. 4.
[x] Misn. Sota, c. 7. sect. 8.
[y] Maimon. in ib. & Moses Kotsensis Mitzvot Tora, pr. neg. 221.
[z] T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 17. 1.

[a] Maimon. Chametz Umetza, c. 6. sect. 12.
[b] T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 107. 2.
[c] Misn. Horayot, c. 1. sect. 5.
[d] T. Bab. Horayot, fol. 5. 2.

tle's use of this phrase, for he here represents the Israelites as a worshipping assembly, serving God continually, night and day, as they were by their representatives, the priests and stationary men in the temple; and that with intenseness, ardour, and fervency, as the word rendered *instantly* signifies being in a longing and earnest expectation of the coming of the Messiah, and of his world to come, and of the resurrection of the dead, and a future state of happiness. *For which hope's sake, King Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews*; for preaching that the Messiah, the twelve tribes hope for, is already come and that there is salvation in him, and in no other, and that there will be a resurrection of the dead, both just and unjust; and that there is another world and state after this, in which men will be happy and miserable; and these were the charges and accusations, or the sum of what were exhibited against him.

Ver. 8. *Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you*, &c.] You Heathens and Sadducees; for the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead was thought an incredible doctrine by the Heathens in general, and therefore was laughed at by the Stoic and Epicurean philosophers at Athens, when preached by the apostle there: and by a particular sect among the Jews, the Sadducees; and the apostle may be thought either to address himself to Festus, the Roman governor, and to the chief captains, who were present, and, being Heathens, disbelieved this doctrine; or else to King Agrippa, who might be a Sadducee, and to such of the Sadducees as were in court, and expostulate with them, why it should be looked upon as a thing by no means to be credited, *that God should raise the dead*: which may be understood both of the particular resurrection of Christ from the dead, which was not believed, neither by the Romans nor by the Jews, and neither by Pharisees nor Sadducees; or of the general resurrection of the dead, which was judged from the nature of things to be impracticable, and impossible by the latter, as well as by the Heathens: but since God is omniscient and omnipotent, and just and true, knows where every particle of a dead body lies, and can gather all together, and inspire with life; which he can as easily do, as to form all things out of nothing, as he did; and his justice and veracity seem to require, that the same bodies which have been partners with their souls in sinning, or in sufferings should share with them in woe or in happiness; it can neither be absurd, unreasonable, nor incredible, to suppose that God will raise them from the dead.

Ver. 9. *I verily thought with myself*, &c.] This seems to be a correction of himself, why he should wonder at their ignorance and unbelief, particularly with respect to Jesus being the Messiah, and his resurrection from the dead, and expostulate with them about it; when this was once his own case, it was the real sentiments of his mind, what in his conscience he believed to be right and just; namely, *that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth*: to him himself, to his religion, to his Gospel, and ordinances, and people; by blaspheming his name, by denying him to be the Messiah, by condemning his religion as heresy, by disputing against his doctrines, and manner of worship, and by persecuting his followers.

Ver. 10. *Which thing I also did in Jerusalem*, &c.] The metropolis of Judea, where he had had his education, and was well known; here he consented to the death of Stephen, and held the clothes of the witnesses while they stoned him; and here he haled men and women out of their houses, and committed them to prison, and made havoc of the church of Christ, and destroyed the faith, and those that professed it, as much as in him lay. *And many of the saints I shut up in prison*; at Jerusalem; see Acts viii. 3. *having received authority from the chief priests*; to take them up, and imprison them. *And when they were put to death*; for it seems there were more than Stephen put to death, though we have no account of them: *I gave my voice against* them; not that he sat in council, or was a member of the Jewish sanhedrim, and voted for the execution of the Christians, but he was pleased with the sentence they passed, and approved of it; or he joined the zealots, who, without any form of law, seized on the Christians, and put them to death wherever they found them; and this he assented to, and encouraged: some render the words, *I carried the sentence*; as the Vulgate Latin version; that is, the sentence of condemnation, which the Jewish sanhedrim passed upon the disciples and followers of Christ: this Saul took, and carried, it may be, both to the Roman governor, to be signed by him, and to the officers to put it in execution; so industrious and forward was he in persecuting the saints.

Ver. 11. *And I punished them oft in every synagogue*, &c.] In Jerusalem, where there were many; see the note on ch. xxiv. 12. by beating and scourging them there, as the manner was; see Matt. x. 17. *and compelled* them *to blaspheme*; the Lord Jesus Christ, both to deny him to be the Messiah, and to call him accursed; as the Jews and Heathens obliged some professors of Christianity to do, who were only nominal ones, and had not grace and strength to stand against their threatenings, and to endure their persecutions: *and being exceeding mad against them*; full of malice, envy, and hatred: *I persecuted* them *even to strange cities*; particularly Damascus; and of his journey thither, he gives an account in the following verse: or through the violence of his persecution he obliged them to fly to strange cities, where they were foreigners and strangers; though he himself might not follow them there, since we don't read of his going anywhere but to Damascus; whereas they that were scattered by the persecution, in which he was concerned, travelled as far as Phenice, Cyprus, and Antioch, ch. ix. 19. The phrase may be rendered, *even to cities without*: i. e. without the land of Israel: frequent mention is made in Jewish writings of such and such cities being חוצה לארץ, *without the land*.

Ver. 12. *Whereupon as I went to Damascus*, &c.] Being intent, upon the above-said things, to punish the saints, compel them to blaspheme, imprison them, and even put them to death on account of these things: upon this errand and business he went to Damascus, the chief city of Syria, where he knew there were many that believed in Christ, who had removed from Jerusalem thither, on account of the persecution, or were settled there before: *with authority and commission from the chief priests*: the Jewish sanhedrim, to bring

those of them at Damascus bound to Jerusalem, in order to be punished, as in ch. ix. 2. and xxii. 5. and which the Ethiopic version adds here.

Ver. 13. *At mid-day, O king,* &c.] So in ch. xxii. 6. This circumstance is omitted in ch. ix. 3. King Agrippa is called upon by the apostle, to excite his attention to what he was about to relate, it being very wonderful, and of great importance. *I saw in the way;* that is, to Damascus, when near the city; *a light from heaven;* which descended from thence: *above the brightness of the sun;* it was a greater light than that, or otherwise it could not have been discerned at noon, or have had the effect it had upon Saul, and his company. This account of the greatness of the light, is not in the other places where this narrative is given: *shining round about me;* so in ch. ix. 3. and xxii. 6. *and them which journeyed with me;* this is not mentioned in the other accounts.

Ver. 14. *And when we were all fallen to the earth,* &c.] Saul, and the men that were with him, for fear of the divine Majesty, who by this extraordinary light was thought to be present: the other narratives only relate Saul's falling to the earth; how this is to be reconciled to their standing speechless, in ch. ix. 7. see the note there. *I heard a voice speaking unto me,* &c. see the note on ch. ix. 4, 5.

Ver. 15. *And I said, who art thou, Lord? and he said,* &c.] Or *the Lord said,* as the Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin, and Syriac versions read, *I am Jesus whom thou persecutest;* the Syriac and Ethiopic versions read, *Jesus of Nazareth;* see the note on ch. ix. 5.

Ver. 16. *But rise and stand upon thy feet,* &c.] This, and what follows in this and the two next verses, are not in any of the former accounts; and these words are used not only because Saul was fallen to the earth, and are an encouragement to rise up, and stand corporeally, but to take heart, and be of good cheer; for though he had acted so vile and cruel a part by Christ, and his people, yet he had designs of grace, and good will to him; and this appearance was not for his destruction, but for his honour, comfort, and usefulness: *for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose;* not to take vengeance for past offences, but for the ends hereafter mentioned: and this appearance of Christ was real, corporeal, and personal, and not imaginary, or merely visionary and intellectual; and it was to this sight of Christ he more than once refers, partly in proof of Christ's resurrection from the dead, and partly to demonstrate the truth of his apostleship, 1 Cor. ix. 1. and xv. 8. *to make thee a minister and a witness, both of those things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee:* so that he was an apostle, not of men, nor by man, but by Jesus Christ, as he himself says, Gal. i. 1. He was a minister, not of man's making, but of Christ's; and they are the only true ministers of the Gospel, who are made by Christ, who have their mission and commission, their qualifications, gifts, and abilities, their doctrine, work, and wages from him: and the apostle's work, as a minister, was to be a witness; it was to testify what he had seen of Christ corporeally; and what knowledge of his person, office, and grace was now communicated to him by the spirit of wisdom and revelation; and what should hereafter be made known to him, either mediately by Ananias, or immediately by Christ and his spirit; for the apostle had after-appearances, visions, and revelations; see ch. xxii. 17, 18. and xxiii. 11. 2 Cor. xii. 1, 2, 3, 4, 7.

Ver. 17. *Delivering thee from the people,* &c.] That is, the people of the Jews, as they are distinguished from the Gentiles; and so the Syriac version, and two of Beza's copies, and two of Stephens's, read; for the Lord knew, that as soon as ever Saul was converted and professed his name, and preached his Gospel, the people of the Jews would immediately become his implacable enemies, and seek to destroy him; wherefore he promises him before-hand deliverance, and security from them: *and* from *the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee;* to both Jews and Gentiles; to the Jews first, and then to the Gentiles; which method the apostle observed, and which course he steered, until the Jews put away the Gospel from them; and then he turned to the Gentiles, to whom he chiefly preached, as their apostle, and was saved from many dangers among them, as is here promised.

Ver. 18. *To open their eyes,* &c.] The eyes of their understanding, which were shut, and darkened, and blind: one copy reads, *the eyes of the blind;* and the Ethiopic version renders it, *the eyes of their heart;* and to have them opened, is to have them enlightened, to see their lost state and condition by nature, the exceeding sinfulness of sin, the plague of their own hearts, the impurity of nature, the impotence of man to that which is spiritually good, the imperfection of obedience, and the insufficiency of a man's righteousness to justify him before God; and to see where help is laid, and where salvation is; to behold Christ as the only able, willing, complete, and suitable Saviour; to see that there is life and righteousness, peace, pardon, grace, and glory in him; and to have an insight into the doctrines of the Gospel, and a glimpse of the invisible things of another world. Now though this is all the work of the spirit, by whom only the eyes of the understanding are enlightened; yet this is ascribed to the apostle, not as the efficient cause, but as the instrument and means through preaching of the Gospel, which the spirit of God would, and did make use of: *and to turn* them *from darkness to light;* or *that they might be turned,* as the Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions render it: by *darkness* is meant, the darkness of nature, the darkness of sin, of ignorance, and unbelief, in which all men by nature are; who are in the dark about, and are ignorant of God, and the perfections of his nature; and about sin, and the evil there is in it, and that comes by it; and the way of peace, righteousness, and salvation by Christ; and the work of the spirit in regeneration and sanctification upon the heart; and about the Scriptures of truth, and the doctrines of the Gospel, and what will be their state and portion in another world; they don't know where they are, what they are, nor where they are going: and in effectual vocation this darkness is in a great measure removed, and they are turned to *light;* to God, who is light itself, and to Christ,

the light of the world, and to the light of the word, and to a participation of the light of grace here, in which they see light, and behold the above things, and of the light of glory hereafter. This is a phrase used by the Jews, at the time of the passover, when they praise the Lord, and give thanks unto him for the wonders he wrought for their fathers and for them, as that he had brought them out of bondage to liberty, and from sorrow to joy, and מאפלה לאור גדול, *from darkness to a great light*[s]. Conversion is the end of the Gospel ministry, and illumination is necessary to it; yea, it lies in a turn from darkness to light, as is here expressed: and this conversion is not a mere external one, or a reformation of manners; this is indeed sometimes called a conversion, and is a man's turning from the evil of his ways, from a vicious life and conversation, to a sober way of living, and is often brought about through the ministry of the word; but then this may be where true conversion is not, and where there is no special illumination of the spirit, nor any true spiritual light; and there may be a turning again to the former course of life; besides, this external conversion, when it is right and genuine, is the fruit and effect of inward conversion, or true grace, and is at most but the evidence of it: nor is it a conversion to a doctrine in a professional way; men may be converted in this sense, and remain wicked; they may have the form, but not the power of godliness; know the doctrine and profess it, and yet be strangers to the experience of it: nor does it design a restoration after backslidings; which sometimes goes by the name of conversion, such as was Peter's after his fall; but the first work of conversion is here meant, which is internal, and is a turn of the hearts of men; and is not the work of man, but of God, who has the hearts of all in his hands, and can turn them as he pleases; and is what man is passive in, he does not turn himself, but is turned by the Lord; though ministers may be, and are instruments in it. It follows, *and from the power of Satan unto God:* this power of Satan regards not his power over the rest of the devils, whose prince and head he is; hence he is called the prince of devils, and the prince of the power of the air; but his power over the world of men, which he has by usurpation, and therefore is called the prince of the world; but not his power over the bodies of men, by possessing them, inflicting diseases, and death itself upon them, nor over their estates; all which is only by permission of God, whenever he exercises it; but over the souls of men, in whom he rules as in his own kingdom: he is the strong man armed, and the hearts of men are his palaces, which are guarded with devils and unclean lusts; when all the goods are kept in peace by him, there's no concern about sin, no inquiry after salvation, no dread of the curses of the law, nor fear of hell and damnation, but all in the utmost security: and he not only dwells in the hearts of unregenerate persons, but he works effectually there; by stirring up their corruptions, putting ill things into their minds, and instigating them against true spiritual and powerful religion, and the professors of it: he has power over the minds of them that believe not, to blind them, by keeping them in blindness, and increasing it; which he does by diverting their minds from hearing the Gospel; and whilst hearing it, by filling them with enmity against it. Moreover, they are led by him as captives at his will; they are in his power, as the bird is in the snare of the fowler, and as a prisoner in the hands of a gaoler; and are entirely at his beck and command, and do his lusts, and obey his will: and this also may have a particular respect to the power and authority which he exercised over the Heathens, before the Gospel came among them; Satan usurped a power over the Gentile world, and took upon him to be the god of it; and for many hundred of years was worshipped in their idols; and he held them fast bound unto him in the fetters of ignorance, superstition, and idolatry; but now the Gospel was sent among them to free them from this power and tyranny of his; and it was made effectual to the turning of multitudes of them from him, and subjection to him, which is done in the effectual vocation of every person; not that Satan then has no more power over them to tempt and distress them, but not to rule over them, and lead them about at pleasure, and much less to devour and destroy them: and then also are they turned to God, to have true knowledge of him, and an hearty desire after him, which they had not before; and to a love of him, whose hearts before were enmity to him; and to believe in him, and trust in him as the God of providence, and of grace; and to have communion with him; and to be subject to his government, and yield a cheerful obedience to him, both externally and internally. *That they may receive forgiveness of sins;* as an act of God's free grace, through the blood of Christ, which was shed for it; and which free and full forgiveness of sins is published in the Gospel, that whoever believes in Christ, may by faith receive it. This is what every enlightened soul sees it needs, and is desirous of; it is the first thing it wants, and asks at the hands of God; and nothing can be more suitable to its case, and welcome to it; and this is the good news which is declared in the ministry of the Gospel: and it is had in a way of receiving; for it is not purchased with money, nor procured by the merits of men; but is a gift of God, which is received by the hand of faith into the conscience of the enlightened sinner; the consequences of which are peace, joy, and comfort. *And inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me:* by the *inheritance* is meant, either something enjoyed now, as God himself, who is the portion of his people, and the lot of their inheritance; or a part and interest in Christ, who is that good part and portion, and which shall never be taken away; and the blessings of grace in him, which, besides forgiveness of sins, are peace with God, a justifying righteousness, and adopting grace: or rather eternal glory and happiness hereafter is here designed, which is called an *inheritance* or *lot*, in allusion to the land of Canaan, which was distributed by lot; not that heaven is a casual thing; but it signifies that every Israelite indeed will have their share and portion

[s] Haggada Shel Pesach, p. 23. Maimon. Hilchot Chametz Umetza, c. 8. sect. 5.

in it. There are many things which shew an agreement between heaven, and the land of Canaan; that was a goodly land, and ready prepared for the Israelites; and so heaven is the better country, and the city and kingdom God has prepared for his people from the foundation of the world: a wilderness was passed through first, and many battles fought before it was possessed; the people of God pass through the wilderness of this world, and fight the good fight of faith, and then enter into rest: the Israelites were introduced into it, not by Moses, but by Joshua; and saints get to heaven, not by the works of the law, but by Christ the Saviour, another Jesus or Joshua: and lastly, Canaan was a place of rest; and so is heaven. Moreover, it may be so called, in allusion to inheritances among men, though it vastly exceeds all earthly ones, being incorruptible, undefiled, which fadeth not away, reserved in the heavens; yet it bears some likeness to them; it is what is bequeathed to the children of God by their heavenly father, and comes to them through the death of Christ the testator, and is for ever: it is neither purchased nor acquired, but is freely given; belongs only to the children of God, and is their father's free gift unto them, and is only enjoyed by such who are *sanctified*: and it lies among them, and will be jointly and equally possessed by them. The heirs of salvation are said to be sanctified in different senses; they are sanctified by God the father in eternal election, being separated from others, and chosen through sanctification to it; and they are sanctified *in* and *by* the Lord Jesus Christ: they are sanctified *in* him representatively, he being the covenant-head of his people, has all grace, and so all holiness in him for them, which is perfect and complete; and this is the source of all that holiness that is in them, and which they have communicated to them by virtue of their union to him; and also they are sanctified *in* him through the imputation of the holiness of his human nature to them, which is a branch of their justification before God; and they are sanctified by him meritoriously, or by his blood, through which their sins are expiated, and fully atoned for; and so in this sense they are sanctified by it: and they are sanctified internally by the spirit of God, who in regeneration produces principles of grace and holiness in them, which were not there before; man was originally possessed of a perfect moral holiness, but through sin is become an unholy creature; and in the same state and condition are the children of God by nature, as others, and need the sanctifying influences of the divine Spirit to make them meet for the undefiled inheritance: and this inheritance these sanctified ones receive by faith now, as they do the forgiveness of their sins; that is, they now receive by faith the promise of the inheritance, and the earnest and pledge of it, and their right unto it, and claim upon it: for the phrase, *by faith that is in me*, is not to be connected with the word *sanctified*, but with the word *receive*, in the preceding clause; and has respect to both benefits, which it receives from Christ, the object of it here expressed; for it is not any faith, but faith which is in Christ, by which these blessings of grace are received and enjoyed: and the whole of this shews the great ends and usefulness of the Gospel ministry.

Ver. 19. *Whereupon, O King Agrippa, &c.*] Having been favoured with this illustrious appearance of the Lord, and with this declaration and commission from him: *I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision*: to Christ himself, who appeared from heaven in so much light and glory, and spoke unto him, and appointed him what he should be, and do, and declared what use he should be of: he did not disbelieve what Christ said, nor was he disobedient to the orders he gave, but immediately set about the work he called him to, without consulting flesh and blood; see Gal. i. 16.

Ver. 20. *But shewed first unto them of Damascus, &c.*] The Jews at Damascus to whom the apostle first preached; see ch. ix. 20, 22. *and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judea*: observing the order of his mission, ver. 17. though it was not until after he had been in Arabia, and had returned to Damascus, that he went to Jerusalem, and preached there; see Gal. i. 17, 18. compared with Acts ix. 28. *and* then *to the Gentiles*; as at Antioch in Pisidia, at Iconium, Derbe, and Lystra in Lycaonia; and at Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea in Macedonia; and in many places in Greece and Asia, as at Athens, Corinth, Ephesus, and others, as this history shews; and indeed he preached the Gospel from Jerusalem round about to Illyricum; *that they should repent*: that is, that they should repent of their sins; of sin in general, as it is committed against God, is a transgression of his law, and as it is in itself exceeding sinful, and in its effects dreadful; and of particular sins, such as men have been more especially addicted to, and of which the Jews and Gentiles, the apostle was sent unto, and to whom he preached, had been guilty: as the former of their will-worship, and following the commandments and traditions of men, thereby making void the law of God; of their rejection and crucifixion of the Messiah; of their persecution of his apostles, ministers, and people; and of their trust in, and dependence upon, their own righteousness for justification: and the latter of their immoralities, superstition, and idolatry; and both not of the outward gross actions of life only, but of inward sins and lusts: and repentance of each of these lies in a different sentiment of them; in a detestation and abhorrence of them; in shame and confusion on account of them; in self-reflections upon them, and humiliation for them; in an ingenuous acknowledgment of them, and turning from them: and this is not a national repentance which the ministers of the Gospel are to shew to men the necessity of; though this is not unworthy of them, when there is a call in Providence to it, and the state of things require it; much less a legal one, but an evangelical repentance; which has along with it faith in Christ Jesus, dealing with his blood and righteousness for the remission of their sins, and their justification before God; and which springs from, and is encouraged and heightened by, a sense of the love of God: and now this being a part of the Gospel ministry, does not suppose it to be in the power of men to repent of themselves, since no man, whilst he remains insensible of the evil nature of sin, and the hardness of his heart continues, which none but God can remove, can repent; and when he becomes truly sensible, he then

prays to God to give him repentance, and to turn him: nor does it at all contradict its being a blessing of the covenant, a gift of Christ, and a grace of the spirit of God; nor does it suggest, that the preaching of the word is sufficient of itself to produce it; the contrary of which the ministry of John the Baptist, of Christ, and of his apostles, declares; but the design of its being insisted on in the Gospel ministry, is to shew that men are sinners, and in such a state and condition, that they are in need of repentance, and that without it they must perish; and the rather this is to be frequently inculcated, since true repentance is unto life, is the beginning and evidence of spiritual life, and issues in eternal life; and since there is a close connexion between that and salvation, and that without it there is no salvation. It follows, *and turn to God:* this is to be understood, not of the first work of conversion, which is God's work, and not man's act, and in which man is passive, and which is before repentance, whereas this follows upon it; though the ministers of the word have a concern with this; to bring about this is the design and use of their ministrations; their business is to shew the nature of conversion, what it is, and wherein it lies; to rectify mistakes about it, and to observe the necessity of it: but here is designed a turning to God, in consequence of the grace of first conversion; by an acknowledgment and confession of sin to God, by an application to him for pardoning grace and mercy, by a trust and dependence on him for righteousness, life, and salvation, and by obedience to his commands and ordinances. It intends a turning of the Jews from their evil principles and practices, from the traditions of their elders to the law of God, the Gospel of Christ, and the ordinances of it, and of the Gentiles, from their idols to the worship of the true and living God: *and do works meet for repentance;* the same with *fruits meet for repentance*, Matt. iii. 8. And such as are particularly mentioned in 2 Cor. vii. 11. they are they which are the reverse of the evil actions they have been guilty of, and which are properly good works. And they are they which are done according to the will of God declared in his word, this is a requisite of a good work; what is not according to the word of God is not a good work, nor can it be any evidence of repentance; and they are also such as spring from love to God, for if they are done through fear of punishment, or for sinister and selfish ends, they shew repentance to be a mere legal one: and they are such as are done in faith, in the name and strength of Christ, and to the glory of God by him. All external good works are designed, which shew that the inward repentance professed, and that the outward change made in religion and worship, are genuine and sincere: the doctrines of internal repentance and outward worship, and all good works, are parts of the Gospel ministry, and to be insisted on in their proper places.

Ver. 21. *For these causes the Jews caught me in the temple*, &c.] He means the Asiatic Jews, who finding him in the temple, laid hold on him, and dragged him out of it: *and*, as he says, *went about to kill* me; for no other reason, but for preaching to the Gentiles, and for preaching the above doctrines to them; what he refers to is in ch. xxi. 27—31.

Ver. 22. *Having therefore obtained help of God*, &c.] Both to preach the Gospel, and escape danger; for he had delivered him many a time both from Jews and Gentiles, according to his promise, ver. 17. and particularly from the Asiatic Jews, when they were about to kill him, by the means of Lysias the chief captain, who rescued him out of their hands; and also from the lying in wait of the Jews to take away his life, and the various methods they used both with Felix and Festus to get him into their power: but the Lord appeared for him, and saved him from all their pernicious designs against him; and therefore he could say as follows, *I continue unto this day*: in the land of the living, though in bonds: *witnessing both to small and great;* to kings and subjects, as now to Agrippa, Festus, the chief captains and principal inhabitants of Cæsarea, and to the common people assembled; to high and low, rich and poor, bond and free, male and female, young and old; to persons of every state, age, and sex: *saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come.* This he mentions in opposition to the charge against him, as that he spoke against the law of Moses, as well as against the temple, and the people of the Jews; whereas his doctrine was perfectly agreeable to the writings of Moses, and the prophets, concerning the Messiah, they speak of in many places, and the Jews expected. There's an entire harmony and agreement between the writings of Moses, and the prophets of the Old Testament, and the apostles of the New, in all the doctrines of the Gospel revelation; in the doctrine of a trinity of persons in the unity of the divine essence, and of the proper deity of each person; in the doctrines respecting the person, offices, and work of Christ; that he is the son of God, God and man in one person, and the only Mediator between God and man; and that he is prophet, priest, and King; and that the great work he was appointed to, undertook, and came about, and has fulfilled, is the redemption of his people; and in the several doctrines of grace concerning the choice of men to salvation, the covenant made with Christ on account of them, their redemption, justification, and pardon, their repentance and good works, the resurrection of the dead, and a future state: the particular things instanced in, the apostle preached, and Moses and the prophets said should be, and in which they agreed, are as follow.

Ver. 23. *That Christ should suffer*, &c.] Great afflictions in soul and body, and death itself; this is recorded by Moses, Gen. iii. 15. and is the sense of many of the types, as of the passover, brazen serpent, *&c.* and of all the sacrifices which from God were appointed by him, and is the constant account of all the prophets from the beginning to the end; see Psal. xxii. 1, 2, 6, 7, 11—21. Isa. liii. 2, 3. to the end, Dan. ix. 26. Zech. ix. 9. and xii. 10. and xiii. 6, 7. The sufferer is Christ, or the Messiah, not the Father, nor the Spirit, but the Word, or Son of God, and not in his divine nature, which was incapable of suffering, but in his human nature; though sufferings may be ascribed to his whole person, both natures being united in him: and hence they became efficacious to answer the purposes for which they were endured; and which he endured, not for himself, nor for angels, but for chosen men, sinners, and ungodly persons; in order

to make peace and reconciliation for them, procure the pardon of their sins, obtain eternal redemption for them, deliver them from all evil, and from all enemies, and bring them nigh to God: and what he suffered were no other than what had been foretold in the writings of the Old Testament, which all along represent the Messiah as a suffering one; and in particular that he should suffer in his character, be reproached, and accounted a worm, and no man, Isa. liii. 3. Psal. xxii. 6. and lxix. 9. and in his soul and body, and be put to death and buried, as the above prophecies referred to shew; the several circumstances leading on to, or attending his sufferings and death, are distinctly expressed; as the betraying him by one of his disciples, selling him for thirty pieces of silver, his being forsaken by all his disciples, his crucifixion between two thieves, the parting of his garments, giving him gall and vinegar to drink, and the piercing his side with a spear, Psal. xli. 9. Zech. xi. 12, 13. and xiii. 7. Isa. liii. 12. Psal. xxii. 18. and lxix. 21. Zech. xii. 10. And to this agreed the doctrine of the apostle, who taught that Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ that was to come, and that he had suffered all that Moses and the prophets did say should come upon him: but these were not the present sentiments of the Jews, who expected the Messiah to be a temporal Prince and Saviour, and to live in great outward prosperity, and for ever. *And that he should be the first that should rise from the dead;* by his own power, and to an immortal life, as Jesus did; and so is the first-born from the dead, and the first-fruits of them that slept: a type of this, in the deliverance of Isaac, is recorded by Moses in Gen. xxii. 12, 13, 14. compared with Heb. xi. 19. and the thing itself is foretold by many of the prophets, Psal. xvi. 10. Isa. xxvi. 19. Hos. vi. 2. *and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles;* in his own person to the people of the Jews, and by his apostles to the Gentiles. In the writings of Moses he is spoken of as the great prophet God would raise up in Israel, to whom they should hearken; and as the Shiloh to whom the gathering of the people should be, Deut. xviii. 15. Gen. xlix. 10. and that he should be a light to both Jews and Gentiles, through the ministration of the Gospel, is said by the prophets, Isa. ix. 2. and xlii. 6. and xlix. 6. and these were the things which the apostle asserted in his ministry, in perfect agreement with those writings.

Ver. 24. *And as he thus spake for himself,* &c.] Asserting the integrity and innocence of his past life and conversation, in proof of which he appealed to the Jews themselves; setting forth the prejudices to the Christian religion he had been under; declaring the heavenly vision that had appeared to him, and the divine orders he had received; alleging, that in his ministry there was an entire harmony between him, and the writings of Moses, and the prophets, for which the Jews professed a veneration; as he was thus vindicating himself, ere he had well finished his apology, *Festus said with a loud voice;* that all might hear, and being moved with resentment at what he had heard; and it may be, he was displeased with Paul that he took so much notice of Agrippa, and so often addressed him, and appealed to him, when he scarce ever turned to, or looked at him: *Paul, thou art beside thyself;* not in thy senses, or right mind, to talk of such an appearance and vision, and especially of the resurrection of a person from the dead. This is no unusual thing for the ministers of the Gospel to be reckoned madmen, and the doctrines they preach madness and folly: our Lord himself was said to be beside himself, and to have a devil, and be mad; and so were his apostles, Mark iii. 21. John x. 20. 2 Cor. v. 13. and it is not to be wondered at that natural men should entertain such an opinion of them, since what they deliver is quite out of their sphere and reach: Festus added, *much learning doth make thee mad;* the apostle was a man of much learning, both Jewish, Greek, and Roman; and Festus perceived him to be of great reading by his making mention of Moses, and the prophets, writings which he knew nothing at all of. And as this sometimes is the case, that much reading, and hard study, do cause men to be beside themselves, he thought it was Paul's case: so the philosopher[f] suggests, that men of great wit and learning, and who are closely engaged in study, whether in philosophy, or politics, or poetry, or in technical affairs, are inclined to be melancholy, and phrenetic.

Ver. 25. *But he said, I am not mad, most noble Festus,* &c.] That is, Paul said, as the Alexandrian copy, and some others, and the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions read: he replied to Festus, to whom he gives his title of honour, not out of fear, nor flattery, but according to custom; and though he used him in such a reproachful manner, as if he was not himself, which he denies; nor did what he had said shew any thing of that kind, but the reverse, to which he appeals; *but speak forth the words of truth and soberness;* which are true in themselves, being perfectly agreeable to the Scriptures of truth; and are what Christ, who is truth itself, had spoken, and of which he is the subject; and which the spirit of truth leads into, and owns and blesses: the Gospel in general, and all the doctrines of it, are words of truth; they are true, in opposition to that which is false, there is nothing of falsehood in them, no lie is of the truth; and to that which is fictitious, as the counterfeit Gospel of false teachers, which looks like the Gospel, and has the appearance of truth, but in reality is not; and to that which is but shadow, the Gospel, and the truths of it, are solid and substantial ones; hence the law and truth are opposed to each other, John i. 17. and there are particular doctrines of the Gospel, and such as the apostle had been speaking of, or referred unto, which are called truth, words of truth, and faithful sayings; as that Jesus Christ is the son of God; that he is God manifest in the flesh, or is God and man in one person; that he came into the world to save the chief of sinners; that he suffered, died, and rose again from the dead; that justification is by his righteousness; and that as he is the first that rose from the dead, others will rise also; or that there will be a resurrection of the dead by him; see 1 John ii. 21, 22. 1 Tim. iii. 15, 16. and i. 15. 1 Cor. xv. 1, 3, 4. Gal. iii. 1. 2 Tim. ii. 18. And these are *words* of *soberness* also; they are words of the highest wisdom, which contain

[f] Aristotel. Problem. sect. 30.

the wisdom of God in a mystery, even hidden wisdom, the deep things of God, and such as could never have been found out by the wisdom of men; they are the means of bringing a man to himself, to his right mind, who before was not himself; of causing a man to think soberly of himself, and not more highly than he ought to think, even to think of himself, that he is the chief of sinners, and the least of saints; and of speaking soberly, wisely, and prudently; and of living soberly, righteously, and godly: they are doctrines, as delivered by the faithful ministers of them, which come from a sound and sober mind, and have a tendency to make wise and sober; and therefore should be spoken *forth*, openly and boldly, freely and faithfully, constantly and continually, as they were by the apostle, whatever reproaches, calumnies, and reflections may be cast upon them for so doing, even though they may be called fools and madmen.

Ver. 26. *For the king knoweth of these things*, &c.] Something of them, of the sufferings and resurrection of the Messiah, and of his shewing light to Jews and Gentiles, as they are spoken of by Moses and the prophets, whose writings Agrippa was conversant with, and of these things as fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth; at least he had heard the report of them, how that they were said to be accomplished in him. *Before whom also I speak freely*: because of the knowledge he had of these things: *for I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from him*: as that Moses and the prophets have foretold them, and that they have had their fulfilment in Jesus; *for this thing was not done in a corner*: the ministry of Jesus was public, his miracles were done openly, his suffering the death of the cross under Pontius Pilate was generally known, and his resurrection from the dead was a well-attested fact, and the ministration of his Gospel to Jews and Gentiles was notorious. The Arabic and Ethiopic versions refer this to Paul's words and actions, that what he had said and done were not private but public, and of which Agrippa had had, by one means or another, a full account; but the other sense is best.

Ver. 27. *King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets?* &c.] What they have said concerning the person, office, sufferings, death, and resurrection of Christ, and that what they have said is fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth? *I know that thou believest*; that what the prophets said were true, and are accomplished.

Ver. 28. *Then Agrippa said unto Paul*, &c.] Either seriously or ironically: rather the former, arising from the convictions of his mind, which he could not stifle nor conceal: *almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian*; to profess faith in Jesus as the Messiah, to embrace his doctrine, and submit to his ordinances, which is to be a Christian, at least externally: and when he says *almost*, or *in a little*, his meaning is, that within a little, or very near, he was of being persuaded to embrace Christianity; or in a little matter, and in some respects; or rather in a few words, and in a small space of time, Paul had strangely wrought upon him to incline to the Christian religion; though the first sense, that he was almost, or within a little of being a Christian, seems to be the best, as appears by the apostle's reply to it: what it is to be a real Christian, see the note on ch. xi. 26. An *almost* Christian is one that has much light and knowledge, but no grace; he may know something of himself and of sin, of its being a violation of the law of God, and of the bad consequences of it, but has not true repentance for it; he may know much of Christ in a speculative way, concerning his person and offices, as the devils themselves do, and of the good things which come by him, as peace, pardon, righteousness, and salvation; but has no application of these things to himself; he may have a large notional knowledge of the doctrines of the Gospel, but has no experience of the power, sweetness, and comfort of them in his own soul; all his knowledge is unsanctified, and without practice: he is one that has a taste of divine things, but has not the truth of them; he may taste of the heavenly gift, of the good word of God, and of the powers of the world to come; yet it is but a taste, a superficial one, which he has; he does not savour and relish these things, nor is he nourished by them: he has a great deal of faith in the historical way, and sometimes a bold confidence and assurance of everlasting happiness; but has not faith of the right kind, which is spiritual and special, which is the faith of God's elect, the gift of God, and the operation of his spirit; by which the soul beholds the glory, fulness, and suitableness of Christ, under a sense of need, and goes forth to him, renouncing every thing of self, and lays hold upon him, and trusts in him for salvation; and which works by love to Christ and his people, and has with it the fruits of righteousness: he may express a great deal of flashy affectation to the word, and the ministers of it, for a while, but has nothing solid and substantial in him; he may partake of the Holy Ghost, of his gifts largely, but not of special and internal grace; and indeed he can only be an almost Christian, that becomes one merely through the persuasion of men: it is one part of the Gospel ministry to persuade men, but this of itself is ineffectual; a real Christian is made so by the power of divine grace. Agrippa was only persuaded, and but almost persuaded by the apostle to be a Christian, but not by the Lord, nor altogether, who persuades Japheth to dwell in the tents of Shem.

Ver. 29. *And Paul said, I would to God*, &c.] This prayer of the apostle's shews his affection for the souls of men, and his great desire for their conversion, and also his sense of the power and grace of God, as necessary to it: *that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost and altogether such as I am*: that is, his wish was that not only Agrippa, but that all that were present, were not only within a little, or in some low degree, but entirely; in the highest and fullest sense, Christians, as he was; that they knew as much of Christ, and had as much faith in him, and love to him, as he had, and were as ready to serve and obey him: he does not wish that Agrippa and the rest that heard him were as he had been, a bigot for traditions and ceremonies, that trusted in his own righteousness, did many things contrary to the name of Jesus, was a blasphemer of him, a persecutor of his saints, and an injurious person; but as he now was, not meaning with respect to his civil circumstances, as a mean poor man, and a tent-maker, or with respect to his single state of life, which he elsewhere advises to, 1 Cor. ix. 5. or with respect to his ministerial capa-

city, as an apostle of Christ, and a preacher of the Gospel; but as a Christian, and in a private capacity: his sense is, he wished that they were as he, regenerated by the spirit of God, new creatures in Christ, called by the grace of God with an holy calling, believers in Christ, lovers of him, pardoned by his blood, justified by his righteousness, sanctified by his grace, children of God, and heirs of eternal life: and all this he wishes for of God, saying, *would to God*, &c. knowing that the whole of this is not of men, but of God; all grace, and every blessing of it, which make or shew a man to be a Christian indeed, are from him. And this wish is expressive of true grace, which desires the good of others, and also of a spirit truly generous, that is not selfish and monopolizing; and which is concerned for the glory of God, the interest of Christ, and the weakening of Satan's kingdom: and from the whole of this it appears, that a person may arrive to true satisfaction of his own state; and that it is an evidence of grace, when the heart is drawn out in desires, after the salvation of others; and that altogether Christians are the only desirable ones; and that to be made a real Christian is the work of God, and to be ascribed to him. This the apostle wished for, for Agrippa and all that heard him; as does every Gospel minister for their hearers, the hearing of the word being the ordinary means of believing; and the rather it is desired by them, because the condemnation of those that hear the word is otherwise thereby aggravated: the apostle adds, *except these bonds;* which were both troublesome and reproachful: not but that he cheerfully endured them himself, and thought it the duty of Christians to bear them patiently, when called to it, but then they were not things to be desired and wished for; the exception is not only Christian-like, but humane and genteel.

Ver. 30. *And when he had thus spoken,* &c.] These words are omitted in the Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions: *the king rose up;* from the judgment-seat; that is, King Agrippa: *and the governor;* the Roman governor, Festus: *and Bernice;* the sister of King Agrippa: *and they that sat with them;* either in council, or to hear; the chief captains, and principal inhabitants of Cæsarea.

Ver. 31. *And when they were gone aside,* &c.] Into some apartment adjoining to the judgment-hall: *they talked between themselves;* that the common people might not hear their debates, and the result of them, and what were their sentiments concerning Paul and his case: *saying, this man doth nothing worthy of death, or of bonds;* according to the Roman laws; for as yet there were no laws among the Romans against the Christians as such, or against their professing and preaching Christ.

Ver. 32. *Then said Agrippa unto Festus,* &c.] As declaring his sense, and by way of advice and counsel; but not as determining any thing himself, for that lay in the breast of Festus, the Roman governor and judge: *this man might have been set at liberty;* from his bonds and imprisonment; for ought that appears against him, or any law to the contrary: *if he had not appealed unto Cæsar;* wherefore an inferior judge could not release him; but so it was ordered in divine Providence, that he should appeal to Cæsar, that he might go to Rome, and there bear a testimony for Christ; however, this declaration of Agrippa, and what he and the governor and the rest said among themselves, are a considerable proof of the innocence of the apostle.

C H A P. XXVII.

Ver. 1. *AND when it was determined that we should sail into Italy,* &c.] The chief city of which was Rome, the metropolis of the empire, where Cæsar had his palace, to whom the apostle had appealed; and his voyage thither was determined by Festus, with the advice of Agrippa and his council, pursuant to the apostle's appeal, and which was founded on the will of God; all which concurred in this affair: it was the decree and will of God that the apostle should go to Rome, which was made known to him; and it was his resolution upon that, to go thither, wherefore he appealed to Cæsar; and it was the determination of the Roman governor, not only as to his going there, but as to the time of it, which was now fixed: the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions, read *he*, instead of *we;* and the Ethiopic version reads expressly *Paul;* but the Greek copies read *we;* by whom are meant the apostle, and his companions; as Luke the writer of this history, and Aristarchus the Macedonian mentioned in the next verse, and Trophimus the Ephesian, who was afterwards left at Miletus sick, 2 Tim. iv. 20. and who else cannot be said; these were to sail with him to Italy, not as prisoners, but as companions: this resolution being taken, *they delivered Paul and certain other prisoners;* who very likely had also appealed to Cæsar, or at least the governor thought fit to send them to Rome, to have their cases heard and determined there; and these by the order of Festus were delivered by the centurions, or gaolers, in whose custody they had been, *unto one called Julius;* in the Alexandrian copy of the 3d verse, he is called Julianus; he was either one of the Julian family, or rather was one that had been made free by some of that family, and so took the name: *a centurion of Augustus' band;* of a Roman band of soldiers, which belonged to that legion which was called *Augusta;* for it seems there was a legion that bore that name, as Lipsius observes, and it may be from Augustus Cæsar.

Ver. 2. *And entering into a ship of Adramyttium,* &c.] Which was in the port of Cæsarea; for from thence they set sail to the place where this ship was bound, which very likely was the place here mentioned; there was a city of this name in Africa, and which was built upon the sea-shore, and is sometimes called Hadrumentum[g], as this is called Adramantos,

[g] Mela, l. 1. c. 7.

in the Syriac version; and in the Alexandrian copy, and in another manuscript, *a ship of Adramyntum*: it is mentioned with Carthage, a city in Africa, by Pliny [h] and Solinus [i]; the one calls it Adrumetum, and the other Adrymeto; and the latter says, that it, as well as Carthage, was built by the people of Tyre; and so Sallust [k] says, that the Phœnicians built Hippo, Adrumetum, Leptis, and other cities on *the sea-coast*: and the name seems to be a Phœnician name, חדרמות, *Hadarmuth*, which signifies the *court of death*; perhaps it might be so called, either from the badness of the air in which it was, or the dangerousness of its haven: Jerom calls it Hadrumetus, and says [l] it is a city in Byzacium, a country in Africa; he seems to design another place, the metropolis of the Byzacian country, the most fruitful of all the parts of Africa, and which in the Phœnician language was הדרמאות, *Hadarmeoth*: which signifies *the court of a hundred*: that is, it was a place so fruitful that it brought forth an hundred-fold; and agreeably to which is what Pliny says [m], they are called Libyphœnicians, who inhabit Byzacium, a country so named, in circuit two hundred and fifty miles, and of such great fruitfulness that the land returns to the husbandmen an hundred-fold. The former of these is most likely to be the place here meant; and though we nowhere read of the apostle being here, nor of the Gospel being preached here in the early times of Christianity; yet in the *fourth* century there was a church in this place, and Philologus was bishop of it, who subscribed at a council held at Carthage in this century; and in the *fifth* century we read of several bishops of this place, as Aurelius, who was in the Chalcedon council, Flavianus in that at Ephesus, which was reckoned an infamous one, and Helladius, who was in the first Ephesine council, and Felix, who was banished by Gensericus [n]. There was another city of the same name in Æolia, or Mysia [o], and which was formerly called Pedasus, and since Landermiti, and was a seaport, and bids fair to be the place here intended; though since there was an island of Lycia called Adramitis [p], now Andromety, and it was at Myra, a city of Lycia, where this ship stopped, ver. 5. and where the passengers changed their ship, this seems most likely to be designed: *we launched*; in the said ship from Cæsarea: *meaning to sail by the coast of Asia*: the lesser Asia, along by Ephesus and Miletus, as they did; for in this last place, as before observed, Trophimus was left sick; the Alexandrian copy reads, μέλλοντι, *that was about to sail*: that is, the ship of Adramyttium was about to sail, or just ready to sail by the coast of Asia, wherefore the company entered, and set forth in it on their voyage: *one Aristarchus a Macedonian, of Thessalonica, being with us*; the same person that was with the apostle at Ephesus, and accompanied him into Asia, ch. xix. 29. and xx. 4. the same went through with him to Rome, and became his fellow-labourer, and fellow-prisoner there, Philem. ver. 24. Col. iv. 10.

Ver. 3. *And the next* day *we touched at Sidon*, &c.] This was a famous city in Phœnicia, upon the northern border of the land of Israel; it was a maritime place, and noted for trade and navigation; Mela [q] calls it rich Sidon, and the chief of the maritime cities; Jerom [r] calls it the ancient city Sidon; and Curtius says [s] it was renowned for the antiquity and fame of its founders; it is thought to be built by Sidon, the first-born of Canaan, Gen. x. 15. from whom it took its name; so Josephus [t] affirms, that Sidonius, as he calls him, built a city in Phœnicia after his own name, and it is called by the Greeks Sidon; some say it was built by Sidus the son of Ægyptus, and named after him: according to R. Benjamin [u], it was a day's journey from hence to Tyre; and with others [w], it was not more than two hundred furlongs, about twelve or thirteen miles, which was another city of Phœnicia, as this was: Jerom's [x] account of Sidon is this, "Sidon, a famous city of Phœnicia, formerly the "border of the Canaanites, to the north, situated at "the foot of Mount Libanus, and the artificer of "glass:" and so Pliny [y] calls it, it being famous for the making of glass; and Herodotus [z] speaks of it as a city of Phœnicia: Justin the historian says [a] it was built by the Tyrians, who called it by this name from the plenty of fish in it; for the Phœnicians call a fish *Sidon*: and indeed Sidon or Tzidon seems to be derived from צוד, *Tzud*, which signifies *to fish*: and the place is to this day called Said or Sait; and so R. Benjamin calls it Tzaida [b]: to this city they came from Cæsarea, the day following that they set out on, and here they stopped awhile: *and Julius courteously entreated Paul*; the centurion into whose hands the apostle was delivered, used him with great humanity and civility; he found grace in his sight, as Joseph did in the sight of Potiphar, and as he himself had done before with Lysias, Felix, Festus and Agrippa: *and gave him liberty to go unto his friends to refresh himself*; for as there were disciples at Tyre, ch. xxi. 3, 4. so it seems there were at Sidon, both which cities were in Phœnicia, and are often mentioned together; and the apostle was allowed to go ashore, and visit his friends, and be refreshed by them, both in body and spirit, and be provided for by them with things convenient for his voyage. It is highly probable that there was here a Gospel church, but by whom planted cannot be said; our Lord himself was at the borders of this place, Matt. xv. 21. and the ministers of the word scattered at the death of Stephen, went as far as Phœ-

[h] Nat. Hist. l. 6. c. 34.
[i] Polyhistor. c. 40.
[k] Bellum Jugurth. p. 52.
[l] De locis Hebraicis, fol. 96. B.
[m] Nat. Hist. l. 5. c. 4.
[n] Magdeburg. Eccl. Hist. cent. 4. c. 9. p. 496, 497. cent. 5. c. 10. p. 648.
[o] Plin. l. 5. c. 30. Ptolom. l. 5. c. 2. Mela l. 1. c. 18. Pausan. Messenica sive l. 4. p. 269. Herodot. l. 7. c. 42.
[p] Stephanus de urbibus.
[q] De orbis Situ, l. 1. c. 12.
[r] Epitaph. Paulæ, Tom. I. fol. 58.
[s] Hist. l. 4. c. 1.
[t] Antiqu. l. 1. c. 6. sect. 2.
[u] Itinerar. p. 35.
[w] Reland. Palestina Illustrata, l. 2. p. 433, 510.
[x] De locis Hebraicis, fol. 96. I.
[y] Nat. Hist. l. 5. c. 19. & l. 36. c. 26.
[z] Euterpe, c. 116. & Thalia, c. 136.
[a] Hist. ex Trogo, l. 18. c. 3.
[b] Itinerar. p. 34.

nicia preaching the Gospel, Acts xi. 19. and that there were brethren there, appears from ch. xv. 3. see the note there, in which country Sidon was: in the *third* century there was a church in this place, and Zenobius was presbyter of it, who suffered martyrdom under Dioclesian[c]; in the *fourth* century there was a bishop of the church here, at the synod held at Nice; in the *fifth* century the bishop of the Sidonians, in the council of Chalcedon, declared his opinion with others against Dioscorus, whose name was Damianus; in the *sixth* century, mention is made of a bishop of Sidon, in the acts of the council held at Rome and Constantinople, and in the same century a synod met at Sidon, in the 20th year of Anastasius the emperor[d]: the account of the bishops of Sidon, as given by Reland[e], is as follows; Theodorus bishop of Sidon subscribed in the first Nicene council, in the year 325; Paulus subscribed in the first council at Constantinople, in the year 381; Damianus was in the council held at Chalcedon, in the year 451; Megas is mentioned in the acts and epistles subjoined to the Chalcedon council; Andreas, bishop of this place, is taken notice of in a letter of John of Jerusalem.

Ver. 4. *And when we had launched from thence,* &c.] From Sidon: *we sailed under Cyprus, because the winds were contrary;* that is, they sailed below the island of Cyprus; of which see ch. iv. 36. and xiii. 4. whereas if the wind had been right for them, they would have sailed above the island; leaving it on the right hand, in a straight course to Myra; but now they were obliged to go below it, leaving it on the left hand, going in part about it, through the seas of Cilicia and Pamphylia to Lycia, as follows.

Ver. 5. *And when we had sailed over the sea of Cilicia and Pamphylia,* &c.] For these two seas joined, as Pliny says[f], *mare Pamphylium Cilicio jungitur,* the Pamphylian sea is joined to the Cilician; and in another place[g] he observes, that in the Pamphylian sea were islands of no note, and in the Cilician sea of the five chiefest was Cyprus (an island mentioned in the preceding verse), and a little after, the sea of Cilicia is distant from Anemurius fifty miles: *we came to Myra a city of Lycia;* not Limyra in Lycia, though that lay by the sea-side; for according both to Pliny[h] and Ptolomy[i], Limyra and Myra were two distinct places in Lycia; which was a country, according to the latter, which had on the west and north Asia; (according to others, Caria on the west, and part of Lydia on the north;) on the east part of Pamphylia, and on the south the Lycian sea, or, as others, the Rhodian sea: much less was this the city of Smyrna, as some have said, which lay another way in Ionia, over-against the Ægean sea; and still less Lystra, as the Alexandrian copy and Vulgate Latin version read, which was in Lycaonia, and in the continent many miles from the sea: Lycia was a country of the lesser Asia, and lay between Caria and Pamphylia, and so it is mentioned with Caria and Pamphylia, in 1 Maccab. xv. 23. and the Carians, Pamphylians, and Lycians, are frequently put together in history; and the Lycians are said[k] to be originally of Crete, and to have their name from Lycus the son of Pandion; though some think that Lycia took its name *a luce,* from light, and of this country Myra was the metropolis: Ptolomy calls it Myrra, as if it had the signification of *myrrhe;* and so Jerom or Origen[l] reads it here, and interprets it *bitter;* but Pliny and others call it Myra, as here, and it signifies *ointment;* and here the apostle staying some time, though it cannot be said how long, no doubt opened the box of the precious ointment of the Gospel, and diffused the savour of it in this place; for in the beginning of the *fourth* century, in Constantine's time, we read of one Nicolaus, a famous man, bishop of Myra in Lycia, who was present at the council of Nice, and there shewed the scars and marks upon him, because of his constant confession of Christ under Maximinus; in the *fifth* century there was a bishop of this place, whose name was Romanus, and was in two synods, in the infamous one at Ephesus, where he favoured Eutyches, and in that at Chalcedon; in the *sixth* century mention is made of a bishop of this church in the acts of the synod at Rome and Constantinople; in the *seventh* century, Polyeuctus, bishop of Myra, was in the *sixth* synod at Constantinople, and in this century Myra was the metropolitan church of Lycia; in the *eighth* century, Theodorus, bishop of it, was in the Nicene synod; and in the *ninth* century this place was taken by the Saracens[m].

Ver. 6. *And there the centurion found a ship of Alexandria,* &c.] Alexandria was the chief city in Egypt, built by Alexander the great, from whom it took its name; it was situated near the sea, and had a famous haven or port, which R. Benjamin[n] calls הנמל של אלכסנדריאה, *the port of Alexandria;* from hence ships were sent into several parts for trade and commerce, and one of these Julius found at Myra: the top-sail was a distinguishing sign of a ship of Alexandria, for none might spread their top-sails but ships of Alexandria[o]; these were not obliged to strike sail when they came into a port: the Jewish writers make frequent mention of ספינה אלכסנדרית, *a ship of Alexandria*[p]; by which they intend a ship of a large bulk, which had a cistern in it for fresh water for a long voyage; and by this they distinguish ships of bulk from those small ones, that were used about their coasts; a ship of Alexandria with them was a ship that went from the land of Israel to Alexandria; whereas here it seems to design one that belonged to Alexandria, and went from thence to other parts: and this ship was *sailing into Italy;* and it was usual for

[c] Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. 8. c. 13.
[d] Magdeburg. Hist. Eccl. cent. 4. c. 2. p. 2. cent. 5. c. 2. p. 2. c. 10. p. 551. cent. 6. c. 2. p. 3. c. 3. p. 17. c. 9. p. 243.
[e] Palestina Illustrata, l. 3. p. 1014.
[f] Hist. l. 5. c. 27.
[g] Ib. c. 31.
[h] Ib. c. 27.
[i] Geograph. l. 5. c. 3.
[k] Herodotus, l. 1. c. 173. & l. 7. c. 92. Pausanias, l. 1. p. 33. & l. 7. p. 401.

[l] De Hebraicis Nominibus, fol. 106. A.
[m] Magdeburg. Eccl. Hist. cent. 4. c. 2. p. 3. c. 10. p. 552. cent. 5. c. 2. p. 3. c. 10. p. 588. cent. 6. c. 2. p. 4. cent. 7. c. 2. p. 3. c. 7. p. 112. c. 10. p. 254. cent. 8. c. 2. p. 4. cent. 9. c. 3. p. 13.
[n] Itinerar. p. 121.
[o] Senec. Ep. 77. Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 4. c. 2.
[p] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 35. 1. & Erubin, fol. 14. 2. & Gloss. in ib. Misn. Ohalot, c. 8. sect. 1. & Celim, c. 15. sect. 1. & Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

ships to go from Alexandria to Puteoli in Italy, and from thence to Alexandria upon trade and business [q]: *and he put us therein;* the centurion removed Paul and his companions, and the rest of the prisoners, with whatsoever soldiers were under his care, out of the ship of Adramyttium, into the ship of Alexandria; that is, he ordered them to remove out of one into the other.

Ver. 7. *And when we had sailed slowly many days,* &c.] Because of contrary winds, as in ver. 4. or else for want of wind, as some think; the Syriac version renders it, *and because it sailed heavily;* that is, the ship being loaden with goods: *and scarce were come over-against Cnidus;* or Gnidus, as it is sometimes called; it was a city and promontory in Doris, in the Chersonese or peninsula of Caria, famous for the marble statue of Venus made by Praxiteles [r]; it was over-against the island of Crete, and is now called Capo Chio; it was the birth-place of Eudoxus, a famous philosopher, astrologer, geometrician, physician and lawgiver [s]; it is made mention of in 1 Maccab. xv. 23. Jerom [t] says, it was a famous island over-against Asia, joining to the province of Caria; some think it has its name from the fish *Gnidus*, which is taken about this place, and which is of such an extraordinary nature, that when taken in the hand, it stings like a nettle; others [u] derive it from ענד, *hanad*, or *gnad*, which, in the Phœnician language signifies *to join;* because, as both Pausanias [w] and Strabo [x] say, it was joined by a bridge or causeway to the continent: it had two ports in it, as the last-mentioned writer says, but into neither of them did the ship put, in which the apostle was; nor do we read of the Gospel being preached here, or of a church in it until the *sixth* century, when mention is made of a bishop of Gnidus in the acts of the synod at Rome and Constantinople [y]: *the wind not suffering us;* to go right forward, as the Syriac version adds: *we sailed under Crete;* or below it, as in ver. 4. This is now called Candy; see the note on ch. ii. 11. *over-against Salmone;* now called Capo Salamone: this, by Pliny [z], Ptolomy [a], and Mela [b], is called Samonium or Sammonium, and by them said to be a promontory in the island of Crete, on the east side of it, over-against the island of Rhodes; Strabo calls it Salmonion, an eastern promontory of Crete; and Jerom a maritime city of the island of Crete.

Ver. 8. *And hardly passing it,* &c.] That is, Salmone, with great difficulty, because of the winds: *came unto a place which is called the Fair Havens;* called by other writers Cale Acte, or the fair shore, and is placed by Ptolomy [c] in Eubœa, and by Herodotus [d] in Sicily; but by Stephanus [e] is said to be a city of the Cretians, and which agrees with this account; *nigh whereunto was the city of Lasea;* there was a city in Crete called by Solinus [f] Lisson, and by Ptolomy [g] Lyssus, which he places on the south side of the island; and by Pliny [h] Lasos, which comes pretty near to this name, but then he places it in the midland part of Crete; who also makes mention of an island called Lasia over-against Troezenium, and another that was one of the Cyclades; the Syriac version here reads, *Lasia:* Jerom [i] says, Lasea is a city on the shore of the island of Crete, near the place which is called the Fair Havens, as Luke himself explains it; for which some corruptly read *Thalassa;* as do the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions; and the Alexandrian copy *Alassa:* Beza conjectures that it is the same with Elœa, which Pliny makes mention of in the above-cited place, as a city in Crete.

Ver. 9. *Now when much time was spent,* &c.] In sailing against the wind, or by staying at the Fair Havens; for so the Syriac version renders it, *where we stayed a long time;* and the Ethiopic version, *and there we remained many days:* it follows, *and when sailing was now dangerous, because the fast was now already past;* the Syriac version reads, *the fast of the Jews;* this was the day of atonement, which was the grand fast of the Jews, on which day they afflicted their souls, Lev. xxiii. 27. in memory of the worshipping of the golden calf; on that day they neither eat nor drink, nor do any work, neither do they wash, nor are they anointed, nor do they bind on their shoes, or make use of the marriage-bed; nor do they read any thing but sorrowful things, as the Lamentations of Jeremiah, until the setting of the sun, and the rising of the stars; and hence this day is called by them יום צום, *the day of fasting*, and צום הגדול, *the great fast*, and *the day of the fast of atonement* [k]: now this day was on the 10th of the month Tisri, which answers to the latter part of our September, and the former part of October; so that it was now Michaelmas-time, when winter was coming on, and sailing began to be dangerous; about this time of the year the Pleiades set, which brings on tempestuous weather, and unfit for sailing: *Paul admonished* them, or gave them some advice to continue where they were.

Ver. 10. *And said unto them, Sirs, I perceive,* &c.] Not only by the tempestuous weather which they had met with, and still continued, and which they must expect to have, if they continued on their voyage; but by a spirit of prophecy, which he was endued with, by which he foresaw, and so foretold, as follows; *that this voyage will be with hurt, and with much damage not only of the lading and ship, but also of our lives;* or of our persons, or bodies, that is, of the health of them; for certain it is that it was revealed to the apostle, that not one life should be lost; but yet through the shipwreck, what with the fright of it, and being in the water, much damage must accrue to their persons, as well as the ship and all its freight be lost.

[q] Senec. Ep. 77. Philo in Flaccum, p. 968, 969.
[r] Plin. l. 5. c. 28. Ptolom. l. 5. c. 2. Mela, l. 1. c. 16. Pausanias, l. 1. p. 2.
[s] Laert. de Vit. Philosoph. l. 8. p. 622.
[t] De locis Hebraicis, fol. 96. A.
[u] Hiller. Onomasticum, p. 790.
[w] Eliac. 1. sive, l. 5. p. 339.
[x] Geograph. l. 14.
[y] Magdeburg. Hist. cent. 6. c. 2. p. 4.
[z] Hist. l. 4. c. 12.
[a] Geograph. l. 3. c. 17.
[b] De orbis Situ, l. 2. c. 7.
[c] Ib. l. 3. c. 15.
[d] L. 6. c. 22.
[e] De urbibus.
[f] Polyhist. c. 16.
[g] Ib. l. 3. c. 17.
[h] L. 4. c. 12.
[i] De locis Hebraicis, fol. 96. D.
[k] Vid. Schindler. Lex. Pentaglott. p. 890. & Maimon. Shebitat Asher, c. 1. sect. 1, 4, 5, 6. & Misn. Yoma, c. 8. sect. 1.

Ver. 11. *Nevertheless the centurion believed the master and the owner of the ship*, &c.] Who were either one and the same person, or if two persons, the one was the owner, whose the ship was, and the other, he that was at the helm, and steered and directed it; or the one might be the captain, and the other the pilot. The κυβερνήτης, or *governor*, as he is here called with the ancients, was he who sat on an eminence in the stern of the ship, at the helm, and had the direction of it; he gave the orders, which others executed: what qualified him for his post chiefly lay in three things; in the knowledge of the constellations, and winds, of the former that he might direct the course of the ship according to them, and by them foresee future tempests, and of the latter, that he might be acquainted with the several points, from whence they blew; also in the knowledge of ports, and places to put into, and of rocks and sands, that they might be escaped; likewise in the knowledge of the use of the helm, and sails[l]; for one part of his business, as[m] Seneca observes, was to give orders after this manner; so and so move the helm, so and so let down the sails, &c. in every ship there was a governor, and in larger ones sometimes there were two; [n] Ælianus says, the Carthaginians had always two governors in a ship: the other word, ναυκληρος, is in the glossary rendered *navicularius*, which signifies *the owner* of the ship; and so we render it; though perhaps he is the same with the *proreta*, who governed the prow or head of the ship, and was the next in dignity to the governor, and a kind of a sub-governor; and his business was to observe tempests, to explore promontories, rocks and sands, and shew them to the governor[o]; and so Isidore[p] says, the owner of the ship is called Naucleros, because the ship is in his lot, *cleros* signifying lot: and as these best understood naval affairs, Julius gave more heed to what they said, and rather believed them, *than those things which were spoken by Paul*; by a spirit of prophecy, which he had no notion of; for though he treated him civilly as a man, he had no regard to him as a Christian, or as one endued with the spirit of God, which he knew nothing of.

Ver. 12. *And because the haven was not commodious to winter in*, &c.] Which was called *the Fair Havens*, ver. 8. which name it might have by an *antiphrasis*, it being just the reverse; it might be a good summer haven, but not be fit for winter: perhaps it might be an open road or bay, and having nothing to shelter from the boisterous waves, was a place very improper for a ship to be in, in stormy weather; for in open places, as bays and roads, the sea tumbles in very violently in bad weather: this was a haven fit for fair weather only, and therefore might be so called: *the more part advised to depart thence also*; the major part of the ship's company were of the same opinion with the master and owner of it, and advised as well as they, to sail from the Fair Havens in quest of a better port; the Syriac version reads, *the most of ours*, of the apostle's companions; so that they were against him, according to that version, which is not likely; however, the majority in the ship were for sailing: *if by any means they might attain to Phenice*, and there *to winter*, which is *an haven of Crete, and lieth toward the south-west and north-west*: this place is called in the Syriac version *Phœnix*; and Ptolomy[q] makes mention both of the city and haven of Phœnix, as on the south side of the island of Crete: and whereas it is here said to lie towards the south-west and north-west, this may be reconciled to that, as well as to itself; for the haven considered in general lay towards the south, but having its windings and turnings, with respect to them it lay towards both the south-west and the north-west, and so was a very commodious haven to winter in.

Ver. 13. *And when the south wind blew softly*, &c.] Or moderately, which was a good wind for them: *supposing that they had obtained* their *purpose*; that things would succeed according to their wish, and favour their design: *loosing thence*; from the Fair Havens; the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions render it, *loosing from Assos*; which could not be Assos of Troas, mentioned in Acts xx. 13. which was many miles from hence; rather Asum, a town in Crete, of which Pliny[r] makes mention, though, according to him, it seems to be an inland town; wherefore it is best to take the word ασσον to be an adverb, and render it *thence*, as we do; or join it with the next word, and render it, *they came near*, or *they sailed close by Crete*: along the shore, the wind favouring them, that they were in no danger of being dashed upon it, it being a soft gentle wind.

Ver. 14. *But not long after*, &c.] They had not been long at sea, but *there arose against it*: the ship, or the island of Crete, or both: *a tempestuous wind, called Euroclydon*; in the Greek text it is a *Typhonic* wind, so called, not from the name of a country from whence it blew; rather from Typho, the same with Python, an Heathen deity, who is said to be drowned in the lake Serbonis, or in the river Orontes; about which places this sort of wind is observed to be frequent, and which may take its name from him, being supposed to be raised by him. This wind may very well be thought to be the same which is called Typhon, and is by writers[s] represented as a very tempestuous one, as a sort of whirlwind or hurricane, a violent storm, though without thunder and lightning; and Pliny[t] calls it the chief plague of sailors, it breaking their sails, and even their vessels to pieces; and this may still have its name from Typho, since the Egyptians used to call every thing that is pernicious and hurtful by this name; moreover, this wind is also called Euroclydon. The Alexandrian copy reads *Euracylon*, and so the Vulgate Latin version seems to have read, rendering it *Euro-aquilo, the north-east wind*. The Ethiopic version renders it, the *north wind*; but according to Aristotle[u], and Pliny[w], the wind Typhon never blew in the northern parts; though some think that wind is not meant here, since the Typhon is a sudden storm of wind, and soon over; whereas this storm of wind was a settled and lasting one, it continued many days; and that it is only called Typhonic, because it bore some likeness to it, being

[l] Scheffer. de Militia Navali Veterum, l. 4. c. 6. p. 296, 297.
[m] Ep. 95.
[n] Var. Hist. l. 9. c. 40.
[o] Scheffer. ib. p. 302, 303.
[p] Originum, l. 19 c. 1. p. 162.
[q] Geograph. l. 3. c. 17.

[r] Nat. Hist. l. 4. c. 12.
[s] Aristotel. Meteorolog. l. 3. c. 1. Apuleius de Mundo, p. 256.
[t] Nat. Hist. l. 2. c. 48.
[u] Ut supra.
[w] Ib. c. 49.

very blustering and tempestuous: it seems by its name to be an easterly wind, which blew very violently, ploughed the sea, and lifted up its waves; hence the Arabic version renders it, *a mover* or *stirrer-up of the waves*; which beat against the ship in a violent manner, and exposed it to great danger.

Ver. 15. *And when the ship was caught*, &c.] By the wind, snatched up by it, and forcibly carried away: *and could not bear up into the wind*; and against it, or look it in the face, as the word signifies; could not ply to windward, the wind being so high and the sea so strong: *we let* her *drive*; about the sea, at pleasure, it being in vain to attempt to get her forward against the wind, or to direct her course.

Ver. 16. *And running under a certain island*, &c.] Or below a certain island and hard-by, it or under the sea-shore of it, where the sea might be smoother, the wind not being there so strong: *which is called Clauda*: by Ptolomy [x] it is called Claudus, and was near the island of Crete, and now called Gozo. The Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions, and some copies, read *Cauda*: and there was an island near to Crete, which was called Gaudos [y], and is thought to be the place here meant: *we had much work to come by the boat*; which they had with them to go ashore in, or to betake themselves to in case of shipwreck; and which in this storm was in danger of being dashed to pieces against the ship, or lost; and it was with some difficulty that they came at it, and took it up into the ship.

Ver. 17. *Which when they had taken up*, &c.] When they had got the boat into the ship: *they used helps*; the mariners made use of other persons, called in the assistance of the soldiers, and passengers, and prisoners; or for the help of the ship, they made use of cords, chains, and such-like things: *undergirding the ship*: with cords and ropes, which they drew under the keel of the ship, and so bound both sides of the ship, that it might not split and fall to pieces; which may be what is now called *frapping*, and is done by putting large ropes under the keel, and over the gunwale; and is used when a ship by labouring hard in the sea breaks the bolts in her sides, and this keeps her from parting. Horace [z] refers to this use of ropes in tempests, when he says, *Nonne vides ut—sine funibus vix durare carinæ possint imperiosius Æquor?* don't you see that without ropes the keels can scarcely endure the more imperious sea? Isidorus [a] makes mention of several sorts of ropes made use of in storms; *spiræ*, he says, are ropes that are used in tempests, which the mariners after their manner call *curcubæ*; *tormentum* is a long rope in ships, according to the same writer, which reaches from head to stern, by which they are bound faster together: *and fearing lest they should fall into the quicksands*; which were on the African coast, here called *Syrtes*; either from the conflux of sand and slime, and such like things, which made them very dangerous for shipping, and being covered with water, could not be seen and guarded against, and especially in a storm; or from their drawing of vessels into them, which they retain, suck in, and swallow up; and such the mariners might know were not far off: there were two very remarkable ones on the coast of Africa, the one is called the greater *Syrtis*, the other the lesser [b]; the greater was more to the south than the lesser, and also more to the east, and the lesser was to the west: of these *Syrtes*, Jerom [c] says, they are sandy places in the great sea very terrible, and to be feared, because they use to draw all into them; they are near the Egyptian sea; the Lybian sea, which washes the African shore, is by Seneca called from them the *Syrtic* sea [d]: wherefore, *they strake sail*; let down their sails; so read some manuscripts in New College, Oxford; in the Greek text it is, *they let down the vessel*; not the boat they had taken in, of which we read after; nor an anchor, or anchors, which would have been improper in a storm; nor the mast, it can hardly be thought that should be the first thing they should cut down, when they did not cast out the tackling till the third day; the storm was vehement on the first, more vehement on the second, when they lightened the ship, and most vehement on the third, when they cast out the tackling; and as Scheffer [e] observes, the mast is never cut down before the loss of other things; wherefore this is to be understood of letting down the sail-yard, and contracting the sails; the Syriac version renders it, *we let down the main-sail*; or, *the sail*, using the Greek word *Armenon*, which signifies *a sail*: *and so were driven*; about in the sea, wheresoever the winds and waves carried them; or very likely the ship was driven before the wind under her bare poles.

Ver. 18. *And we being exceedingly tossed with a tempest*, &c.] Sometimes being lifted up as it were to the heavens, and then presently sinking down, as if they were going into the bottom of the sea; such a condition at sea is described to the life by the Psalmist, in Psal. cvii. 25, 26, 27. *the next* day *they lightened the ship*; of its burden, its lading, the goods and merchandise that were in it; as the mariners did in the ship in which Jonah was, Jon. i. 5. the Ethiopic version renders it, *they cast the goods into the sea*; the Arabic version, the *merchandise*.

Ver. 19. *And the third* day, &c.] From the time this storm began, and this tempestuous weather held: *we cast out with our own hands the tackling of the ship*; by which seems to be meant their naval stores and instruments, as sails, ropes, cables, anchors, &c. and yet we afterwards read of their anchors and main-sail: it may be rendered, *the furniture of the ship*; and yet it cannot design the ship's provisions, at least all were not cast away; for afterwards mention is made of casting out the wheat into the sea: many versions render it, *the armament of the ship*; and the Ethiopic version adds, *and arms*; the soldiers' arms, and others which belonged to the ship, which were brought with them to defend themselves against an enemy: these, the historian says, *we cast out*; the Apostle Paul's company, Luke and others; but not without the leave and order

[x] Geograph. l. 3. c. 17.
[y] Mela, l. 2. c. 7. Plin. l. 4. c. 12.
[z] Carmin. l. 1. ode 14.
[a] Originum, l. 19. c. 4. p. 163.
[b] Vid. Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 5. c. 4. Sallust. in Jugurtha Melam. l. 1. c. 7.
[c] De locis Hebraicis, fol. 96. I.
[d] De Militia Naval Veterum, l. 1. c. 4. p. 35.
[e] Scheffer, ib. p. 297—300.

of the centurion and governor of the ship: the Alexandrian copy, and some others, and the Vulgate Latin version read, *they cast out*; which seems most probable.

Ver. 20. *And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared*, &c.] The Syriac version adds, *nor moon*; which is an usual description of dark, cloudy, and tempestuous seasons; and which was not only uncomfortable to them, because they could not see these luminaries, and enjoy their beneficial light and influence; but because they had them not to guide and direct them; for the sun, moon, and stars, are useful to sailors, to steer their course by; especially they were to the ancients, before the invention and use of the loadstone; besides, by these they conjectured what weather it would be, as mariners still do; they observed the rising and setting of the sun, whether it shone with equal rays or not, and whether it was red and fiery, or pale; and the like observations they made upon the moon, both as to its colour and bigness; and especially the constellations and stars were of singular use unto them; and above all, the two Bears, the greater and the lesser; the Greeks observed the former, and the Phœnicians the latter; and who are said by Pliny to have first found out the use of the constellations in navigation; particularly this is ascribed to the famous philosopher Thales, who is said to be a Phœnician; and from other constellations, as Arcturus, Orion, Hyades, &c. they foresaw rains, storms, and tempests: and now what made the case of the apostle and the ship's company the more distressing was, that it was not only dark and cloudy, but very tempestuous, as follows; *and no small tempest lay on us*; and all this continued many days: so Virgil [f] represents Æneas and his company in a like condition at sea, as not able by the heavens to distinguish day from night, nor to direct their course, neither sun nor stars appearing, and so wandered about in the sea three days without the sun, and as many nights without a star; and Homer [g] describes Ulysses in a violent storm at sea, and for the space of nine days tossed about, when on the tenth day he got to land; and Sosia, in Terence [h], is brought in saying, that he had been thirty days in a ship, expecting death every moment, so boisterous was the storm he was in; and so it was in this case, the winds blew hard upon them, and the rains fell with great violence, and every thing was discouraging and distressing; insomuch that *all hope that we should be saved was then taken away*; neither the master and owner of the ship, nor the mariners, nor the soldiers, nor prisoners, nor the apostle's companions, had any hope of being saved, but all expected to be lost. The apostle himself knew indeed, that though the ship would be lost, every man's life would be saved; and yet he could have no hope of this, as to the outward appearance of things, but on account of the revelation which the Lord had made to him, and he believed; otherwise, as to all human helps and means, there was no probability of an escape.

Ver. 21. *But after long abstinence*, &c.] From food, not for want of it, as appears from what follows, ver. 36—38. nor in a religious way, in order to obtain the favour of God; but either for want of appetite, and a nauseousness and loathing of food, through the tossing of the ship, fright at the storm, and fears of death; and chiefly for want of time, being employed for the security of themselves and the ship. *Paul stood forth in the midst of them*; that all might hear him: *and said, sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me*; it would have been better for them to have taken his advice, and staid at the Fair Havens, *and not have loosed from Crete*; or sailed from thence: *and to have gained this harm and loss*; whereby they would have shunned the injuries of the weather, the storm and tempest which they had endured, to the prejudice of their health, and the terrifying of their minds, and have prevented the loss of the goods and merchandise of the ship, and its tackling, utensils, instruments, and arms; the former of these is expressed by *harm* or injury, and the latter by *loss*. The apostle addresses them in a very courteous manner, and does not use sharp reproofs, severe language, or upbraid and insult them, only reminds them of the counsel he had given, which had it been taken, would have been to their advantage; and the rather he mentions this, that since what he had foretold was in part already come to pass, they might give the more heed to what he was about to say to them.

Ver. 22. *And now I exhort you to be of good cheer*, &c.] To take heart and courage, and not be cast down, though things had been thus with them, and they were now in a very melancholy plight and condition. *For there shall be no loss of* any man's *life among you, but of the ship*; the ship will be lost, but not one person in it: there will be a shipwreck, and so every man's life will be in danger, and yet not one will perish; and therefore there was reason to be of good cheer, since this was what they could not, and did not expect, all hope of being saved was gone: wherefore this, if they could but believe it, must be good news to all the company; and in order to engage them to believe it, the apostle adds,

Ver. 23. *For there stood by me this night the angel of God*, &c.] One of the ministering spirits that stand before God, and who was sent by him to the apostle; and appeared to him, either in a vision by a dream, or rather when he was awake, and stood by him, as he was praying for deliverance from the storm; for it is most likely that the apostle should be engaged at such a time as this: *whose I am, and whom I serve*; meaning not the angel, but God, whose the angel was; and his the apostle was, by electing, redeeming, and calling grace; God the father had chosen him in his son unto salvation; and Christ had redeemed him by his blood; and the Holy Spirit had called him by his grace; and he was not only the Lord's in common, as all other saints are, but he was his apostle and minister, and served him in the ministration of the Gospel of Christ, as well as from a principle of grace, obeyed the law of God, and was subject to the ordinances of Christ; in all which he served with great pleasure and cheerfulness, diligence, constancy, and faithfulness; from right principles, and with right views, being constrained by love, and influenced by the consideration of the relation he stood in to God.

[f] Æneid. l. 3.
[g] Odyss. 9.
[h] Hecyra, Act. 3. Scen. 4.

And all this was not peculiar to the apostle, but common to all the saints, excepting that of his being an apostle and minister of the Gospel: and the consideration of their relation to God has the same influence upon them it had upon him; they are not their own, nor are they the servants of men, nor do they belong to Satan, nor even to the ministering angels, but they are the Lord's; not merely by creation, as all men are, but in a way of special grace: they are Jehovah the father's, to whom he bears a peculiar love and favour, and whom he has chosen in his son for his peculiar people; and which is made manifest and known by drawing them with loving kindness to himself in effectual vocation; by his Gospel coming in power to them; by the blessings of the covenant of grace being bestowed on them; and by the spirit of adoption witnessing to them, that they are the children of God: they are Jehovah the son's, they are his people made willing in the day of his power; they are his portion assigned him by his father; they are his spouse and bride, whom he has betrothed to himself; they are his children, to whom he stands in the relation of the everlasting father; and they are his sheep the father has given him, and he has laid down his life for; all which appears by their having his spirit, as a spirit of regeneration and sanctification, without which none are openly and manifestatively his: and they are Jehovah the spirit's; they are his regenerated and sanctified ones; they are his workmanship, having his good work of grace begun and carrying on in their souls; they are his temples in which he dwells; he has the possession of them, and will not leave them till he has brought them safe to glory: and under all this evidence, and especially through the testimony of the spirit of God unto them, they call themselves the Lord's, as the apostle here does, and this engages them to serve him. The natural man has no desire, but an aversion to the service of God; converted men are willing to serve him, and delight to do it; they serve God in the best manner they can, in righteousness and true holiness, in an acceptable manner, with reverence and godly fear, and heartily and willingly; as appears by the pleasure they take in being called the servants of God, by disclaiming all other lords, by running all risks to serve the Lord, and by lamenting it, that they serve him no better.

Ver. 24. *Saying, fear not, Paul,* &c.] For though the apostle knew and believed he should go to Rome, and appear before Cæsar, to whom he had appealed, and where he should bear a testimony for Christ: and though he had previous notice of this storm, and of the loss and damage which should be sustained, and which he expected; yet the flesh was weak, and he might be under some fears and misgivings of heart, for these sometimes attend the best of men. *Thou must be brought before Cæsar;* as has been declared, and therefore can't be lost in this storm; it is the will and decree of God, which can't be frustrated, it must be: *and lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee;* that is, God had determined to save the whole ship's company for his sake, and in answer to his prayers, which he had been putting up for them; the Lord had heard him, and granted his request, and would save them all on his account: so sometimes God saves a nation, a city, a body of men, even of ungodly men, for the sake of a few that fear his name, who are among them.

Ver. 25. *Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer,* &c.] Which he repeats with more fervency and earnestness, there being so much reason for it: *for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me:* true faith lays hold and settles upon the word and promises of God; and the true believer, knowing his power and faithfulness, is firmly persuaded that there shall be a performance of what is said by him, with respect to matter, manner, and circumstances. Whatever God has told his people of, or has promised unto them, shall be performed, whether with respect to things temporal; that they shall not want any good thing; that all their afflictions shall be for their good; that they shall be supported under them, and at last brought out of them: or whether with respect to spiritual things; whatever he has said concerning himself, that he will be their God, will continue to love them, will not leave them, nor forsake them, will guide and protect them, will supply all their need, and give them grace here, and glory hereafter; and whatever he has said concerning his son, that he is their Saviour and Redeemer, that they are justified by his righteousness, pardoned through his blood, and shall be saved in him with an everlasting salvation; and whatever he has said concerning his spirit, that he shall enlighten them more and more, carry on his good work in them, and finish it, shall be their comforter and their guide, shall strengthen them in their inward man, and work them up for that selfsame thing, eternal glory: and likewise, whatever he has said concerning the prosperity and happiness of the churches in the latter day; even all those glorious things spoken of the city of God; and which relate both to the spiritual and personal reign of Christ. Faith takes all this at his word, and firmly believes it shall be as he has said: and it has good grounds and reasons for acting in this manner; from the veracity, faithfulness, and power of God, who has promised; and from the nature of the promises themselves, which are unconditional, immutable, all in Christ, and yea and amen in him, and not one of them has ever failed: and such a believing frame of soul greatly encourages cheerfulness of spirit, and produces it: a believer is cheerful himself, as he has reason to be; he is filled with joy and peace in believing, yea, with a joy unspeakable, and full of glory; and he makes all about him cheerful; he comforts others with the same comforts he has been comforted of God; and however, he exhorts, after his own example, to believe, and be of good cheer; see 2 Chron. xx. 20.

Ver. 26. *Howbeit, we must be cast upon a certain island.*] This circumstance is foretold, that when the whole affair should come to pass, it might be manifest that it was not a casual thing, a fortuitous event, a business of chance, but was predetermined by God, made known to the apostle, and predicted by him. This island was Melita; and the fulfilment of this part of the prediction is related in ch. xxviii. 1.

Ver. 27. *But when the fourteenth night was come,* &c.] From their setting out from the Fair Havens in Crete, or from the beginning of the storm: *as they were driven up and down in Adria:* or in the Adriatic *sea,* as the Syriac version renders it: the Adriatic sea

is now called by the Turks the gulf of Venice, and the streights of Venice, and sometimes the Venetian sea[j]; but formerly the Adriatic sea included more than the Venetian gulf; it took in the Ionian and Sicilian seas, and had its name from the city Adria, a colony of the Tuscans[k]. It is called by Ptolomy[l] Hadria, and reckoned a city of the Picenes. Pliny[m] places it near the river Padus, and calls it Atriæ, a town of the Tuscans, which had a famous port, from whence the sea was before called Atriatic, which is now Adriatic. Adria, Justin[n] says, which is near to the Illyrian sea, and gave name to the Adriatic sea, is a Grecian city; and from this place the ancestors of Adrian, the Roman emperor, originally came; and all the sea between Illyricum and Italy is called the Adriatic; and from the beginning of it, which is at the city of Venice, unto Garganus, a mountain in Italy, and Dyrrachium, a city of Macedonia, it is 600 miles in length, and its largest breadth is 200, and the least 150, and the mouth of it 60. The other part of the sea, which washes Macedonia and Epirus, is called the Ionian sea. Moreover, this whole sea is called the superior sea, with respect to the Tyrrhenian, which dashes the other shore of Italy, and is called the inferior[o]. In this same sea, Josephus[p], the historian, was shipwrecked as he was on a voyage to Rome: his account is this; "I came to Rome, having gone "through many dangers by sea, for our ship being "sunk in the middle of Adria, being in number about "six hundred, we swam all night; and about break "of day, by the providence of God, a ship of Cyrene "appeared to us, in which I, and some others, in all "eighty, getting before the rest, were received into it, "and so got safe to Dicearchia, which the Italians "call Puteoli;" a place afterwards mentioned, where the apostle also arrived. And the sea itself is often, by the poets[q], called Adria, as here, and is represented as a very troublesome sea; and here Paul, and the ship's company, were driven to and fro by the storm, when *about midnight the shipmen deemed that they drew near to some country*: about the middle of the night the mariners thought, by some observations they made, that they were nigh land; or, as it is in the Greek text, that *some country drew near to them*: which well agrees with the language and sense of seafaring persons, to whose sight the land seems to draw near them, or depart from them, when they draw near, or depart from that: the Ethiopic version is, *they thought they should have seen a city*: they had a notion of some city near: and the Arabic version, *they thought to know in what country, or place* they were: and therefore did as follows.

Ver. 28. *And sounded, &c.*] Or let down their plummet, or sounding-line: which was a line with a piece of lead at the end of it, which they let down into the water, and by that means found of what depth it was, by which they could judge whether they were near land or no. The sounding-line, with the ancients, was called by different names; sometimes *bolis*, and this is the name it has here, βολίσαντες, *they let down the bolis*: and the *bolis* is, by some, described thus; it is a brazen or leaden vessel, with a chain, which mariners fill with grease, and let down into the sea, to try whether the places are rocky where a ship may stand, or sandy where the ship is in danger of being lost: it is also called *catapirates*, which is thus described by Isidore: *catapirates* is a line with a piece of lead, by which the depth of the sea is tried. Herodotus makes mention of it under this name, and observes, that when persons are within a day's voyage of Egypt, if they let down the *catapirates*, or sounding-line, they will bring up clay, even when in eleven fathom deep[r]. According to modern accounts, there are two kinds of lines, occasionally used in sounding the sea, the soundling-line, and the deep-sea line: the sounding-line is the thickest and shortest, as not exceeding 20 fathoms in length, and is marked at two, three, and four fathoms with a piece of black leather between the strands, and at five with a piece of white leather: the sounding-line may be used when the ship is under sail, which the deep-sea line cannot.—The plummet is usually in form of a nine-pin, and weighs 18 pounds; the end is frequently greased, to try whether the ground be sandy or rocky, *&c.*[s]. The deep-sea line is used in deep water, and both lead and line are larger than the other: at the end of it is a piece of lead, called deep-sea lead, has a hole at the bottom, in which is put a piece of *tallow*, to bring up the colour of the sand at the bottom, to learn the differences of the ground, and know what coasts they are on. *And found it twenty fathoms*; or *orgyas*: a fathom is a measure which contains six feet, and is the utmost extent of both arms, when stretched into a right line: the fathom, it seems, differs according to the different sorts of vessels; the fathom of a man of war is six feet, that of merchant-ships five feet and a half, and that of fly-boats and fishing vessels five feet: if the fathom here used was the first of these, the sounding was an hundred and twenty feet; the Ethiopic version renders it, *twenty statues of a man*. *And when they had gone a little further, they sounded again, and found it fifteen fathoms*; or ninety feet: by which they imagined that they were near the continent, or some island: in some places, as the coasts of Virginia, for instance, by the use of the deep-sea line, it is known how far it is from land; for as many fathoms of water as are found, it is reckoned so many leagues from land.

Ver. 29. *Then fearing lest they should have fallen upon rocks, &c.*] Or *rough places*, as shelves, rocks, or sands, as they might well fear, when the water shallowed so fast, from 20 to 15 fathoms: *they cast four anchors out of the stern*; or hinder part of the ship; the Ethiopic version calls it, *the head of the ship*: and adds, *where the governor sat*: that is, at the helm, *to steer it*. Perhaps the reason of this version is, because it is not usual in modern navigation, and so, when this version was made, to cast out anchors from the stern, but from the prow or head of the ship; but it seems this

[j] Hyde not. in Peritzol. Itinera Mundi, p. 53, 54.
[k] Alex. ab. Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 3. c. 25.
[l] Geograph. l. 3. c. 1.
[m] Nat. Hist. l. 3. c. 16.
[n] Hist. ex Trogo, l. 20. c. 1.
[o] Pausanias, Eliac. 1. sive, l. 5. p. 337.
[p] In Vita sua, sect. 3. p. 905.
[q] Horat. Carmin. l. 1. ode 3. & l. 3. ode. 3. 9. Ovid. Trist. l. 1. eleg. 11.
[r] Scheffer. de Militia Navali Veterum, l. 2. c. 5. p. 120.
[s] Chambers's Cyclopædia in the word Sounding.

was done by the ancients. According to Pliny, the Tyrrhenians first invented the anchor; though Pausanias ascribes the invention of it to Midas, the son of Gordius: the most ancient ones were made of stone, as was the anchor of the Argonautes; afterwards they were made of wood; and it is said, that the Japonese use wooden anchors now; and these were not pointed, but had great weights of lead, or baskets filled with stones at the head of them, to stop the ship with; last of all they were made of iron, but with a barb or tooth on one side only, not on both: the anchor with two teeth or barbs was found out by Eupalamius; or, as others say, by Anacharsis, the Scythian philosopher: it was usual to have more anchors than one in every ship, of which there was one which exceeded the rest, both in bigness and strength, and was called the *sacred* anchor; and which was only used in case of necessity [t]; and is what is now called *the sheet anchor*. The modern anchor is a large strong piece of iron, crooked at one end, and formed into two barbs, resembling a hook, fastened at the other end by a cable.——The parts of an anchor are, 1. the ring into which the cable is fastened; 2. the beam, or shank, which is the longest part of the anchor; 3. the arm, which is that which runs down into the ground; at the end of which is, 4. the flouke or fluke, by some called the palm, being that broad and picked part with its barbs like an arrow-head, which fastens into the ground; 5. the stock, a piece of wood, fastened to the beam near the ring, serving to guide the fluke, so that it may fall right, and fix in the ground. There are three kinds of anchors commonly used, the kedger, the grapnel, and the stream-anchor [u]; yea, I find that there are four kinds of anchors, the sheet-anchor, best bower, small bower, and stream-anchor: it seems the grapnel is chiefly for the long boat: here were four anchors, but very likely all of a sort, or, however, not diversified in the manner the modern ones are. These they cast out to stop the ship, and keep it steady, and that it might proceed no further, till they could learn whereabout they were: *and wished for the day*; that by the light of it they might see whether they were near land, or in danger of rocks and shelves, as they imagined.

Ver. 30. *And as the shipmen were about to flee out of the ship*, &c.] To save their lives, concluding that it was in the utmost danger, and that it would quickly, notwithstanding the anchors cast out, break away, and fall upon the rocks, and split to pieces: *when they had let down the boat into the sea*; which before they had taken up into the ship, ver. 16, 17. and now they let it down, in order to get into it, and make their escape: *under colour as though they would have cast anchors out of the foreship*; the foremost part of the ship, the prow of it; their pretence in attempting to get out of the ship, and into the boat, was, that whereas there were anchors cast out of the stern, or hinder part of the ship, so they would cast out others, from the fore part of it; and *stretch* them *out*, as the word signifies, or carry them further out into the sea, for the security of the ship; and to do which, it was necessary to use the boat.

Ver. 31. *Paul said to the centurion, and to the soldiers*, &c.] He did not direct his speech to the governor and owner of the ship, who very likely, being sensible of the danger, were in the scheme with the mariners, and at the head of them; but to Julius the centurion, and the soldiers under him, who having no knowledge of maritime affairs, were not apprised of the danger, nor aware of the design of the shipmen; and besides, had now great dependence upon the assurance the apostle had given, that no life should be lost: to these he said, *except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved*: pointing to the mariners who were about to let down the boat, in order to make their escape: the apostle had before declared, that there should be no loss of any man's life, and yet now affirms, that unless the mariners continued in the ship, the rest of the company could not be saved: this does not shew that the decree concerning the salvation of them was a conditional one, and that the condition was, that the mariners should stay in the ship; but that their stay in the ship, who had skill to guide and direct it, as also the company when shipwrecked, were a means absolutely fixed in the decree, and therefore was absolutely necessary: God had determined to save the whole ship's crew, and that in the same way and manner; they were all to be shipwrecked; some were not to leave the ship before-hand, and save themselves in the boat, but they were all to be exposed to equal danger, and then be saved; and till that time came, the proper and prudent means were to be made use of, who were the shipmen, who best knew how to manage the ship in this extremity: this teaches us that the end and means, in the decrees of God, are not to be separated; nor is any end to be expected without the use of means; and means are as peremptorily fixed, and are as absolutely necessary, and must as certainly be accomplished, as the end. Thus spiritual and eternal salvation is a certain thing; it is the appointment of God, which is absolute and unconditional, immutable and unfrustrable; there is a sure connexion between the decree of God and salvation; it is a scheme drawn by Jehovah in the council of peace, who is God only wise, saw every thing before-hand that would come to pass, and has power to execute his scheme; it is an affair secured in the covenant of grace, which is sure and immovable; God is faithful who has made it with his son; and Christ, the surety and Mediator of it, is equal to that part which he has in it; yea, salvation is a finished work, full satisfaction is made for sin, and pardon procured, an everlasting righteousness is brought in, all enemies are conquered and destroyed, and Christ's people are saved from them: and the interest which he has in them shews the certainty of their salvation; for they are given to him, and are in his hands; they are his portion, his treasure and his jewels; they are the purchase of his blood, and the travail of his soul; they are united to him, and are built upon him; they are interested in his preparations and prayers, and are in some sense saved already; and yet there are some things which God has fixed as means, and made absolutely necessary, and without which none can be saved: as for instance, none can be saved without regeneration; without this there's no meetness for heaven; nor does it appear without it

[t] Scheffer. de Militia Navali Veterum, l. 2. c. 5. p. 147, 148, 149.

[u] Chambers's Cyclopædia in the word *Anchor*.

that any have a right unto it; nor can an unregenerate man have any true hope of it; wherefore such as are chosen and redeemed, are regenerated by the spirit of God: so likewise without holiness no man shall see the Lord; this is fixed in the decree of God, and is necessary to the enjoyment of him, and to fellowship with angels and glorified saints; wherefore the Lord sanctifies all he saves: particularly none without faith in Christ will ever be saved; nor is this inconsistent with salvation being by grace, seeing it is not considered as a cause of salvation, but is itself a gift of grace; it lies in receiving things at the hand of God, it admits of no glorying in men, and gives all the glory of salvation to God and Christ, and free grace; and this is necessary because God has appointed it, and therefore he bestows it on all he means to save: to which may be added, that without perseverance in faith and holiness, there is no salvation; wherefore the Lord puts his grace into the hearts of his people to cause them to persevere; he encompasses them with his power, upholds them with the right hand of his righteousness, and preserves them from Satan, and from a final and total falling away.

Ver. 32. *Then the soldiers cut off the ropes of the boat,* &c.] With which it had been fastened to the sides of the ship, and by which the mariners were letting it down, in order to get into it, and go off: *and let her fall off;* from the sides of the ship into the sea, and so prevented the shipmen quitting the ship; for now they gave more credit to Paul than to them.

Ver. 33. *And while the day was coming on,* &c.] Between midnight and break of day: *Paul besought them all to take meat;* to sit down and eat a meal together: *saying, this day is the fourteenth day that ye have tarried;* or, have been waiting for, or expecting; that is, as the Arabic version expresses it, a shipwreck; for fourteen days past, ever since the storm begun, they had expected nothing but shipwreck and death: *and continued fasting, having taken nothing;* not that they had neither ate nor drank all that while, for without a miracle they could never have lived so long without eating something; but the meaning is, they had not eaten any one regular meal all that while, had only catched up a bit now and then, and ate it, and that but very little.

Ver. 34. *Wherefore I pray you to take some meat,* &c.] To sit down composedly, and eat meat cheerfully and freely: *for this is for your health;* the Alexandrian copy reads, *for our health;* it was for the health of them all, that they might be better able to bear the shock and fatigue of the shipwreck, and be in better spirits, and in a better capacity to help themselves, and one another: *for there shall not an hair fall from the head of any of you:* a proverbial phrase, expressing the utmost safety of their lives, and therefore might cheerfully eat their food, and rest themselves, and be satisfied. To dream of shaving the hair, portended shipwreck to sailors; nor was it lawful for any to pare his nails, or cut off his hair, but in a storm; to which custom, some think, the apostle here alludes [w]; see 1 Sam. xiv. 45. 2 Sam. xiv. 11.

Ver. 35. *And when he had thus spoken he took bread,* &c.] A piece of bread, of common bread, into his hands; for this could never be the eucharist, or Lord's supper, which the apostle now celebrated, as some have suggested, but such sort of bread that seafaring men commonly eat: mention is before made of *meat* or *food,* which the apostle entreated them to take, which includes every sort of sea-provisions they had with them; and which, with the ancients, were usually the following: it is certain they used to carry bread-corn along with them, either crude, or ground, or baked; the former when they went long voyages, the last when shorter ones; and it is plain that they had wheat in this ship, which after they had eaten they cast out, ver. 38. and corn ground, or meal, they had used to eat moistened with water, and sometimes with oil, and sometimes with oil and wine; and they had a sort of food they called *maza,* which was made of meat and milk; likewise they used to carry onions and garlic, which the rowers usually ate, and were thought to be good against change of places and water; and they were wont to make a sort of soup of cheese, onions and eggs, which the Greeks call *muttootos,* and the Latins *mosetum;* and they had also bread which was of a red colour, being hard-baked and scorched in the oven, yea it was *biscoctus,* twice baked [x]; as our modern sea-biscuit is, and which has its name from hence, and which for long voyages is four times baked, and prepared six months before the voyage is entered on; and such sort of red bread or biscuit very probably was this, which the apostle now took into his hands, and did with it as follows: *and gave thanks to God in the presence of them all;* and for them all, as Christ did at ordinary meals, Matt. xiv. 19. and xv. 36. *and when he had broken it he began to eat;* which was all agreeably to the custom and manner of the Jews, who first gave thanks, and then said *Amen,* at giving of thanks; when he that gave thanks brake and ate first: for he that brake the bread might not break it until the *Amen* was finished by all that answered by it, at giving of thanks; and no one might eat any thing until he that brake, first tasted and ate [y].

Ver. 36. *Then were they all of good cheer,* &c.] Encouraged by the apostle's words and example: *and they all took some meat;* and made a comfortable meal, which they had not done for fourteen days past.

Ver. 37. *And we were in all in the ship,* &c.] Reckoning the master and owner of the ship, and the centurion and the soldiers, and the apostle and his company, with whatsoever passengers there might be: *two hundred and threescore and sixteen souls;* the Alexandrian copy reads, *two hundred seventy and five;* and the Ethiopic version, *two hundred and six.* This account of the number is given to shew, that the historian, who was one of them, had an exact knowledge of all in the ship; and this being recorded before the account of the shipwreck, may serve to make the truth of the relation the more to be believed that none of them perished, since their number was so precisely known; and makes it the more marvellous, that such a number of men should be saved, and in a shipwreck; and shews, that

[w] Kirchman. de funer. Rom. l. 2. c. 14. p. 212, 213.
[x] Vid. Scheffer. de Militia Navali Veterum, l. 4. c. 1. p. 252, 253, 254.

[y] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 47. 1. Zohar in Num. fol. 100. 3.

there must be a wonderful interposition of divine power to bring them all safe to land.

Ver. 38. *And when they had eaten enough*, &c.] Were satisfied, having eaten a full meal: *they lightened the ship;* of its burden, that it might the better carry them to the shore, and that by the following method: *and cast out the wheat into the sea;* which seems to have been part of the ship's provision; or one part of their lading, which they brought from Egypt, and were carrying to Italy: they had cast out some of the goods of the ship before, and also the tackling of the ship, and now, last of all, the wheat; for what was eatable they reserved till last, not knowing to what extremity they might be reduced.

Ver. 39. *And when it was day they knew not the land*, &c.] What place it was, or the name of it: *but they discovered a certain creek with a shore;* a gulf or bay, with a shore near it; the Ethiopic version explains it, *an arm of the sea*, where was a port, where they thought they could secure themselves, or get ashore: *into which they were minded, if it were possible, to thrust in the ship;* whither they had a mind, and consulted to run the ship, if it could be done by any means, believing it was the most likely method of saving themselves, and that: for notwithstanding the assurance they had that no man's life should be lost, they made use of all proper means for their safety and security.

Ver. 40. *And when they had taken up the anchors*, &c.] The four anchors they cast out of the stern, ver. 29. or *when they had cut the anchors*, as the Syriac and Arabic versions render it; that is, had cut the cables to which the anchors were fastened: *they committed themselves unto the sea;* or left them, the anchors, in the sea; or committed the ship to the sea, and themselves in it, endeavouring to steer its course to the place they had in view: *and loosed the rudder-bands;* by which the rudder was fastened to the ship. The rudder, in navigation, is a piece of timber turning on hinges in the stern of a ship, and which opposing sometimes one side to the water, and sometimes another, turns or directs the vessel this way or that.—— The rudder of a ship is a piece of timber hung on the stern-posts, by four or five iron hooks, called *pintles*, serving as it were for the bridle of a ship, to turn her about at the pleasure of the steersman.——The rudder being perpendicular, and without-side the ship, another piece of timber is fitted into it at right angles, which comes into the ship, by which the rudder is managed and directed: this latter is properly called the *helm* or *tiller*, and sometimes, though improperly, the rudder itself.——A narrow rudder is best for a ship's sailing, provided she can feel it; that is, be guided and turned by it, for a broad rudder will hold much water when the helm is put over to any side; yet if a ship has a fat quarter, so that the water cannot come quick and strong to her rudder, she will require a broad rudder. ——The aftmost part of the rudder is called the *rake* of the rudder. This is the account of a rudder with the moderns [x]: with the ancients, the parts of the rudder were these, the *clavus* or *helm*, by which the rudder was governed; the pole of it; the wings or the two breadths of it, which were as wings, and the handle: some ships had but one rudder, most had two, and some three, and some four; those that had but one, seemed to have it in the middle of the stern; and those that had two had them on the sides, not far from the middle; and there were some ships which had them not only in the stern, but also in the prow or head of the ship [y]: that the ancients had sometimes more rudders than one in a ship, has been abundantly proved by Bochartus and Schefferus; take only an instance or two. The Carthaginians, as [z] Ælianus reports, decreed two governors to every ship, saying it was absurd that it should have δύο πηδάλια, *two rudders*, and that he who was most useful to the sailors, and had the government of the ship, should be alone, and without successor and companion; and so Apuleius [a] says, the ship in which we were carried was shook by various storms and tempests, *utroque regimine amisso*, and having lost both its rudders, sunk at the precipice. Some of the Indian ships have three rudders; that of Philopator's had four rudders: how many this ship had, in which the apostle was, cannot be said: but this is certain, that it had more than one; for the words are, *and loosed the bands of the rudders:* and since it is a clear case, that the ships of the ancients had more rudders than one to each, there is no need to suppose a figure in the text, and that the plural number is used for the singular, as Beza thinks: and *the bands* of them were those by which they were fastened; and they were *loosed*, as Schefferus conjectures, because when the anchors were cast out, they fastened the rudders higher, that they might not be broken by the dashing of the waves, especially as they were in a storm; but now having taken up the anchors, they loosed these bands: and certain it is, that not only oars but rudders were fastened with cords or ropes to the ship [b]: according to the notion of modern navigation, the rudder-band might be thought to be the rope which is turned round the tiller, and made fast to the ship's side, and as the tiller is moved, *ranges* round the end of the tiller; and very likely might be made fast, when the ship was at anchor, on one side, to keep the ship from breaking her sheer; but now being loosed, and the helm *a midship*, and the main-sail hoised, the ship ran to the shore before the wind. *And hoised up the main-sail to the wind;* which they had before struck or let down, ver. 17. The main-sail is that which is upon the main-mast. The Ethiopic version renders it, *the great sail.* The great sail was that which is called *acatius*, which is another word than is here used: so Isidore [c] says *acatus* is the greatest sail, and is placed in the middle of the ship; *epidromos* is the next in bigness, and is placed at the stern; and *dolon* is the least sail, and is fixed at the head: and both the Syriac and Arabic versions here render it, *the little sail;* and which sailors put up when they are afraid to use large sails, which would carry too much wind; but the word here used is *artemon*, which the above writer says is commended rather for the sake of directing the ship, than for swiftness. And

[x] Chambers's Cyclopædia in the word *rudder*.
[y] Scheffer. de Militia Navali Veterum, l. 2. c. 5. p. 145, 146.
[z] Var Hist. l. 9. c. 40.
[a] Metamorphos. l. 2. p. 24.
[b] Vegetius apud Scheffer. de Militia Navali Veterum, l. 2. c. 5. p. [illegible]
[c] Originum, l. 19. c. 2. p. 163.

this seems to be the use that was now made of it, namely, to guide the ship into the creek or bay. *And made toward the shore*: which was in the creek, or to the haven in it.

Ver. 41. *And falling into a place where two seas met,* &c.] An *isthmus*, on each side of which the sea ran; and which the inhabitants of Malta, as Beza says, shew to this day, and call it, *la Cala de San Paulo*, or the Descent of Saint Paul. The meeting of these two seas might occasion a great rippling in the sea like to a large eddy, or counter tide; and here might be a sand on which *they ran the ship aground*, for this place where the two seas met, as the same annotator observes, could not be the shore itself; for otherwise, to what purpose should they cast themselves into the sea, as they afterwards did, if the head of the ship struck upon the shore, and stuck fast there? but must rather mean a shelf of sand, over-against, or near the entrance into the bay, and where the shipwreck was. *And the fore part stuck fast, and remained unmoveable*: so that there was no getting her off: *but the hinder part was broken by the violence of the waves*; that is, the stern; by which means there were boards and broken pieces for the company to get ashore upon.

Ver. 42. *And the soldiers' counsel was to kill the prisoners*, &c.] Paul, and the rest: this they had not only an inclination to, but they declared it, and gave it as their opinion, and what they thought advisable to be done directly: *lest any of them should swim out and escape*: and they should be accountable for them: but this was dreadful wickedness in them to seek to take away the lives of others, when they themselves were in so much danger; and monstrous ingratitude to the Apostle Paul, who had been so much concerned for their lives, and careful of them, and had been the means of saving them, and for whose sake they were saved: the devil must have had a great hand in this.

Ver. 43. *But the centurion, willing to save Paul*, &c.] Not only because he was a Roman citizen, but because he perceived he was some extraordinary person; and chiefly because he was moved thereunto by a superior influence, that Satan might not have his end; and that the will of God might be fulfilled, that he should go to Rome, and there bear a testimony of Christ. *Kept them from* their *purpose*; would not suffer them to execute their design, restrained them from it, and laid his commands upon them to the contrary. *And commanded that they which could swim, should cast themselves first into the sea, and get to land*: which some restrain to the Roman soldiers, as if the centurion's speech was only directed to them; though it seems rather to have respect to the whole company, the mariners, who generally can swim, and the soldiers, as many of them as could, and the rest of the prisoners or passengers; though it may be, he might chiefly regard the soldiers, who were usually learned to swim, that they might the more readily pass rivers, in their marches, where they could find no bridges, that so he might be the sooner rid of them, and break their purpose.

Ver. 44. *And the rest, some on boards*, &c.] Doors, tables, planks, or any such-like things: *and some on* broken pieces *of the ship*; or what came from it, as masts, beams, &c. *and so it came to pass that they escaped all safe to land*: not one was lost, as Paul had foretold. And so it will be with the saints after their afflicted state in this life, who are safe by being in Christ, and by abiding in him and in the use of means; and though by reason of the many difficulties in the way, through the corruptions of their own hearts, the temptations of Satan, the hidings of God's face, various afflictions, and sometimes violent persecutions, they are scarcely saved, yet at last they are certainly saved: so it comes to pass that they get safe on the shores of eternal bliss and happiness; because they are ordained unto it, are the care of Christ, and the purchase of his blood; and are partakers of the blessings of grace, and have the spirit, as an earnest of the heavenly inheritance; and when landed they are safe; sin will be no more; Satan will be under their feet; there will be no more afflictions of any kind; and they will be with the Lord, and for ever with him. This voyage of the apostle, and the saints with him, was an emblem of the passage of the people of God in this world to heaven: their number was but few; who besides Luke, and Aristarchus the Macedonian, were with him, is not known, ver. 2. And so the number of the children of God, in any one period of time, is but small in comparison of the rest of the world: the apostle and his companions had but very indifferent company, as other prisoners, a band of soldiers, and the sailors; Christ's church is as a rose in a field, a lily among thorns, vexed with the conversation of the wicked, being in a world which lies in wickedness; and which may very fitly be compared to the sea, for the waves of afflictions in it, and the restless and uneasy spirits of the men of it. Sailing at this time was dangerous, ver. 9. as the saints' passage through this world always is, and especially now in these last and perilous days; partly through the aboundings of immorality on the one hand, and partly through the spread of error and heresy on the other. A great storm arose, ver. 14. and there are many the Christian meets with in his voyage to heaven; and well it is for him that Christ is an hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest, and that he is built on such a foundation, which the most violent storms can't move him from. There was no sight of sun or stars for many days, ver. 20. and so it is sometimes with the people of God; the sun of righteousness is not seen by them, clouds interpose between him and them; and the stars, the ministers of the Gospel, are removed from them, and their eyes cannot behold their teachers, which make it a distressed time with them: yea, all hope of salvation was gone, ver. 20. and such at times is the case of truly gracious souls; their hope, and their strength, they are ready to say, are perished from the Lord, and they are cut off from before his eyes: there was also a long abstinence from food, ver. 21, 33. which is sometimes the case in a spiritual sense, and is owing either to want of food, the word of the Lord being precious, there being a famine of hearing the word; or for want of appetite to it: and last of all, there was a design formed by the soldiers to kill Paul, and the prisoners, but were prevented by the centurion, ver. 42. The sincere followers of Christ are accounted as sheep for the slaughter, and are killed all the day long in the intention of wicked men; who have always a

good will to it, were they not restrained through the goodness of a civil government, and especially by the power and providence of God: however, at last, they get safe to their port and haven, where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary are at rest.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Ver. 1. *AND when they were escaped*, &c.] From the danger they were exposed to by shipwreck, and were got safe to land; this is omitted in the Syriac version: *then they knew that the island was called Melita:* an island toward the African shore, where it is placed both by Pliny[g], and Ptolomy[h]; in which, the latter says, was the city Melita: it lies between Sicily and Tripolis of Barbary, and is now called Malta: it was famous for the knights of Rhodes, which are now called the knights of Malta: it has its name from מלט, *to escape*, it being formerly a refuge to the Phœnicians, especially in stormy weather, in their long voyage from Tyre to Gades; and was indeed a place of escape to the Apostle Paul, and those that were with him. And perhaps it might be so called from its being a refuge for pirates; for Cicero[i] says, here pirates used to winter almost every year, and yet did not spoil the temple of Juno, as Verres did: though some say it was so called from the great abundance of honey found in it; for it was a very pleasant and fruitful island, bringing forth great plenty of wheat, rye, flax, cummin, cotton, figs, wine, roses, thyme, lavender, and many other sweet and delightful herbs, from whence bees did gather great plenty of honey. It was, according to Pliny, distant from Camerina eighty-four miles, and from Lilybæum a hundred and thirteen; and it is said to be distant from the promontory of Sicily an hundred miles, though others say sixty; and that it was so far from Syracuse, which is the next place the apostle came to in this voyage, was from Africa an hundred and ninety miles. On the east side, a little from the chief city of it, now called Malta, was a famous temple of Juno, spoiled by Verres, as before observed; and on the south side another of Hercules, the ruins of both which are yet to be seen. The compass of the island is about sixty miles, the length twenty, and the breadth twelve, and has in it five ports, and about sixty villages.

Ver. 2. *And the barbarous people shewed us no little kindness*, &c.] The inhabitants of this island are called barbarians, not from the country of Barbary, near to which they were; nor so much on account of their manners, for, though Heathens, they were a civil and cultivated people, being, as appears from the name of the chief man of the island, under the Roman government; but because of their language, see 1 Cor. xiv. 11. it being neither Hebrew, Greek, nor Latin; for as the inhabitants were originally a colony of the Phœnicians, they spoke their language; and now though it is inhabited by such as are called Christians, they speak the Saracen or Arabic language, and little different from the old Punic or Phœnician language: however, though the inhabitants could not understand their language, they understood their case, and were very civil and humane to them, and shewed them extraordinary kindness: *for they kindled a fire;* or set fire to a large pile of wood; for a large fire it must be to be of service to such a number of people, in such a condition as they were: *and received us every one*, though their number were two hundred threescore and sixteen; *because of the present rain, and because of the cold;* for a violent rain fell on them, as is usual upon a storm, and much wetted them, so that a fire was very necessary; and it being winter or near it, it was cold weather; and especially they having been so long in a storm, and now shipwrecked; and some having thrown themselves into the sea, and swam to the island; and others having been obliged to put themselves on boards and planks, and get ashore, and were no doubt both wet and cold; so that nothing was more needful and more agreeable to them than a large fire.

Ver. 3. *And when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks*, &c.] Had picked up some sticks, and put them in a bundle fit for the fire, as every one was busy to assist in this extremity; nor did the apostle think such an action below him, who in all things was a man of great humility and condescension: *and laid them on the fire;* to increase it: *there came a viper out of the heat:* a viper is a kind of serpent, which brings forth its young living, to the number of twenty, only one in a day, which come forth wrapped up in thin skins, which break on the third day, and set them at liberty; and so is reckoned among viviparous animals, from whence it seems to have its name, whereas other serpents lay eggs and hatch them. It is said[k], that this remarkable reptile has the biggest and flattest head of all the serpent kind; its usual length is about half an ell, and its thickness an inch; its snout is not unlike that of a hog; it has sixteen small immoveable teeth in each jaw, besides two other large, sharp, hooked, hollow, transparent, canine teeth, situate at each side of the upper jaw, which are those that do the mischief: these are flexible in their articulation, and are ordinarily laid flat along the jaw, the animal never raising them but when it would bite. The roots or bases of these teeth, or fangs, are encompassed with a vesicle or bladder, containing the quantity of a large drop of a yellow insipid salivous juice.——It has only one row of teeth, whereas all other serpents have two; its body is not at all fetid, whereas the inner parts of the bodies of other serpents are intolerable.——It creeps very slowly, and never leaps like other serpents, though it is nimble enough to bite when provoked.—Its body is of two colours, ash-coloured or yellow, and the ground speckled with longish brown spots;

[g] Nat. Hist. l. 3. c. 8.
[h] Geograph. l. 4. c. 3.
[i] Orat. 9. in Verrem, c. 17.
[k] Chambers's Cyclopædia in the word *Viper*.

the scales under its belly are of the colour of well-polished steel. Its bite is exceeding venomous, and its poison the most dangerous. Now when this viper here is said to come out of the heat, the meaning is, that it came out from the sticks, which were laid upon the fire, being forced from thence by the heat of it: and so the Syriac version renders it, *there came out of them* (the sticks) *a viper, because of the heat of the fire;* it lay quiet among the sticks, among which, and such-like things, this creature often lies; but when the fire began to heat it, it sprung out: *and fastened on his hand;* or wrapped itself about his hand: the Syriac and Arabic versions render it, *bit his hand;* but that does not seem so likely, since he felt no harm by it; the Ethiopic version, *hung upon his hand;* which agrees with what follows; nor is it inconsistent with its wrapping itself about his hand, which is the more proper signification of the word used.

Ver. 4. *And when the barbarians saw the venomous beast,* &c.] The viper is called *Therion*, a beast, it being of the viviparous kind; and hence comes *Theriaca*, or *Venice treacle*, the foundation of which composition is vipers' flesh; and it is called *venomous*, because it is of all serpents the most venomous: this when the country-people saw *hang on his hand*, having wrapped itself about it, *they said among themselves, no doubt this man is a murderer:* they might see he was a prisoner by his chain, or might learn it from some of the company, and therefore took it for granted he had been guilty of some crime; and by the viper's fastening on him, they concluded it was murder he was guilty of; for the same notion might obtain among them, as among the Jews, that a murderer that could not be legally convicted, was sometimes punished this way. "Says R. Simeon ben Shetach [l], may I never "see the consolation, if I did not see one run after "his friend into a desert place; and I ran after him, "and I saw the sword in his hand, and the blood "dropping, and he that was slain panting; and I said "to him, O wicked man, who has slain this? either "I or thou; but what shall I do? for thy blood is "not delivered into my hand; for the law says, *by the "mouth of two or three witnesses he shall surely die:* "may he that knows the thoughts take vengeance on "that man that slew his friend; they say, they did "not remove from thence, עד שבא נחש, *till a serpent "came*, and bit him, and he died." So the Jews observe, that when the execution of capital punishments was taken away from them, yet such who deserved them were punished by God in a way equivalent to them: so for instance, if a man committed a crime, for which he deserved to be burnt, either he fell into the fire, or נחש נרשכו, *a serpent bit him* [m]; or if he deserved to be strangled, either he was drowned in a river, or died of a quinsy. There is a kind of an asp which the Egyptians call *Thermuthis*, which they reckon sacred, and worship: this they say will not hurt good men, but destroys the wicked; and if so, says the historian, then δίκη, *vengeance*, or justice has honoured this creature, to be so sharp-sighted as to discern the good from the bad; and they say, Isis sends it to the most wicked [n]. Agreeably to which these men reason, *whom though he hath escaped the sea;* has not been drowned there, when shipwrecked, *yet vengeance suffereth not to live.* The Greek word *Dice*, rendered *vengeance*, is the name of a goddess among the Heathens, said to be the daughter of Jupiter and Themis [o]. She is represented as sitting by her father Jupiter; and when any one does injury to another, informs him of it [p]. She is painted sorrowful, and with a contracted forehead, a grave countenance, and a rough aspect, to strike terror in unrighteous persons, and give confidence to righteous ones [q], agreeably to her name, which signifies *justice*. This deity the barbarians supposed pursued Paul; and though she let him escape the sea, she'll not suffer him to live any longer; for they looked upon the viper's fastening on him, as to be sent by her, so to be immediate death to him.

Ver. 5. *And he shook off the beast into the fire,* &c.] Having held it a while, and as being master of it, and as not being afraid of it, though it was the ready way to provoke it to fasten on him again: *and felt no harm;* it having not bit him, nor infected him with its poison; and hereby was fulfilled what our Lord promised to his disciples, Mark xvi. 18.

Ver. 6. *Howbeit they looked when he should have swollen,* &c.] With the venomous bite of the viper; swelling is one of the symptoms following the bite of this creature; and if the bite does not issue in death, yet the swelling continues inflamed for some time. The symptoms following the bite of a viper are said to be [r] an acute pain in the place wounded; swelling, first red, afterwards livid, spreading by degrees; great faintness; a quick, low, and sometimes interrupted pulse; sickness at the stomach; bilious convulsions; vomiting; cold sweats; sometimes pains about the navel; and death itself, if the strength of the patient, or the slightness of the bite, do not overcome it: if he does overcome it, the swelling continues inflamed for some time; and the symptoms abating, from the wound runs a sanious liquor, little pustules are raised about it, and the colour of the skin is as if the patient were icterical; or had the jaundice: the Arabic and Ethiopic versions render it, *that he should burn*, or *be burnt:* that is, inflamed, for the bite of the viper causes an inflammation, a hot swelling, which rises up in pustules or blisters: *or fallen down dead suddenly:* for immediate death is sometimes the effect of such poison. Pliny [s] relates, that the Scythians dip their arrows in the sanies or corrupt matter of vipers, and in human blood, which by the least touch causes immediate death; and Pausanias [t] reports from a certain Phœnician, that a man fleeing from a viper got up into a tree, where the viper could not reach him, but it blew, or breathed out its poison on the tree, and the man immediately died: though the force of this creature's poison does not always, and in all places, and in all

[l] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 37. 2. & Shebuot, fol. 34. 1.
[m] Bemidbar Rabba, fol. 214. 2. & T. Bab. Sanhedrin, ib. & Sota, fol. 8. 2.
[n] Ælian de Animal. l. 10. c. 31.
[o] Apollodorus de Deorum Origen. l. 1. p. 6. Phurnutus de Natura Deorum, p. 60.
[p] Hesiod Opera, &c. v. 254, 255.
[q] Chrysippus apud Gellium, l. 14. c. 4.
[r] Chambers's Cyclopædia, ut supra.
[s] L. 11. c. 53.
[t] Bœotica, vel l. 9. p. 583.

persons operate alike; some die within a few hours, and others live some days, some to the third day, and some to the seventh [v]: *but after they had looked a great while*: upon the apostle, to observe whether any inflammation or swelling arose, or death ensued, as they expected: when they had waited some time, perhaps an hour or two, *and saw no harm come to him*; that he was neither inflamed, nor swelled, nor dead; that it had no manner of effect upon him, and no evil of punishment was inflicted on him hereby, from whence they could conclude that he was guilty of any notorious crime: *they changed their minds, and said that he was a god*: before they took him to be a murderer, and now they even ascribe deity to him, as was usual with the Gentiles, when any thing extraordinary was performed by men: so the Lystrians took Paul for Mercury, and Barnabas for Jupiter, upon the apostle's curing the cripple, Acts xiv. 11, 12. but what god the inhabitants of Melita thought him to be, is not certain; some think Hercules, who was worshipped in this island. The inhabitants of this island now believe that the apostle expelled all poison and venom out of it when he was there; and 'tis reported, that the children born in this place fear not any snakes, neither are hurt by any thing that is venomous, insomuch that they will take scorpions, and eat them without danger; although, in all other parts of the world, those kind of creatures are most pernicious, and yet do no manner of hurt to men in this island; yea, it is affirmed, that there is a sort of earth found here, which kills serpents: as for the eating of them, the viper itself may be eaten; most authors agree [w], that there is no part, humour, or excrement, not even the gall itself, of a viper, but may be swallowed without much harm; accordingly the ancients, and, as several authors assure us, the Indians at this day, both of the east and west, eat them as we do eels——viper's flesh either roasted or boiled, physicians unanimously prescribe as an excellent restorative, particularly in the elephantiasis, incurable consumptions, leprosy, *&c.*

Ver. 7. *In the same quarters were possessions of the chief man of the island*, &c.] Or *the first man of the island*: so the governor of Melita used to be called, as appears by an inscription mentioned by Bochart, wherein a Roman knight is called πρῶτος Μελιταίων, *the first of the Melitians*; for this island was under the Roman government, and the very name of this chief man shews it: it was first in the hands of the Africans, when Dido built Carthage, which was eight or nine hundred years before the time of Christ: Battus was king of this island, from whom it was taken by Hiarbas king of Lybia, or of the Getulians, and who also conquered Carthage; and it continued under the power of the Carthaginians, until they were conquered by the Romans; and then it was taken by Titus Sempronius, above two hundred years before Christ, in whose hands it was when the apostle was here; since then it has been taken by the Saracenes, though they held it not, being taken from them by Roger earl of Sicily, in the year 1090; and so it remained in the hands of the Sicilians, until the knights of Rhodes were driven out of that island by the Turks, in 1522; and then this was given them by the Emperor Charles the Fifth, seven years after, on condition they would oppose the Turks, and defend that part of Christendom, which they bravely did: in the year 1565, it was besieged by Pialis Bassa, but without success [x]; and it is said to be so well fortified, as that it is impossible it should be taken, unless through treachery or famine; it is now in the hands of the said knights: but whether this man was governor of the island or no, it may be reasonably thought that he was the richest man in the island, and in the greatest honour and dignity; and had near the shore, where the ship's company landed, many houses and much land, and farms and vineyards, and the like: *whose name was Publius*; or Poplius, as some copies, and the Syriac version read. Publius was a name common with the Romans; it was with them a fore-name, by which such were called, who were *pupilli*, or fatherless, for it is a contraction of *Popilius*. There was one of this name who was bishop of Athens, said to succeed Dionysius the Areopagite there; who is thought by some to be the same here mentioned; who they say was first bishop in his own country, which through mistake they make to be Miletus, instead of Melita; and afterwards bishop of Athens, where he suffered martyrdom: but this is not likely, for even though he might be converted by the apostle, of which we have no account; and also became a preacher of the Gospel, of which there is no proof; it is not probable that he should leave his own country, and go to Athens, and take upon him the care of that church there: but whether he was afterwards converted or no, he was very kind to the apostle and the ship's company, as follows: *who received us, and lodged us three days courteously*; this was a very considerable instance of humanity and hospitality, to receive so many strangers at once into his houses, as two hundred three score and sixteen; and give them food and lodging, for three days together, and that in such a kind, friendly, and cheerful manner: and thus, as Abraham and Lot, by receiving strangers, entertained angels at unawares, so Publius, though ignorant of it, entertained an apostle of Christ among those strangers; the benefit of which he afterwards enjoyed, and which was a compensation for his liberality and beneficence.

Ver. 8. *And it came to pass that the father of Publius*, &c.] So that Publius was not an old man, though of so much dignity and wealth: the Arabic version, contrary to all copies, and other versions, reads, *the son of Publius*: *lay sick of a fever*; or *fevers*, of different sorts, a complication of them, which sometimes is the case; unless this was an intermitting fever, and the several fits of it are intended; or rather the plural number is put for the singular, to denote the vehemence of it, and which was attended with another disorder, and might be brought on by it: *and of a bloody flux*; or dysentery, a pain of the bowels, as the Syriac version renders it; or an ulceration of the bowels, as the Arabic version; which occasioned a discharge of blood, so that his case was very threatening. This disease, according to modern writers [y], is attended with a fever. The word *dysentery* here used

[v] Alberus de Animal. l. 25. c. ult.
[w] Chambers's Cyclopædia, ut supra.

[x] Petav. Rationar. Temp. par. 1. l. 9. c. 11. & 12. p. 501, 507.
[y] See Chambers's Cyclopædia in the word *Dysentery*.

properly signifies that kind of flux of the belly, characterized by the frequency of stools, or dejections, mixed with blood, and accompanied with gripes: the fever, ulcer, &c. which attend it, are not essential to the disease; though many both of the ancients and moderns think the ulcer is.——There are three kinds of *dysenteries*; the *first* when a laudable blood is evacuated from a mere plethora, or plenitude, without any disorder of the intestines, as in the hæmorrhoidal flux; the *second* when a thin watery blood is evacuated, called the *hepatic* flux, though really arising from hæmorrhoidal vessels; the *third* kind, which is that that is properly called the *dysentery*, is when blood is cast out, mixed with a purulent matter in the excrements: this is either *benign*, *i. e.* without a fever, and not contagious; or *malignant*, which is attended with a pestilential fever, and frequently ravages whole cities and provinces, happening most commonly in armies; in the last stage, a sort of caruncles are frequently ejected along with the purulent matter, which are difficult to be accounted for, unless from an excoriation and ulceration of the intestines: sometimes the intestines are even gangrened: this seems to have been the case of the father of Publius, which makes the following cure the more remarkable: *to whom Paul entered in;* into the room where he was, no doubt with the consent and leave, if not at the request of Publius; the Ethiopic version adds, *and he entreated him to put his hand upon him:* that is, either Publius asked this favour of the apostle for his father, having heard of the affair of the viper, from whence he concluded there was something divine and extraordinary in him; or the father of Publius asked this for himself: *and prayed and laid his hands on him, and healed him:* when Paul had entered the room, and found in what a bad condition the sick man was, he either kneeled down and prayed by him, or stood and prayed over him, and for him, that God would restore him to his health; and this he did, to let them know that he himself was not a god; and that the cure that would now be wrought would be from God, and not from himself, and therefore all the glory should be given to God; and he laid his hands on him, as a sign or symbol, or rite that was used in extraordinary cases, and agreeably to the direction and promise of Christ, Mark xvi. 18. and upon this a cure followed; both the diseases left him at once, and he was restored to health.

Ver. 9. *So when this was done,* &c.] This miracle was wrought, and the fame of it spread over the island: *others also which had diseases in the island came:* from all parts of it, to the apostle: *and were healed;* of whatsoever diseases they were afflicted with.

Ver. 10. *Who also honoured us with many honours,* &c.] Not with divine honours, with religious adorations, as if they had been so many deities; for these they would not have received, nor have recorded them, to the commendation of the inhabitants; but civil honours, expressions of respect and gratitude; and particularly gifts and presents, large and valuable, in which sense the phrase is used by Jewish writers; so upon those words in Judges xiii. 17. *What is thy name, that when the sayings come to pass, we may do thee honour?* they make this paraphrase [z], "Manoah said to him (the "angel), tell me thy name, that I may inquire where to "find thee, when thy prophecy is fulfilled, and give thee "דורן, *a gift,* ואין וכבודך אלא מנחה, *for there is no honour* "*but a present,* or *offering;* or wherever this phrase is "used, it signifies nothing else but a gift, as it is said, "Numb. xxii. 17. *For honouring I will honour thee;*" that is, with money and gifts, as Balaam's answer in the next verse shews, and so the Jewish commentators interpret it [a]; see the note on 1 Tim. v. 17. *And when we departed;* from the island, which was not till three months from their first coming ashore: *they laded us with such things as were necessary:* that is, for the voyage: they provided a proper supply of food for them, which they put into the ship, for their use in their voyage; by which they expressed their gratitude for the favours they received from Paul; for whose sake not only his company, but the whole ship's company fared the better: and very likely many of them were converted under the apostle's ministry; for it can hardly be thought that the apostle should be on this island three months, as he was, and not preach the Gospel to the inhabitants of it, in which he always met with success, more or less; and the great respect shewn him at his departure seems to confirm this; though we meet with no account of any church, or churches, or preachers of the word in this place, in ecclesiastical history, until the *sixth* century, when mention is made of a bishop of the island of Melita [b]; indeed in the *fourth* century, Optatus Milevitanus is said by some, through mistake, to be bishop of Melita, when he was bishop of Milevis, a city in Africa upon the continent; and, through a like mistake, this island is said to be famous for a council held in it under Pope Innocent, against Pelagius, in the beginning of the *fifth* century; when the council was held at the above place Milevis, and not at Melita, from whence it was called the Milevitan council.

Ver. 11. *And after three months we departed,* &c.] From Melita; here they staid the three winter months, which were unseasonable for navigation; but now the spring coming on, and the weather agreeable, they left the island, and sailed *in a ship of Alexandria:* see the note on ch. xxvii. 6. *which had wintered in the isle;* perhaps all the said three months, for the same reason: *whose sign was Castor and Pollux:* or Dioscuri, that is, the sons of Jupiter; for Castor and Pollux were his sons, by Leda: these are placed among the constellations in the Zodiac, and go by the name of Gemini, or the twins; and these were supposed to have a power of saving men in danger at sea: wherefore such as were about to go to sea, first paid their devoirs, and made vows to them; which they performed when they returned, and were delivered from shipwreck; and when they were in danger at sea, they used to pray unto them: the fiery exhalations that sometimes appear at sea, they took for them; and when only one appeared, it was looked on as a bad omen; but when both, it was reckoned to portend a prosperous voyage; hence they were considered as sea-deities; and the Ethiopic ver-

[z] Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 10. fol. 199. 1. Vid. Laniado in Judg. xiii. 13.

[a] Jarchi & Aben Ezra in loc.

[b] Magdeburg. Eccl. Hist. cent. 6. c. 9. p. 5.

sion accordingly renders it here *Dioscoura*, and adds, *who is the god of the* mariners: now the images of these two brothers were sometimes set at the head, or fore-part of the ship, as they were in this, from whence the ship took its name; as it is very common for the names of ships to be the same with the pictures or images that are placed at the head of them: whether the centurion chose this ship because of its sign, imagining there might be more safety in it, he having suffered shipwreck already; or whether this was the only one in the island, that was going for Italy, is not certain, nor very material: the Arabic version takes the word rendered Castor and Pollux, to be the name of a man, who was the owner of the ship; for it reads the words thus, *in a ship of Alexandria*, that belonged *to a man of Alexandria, called Dioscorides.*

Ver. 12. *And landing at Syracuse*, &c.] A famous city in the isle of Sicily, now called Saragossa: it is placed by Ptolomy [c] on the east side of the island, in the Adriatic sea; it was 180 furlongs, or two-and-twenty miles and a half in circuit, and formerly had a marble haven and triple wall, and as many towers; the founder of it was Archias, a Corinthian; Pliny says [d], that it is never so cloudy weather, but the sun is seen in it, at one time or another of the day: Cicero [e] calls it the greatest and most beautiful of all the cities of Greece; it is such a city, he says, that it may be said to consist of four large cities; *one* part of it is called *the island*, which has two ports to it; *another* was called Acradina, in which were a large market, beautiful porticos, *&c.* the *third*, Tiche, in which was the ancient temple of Fortune; and the *fourth*, which because it was last built, was called Neapolis: it is a very ancient city, being built more than seven hundred years before the birth of Christ; it was a colony of the Corinthians; here reigned two tyrants, whose names were Dionysius; it was attacked by the Carthaginians, but without success, being delivered from the siege by Pyrrhus king of Epirus [f]; it was again assaulted by the Athenians, who were repulsed, and entirely conquered, about the year before Christ 413: after that it was taken by Marcellus, the Roman consul, about the year of the city of Rome 542 [g], after a three-years' siege; during which time it was defended, and preserved by the means of the famous mathematician Archimedes; who by his invention of warlike machines, baffled all the attempts of the Romans; but was killed by a soldier, as he was intent upon his studies, not knowing that the city was taken; and it continued in the hands of the Romans, until it was taken and plundered by the Saracens, in the year of Christ 675; and was retaken by Roger king of Apulia, about the year 1090, and is now under the government of Don Carlos, king of the two Sicilies; *we tarried* there *three days*: on what account it is not said, whether on account of merchandise, or for the sake of the conversation of Christians here: it is certain there were churches in Sicily very early; we read of them in the *second* and *third* centuries; in the time of Constantine, at the beginning of the *fourth* century, there was a church at Syracuse, of which Chrestus was bishop, to whom the emperor wrote a letter himself, which is still extant in Eusebius [h]: in the *fifth* century, Hilarius, a teacher at Syracuse, wrote from thence to Augustine, concerning the Pelagian heresy, to whom he gave an answer: in the *sixth* century, Maximinianus, bishop of this church, had the inspection of all the churches in Sicily committed to him, by Gregory; who was wonderfully preserved in a shipwreck, as he was returning from Rome; in this same age lived John, bishop of Syracuse, and Trajanus a presbyter, and Felix a deacon of the same church: in the *seventh* century there was one George bishop of this place, to whom Pope Vitalian wrote a letter; and in the same century a bishop of this church was in the sixth council at Constantinople [i].

Ver. 13. *And from thence we fetched a compass*, &c.] About the isle of Sicily, from Syracuse to Pachinus, the promontory of the island: *and came to Rhegium*: a city in Calabria, called by Ptolomy [k] Regium Julium; it was built, as Solinus [l] says, by the Chalcidensians, and was formerly a city of the Brutians [m]; it is now called Reggio: it is said [n] to have its name from its being broken off from the main continent, for it lies in the streights of Sicily; and formerly Sicily was joined to Italy, but was separated from it by the violence of the sea at this place: *and after one day the south wind blew*: they staid one day at Rhegium, and when they departed from thence, they had a south wind, which was favourable to them: whether the apostle preached here, or no, is not certain, since his stay was so short; some Popish writers tell some idle stories about the apostle's preaching; how that the fishes came to the shore to hear him; that the grashoppers were commanded by him to be silent, and have never been seen in that place since; that a stone pillar was set on fire by the flame of a candle, by which miracle the inhabitants present were converted and baptized; and one Stephen, that was in company, was made by him their first bishop: but in ecclesiastical history we meet with no account of any church in this place, until the *fifth* century; when the bishop of it, with others, subscribed a letter of Leo the First, sent into the east; and about the year 440, there was a synod of thirteen bishops convened in this place, on account of a certain ordination; and in the *seventh* century, a bishop of the church at Rhegium was present in the sixth council at Constantinople; in the *eighth*, Constantine, bishop of Rhegium, was in the Nicene synod [o]: *and we came the next day to Puteoli*: the Syriac version adds, *a city of Italy*; it was formerly called Dicearchia [p], from the strict justice used in the government of it: it had its name of Puteoli, either *a putore*, from the rankness and ill smell of the waters of it, through the *sulphur* and *alum* in them; or *a puteis*, from the wells about it, the waters

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[c] Geogr. l. 3. c. 4.
[d] Nat. Hist. l. 2. c. 62.
[e] Orat. 9. in Verrem, l. 4. p. 566.
[f] Pausanias, l. 1. p. 22.
[g] Petav. Rationar. Temp. par. 1. l. 3. c. 9. p. 108. & l. 4. c. 2. p. 137.
[h] Eccl. Hist. l. 10. c. 5.
[i] Magdeburg. Eccl. Hist. cent. 2. c. 2. p. 4. cent. 3. c. 2. p. 3. cent. 4. c. 2. p. 5. cent. 5. c. 2. p. 6. c. 10. p. 664. cent. 6. c. 2. p. 6. c. 10. p. 346. c. 13. p. 436. cent. 7. c. 2. p. 4. c. 10. p. 358.

[k] Geograph. l. 3. c. 1.
[l] Polyhistor. c. 8.
[m] Mela, l. 2. c. 11.
[n] Philo quod mundus, &c. p. 963. & de mundo, p. 1171. Vid. Justin. l. 4. c. 1. & Sallust. fragment. p. 147.
[o] Ib. cent. 5. c. 2. p. 7. c. 9. p. 508. cent. 7. c. 2. p. 5. cent. 8. c. 2. p. 13.
[p] Plin. l. 3. c. 5.

of which, by Pausanias, are said [q] to be so hot, as in time to melt the leaden pipes through which they flow, who calls it a town of the Tyrrhenians; by Pliny [r] it is placed in Campania, and so Jerom [s] says, Puteoli, a city, a colony of Campania, the same that is called Dicearchia. Josephus [t] also speaks of it as in the same country; for he says, that Herod and Herodias both came to Dicearchia, (or Puteoli), and found Caius (the emperor) at Baiai, which is a little town in Campania, about five furlongs from Dicearchia; and he also in another [u] place says, the Italians call Dicearchia, Ποτίολοι, *Potioli*; which is the same word the apostle here uses, and which is the Latin *Puteoli* corrupted; it is said to be first built by the Samians: frequent mention is made by writers [w], of *pulvis Puteolanus*, the dust of Puteoli; which being touched by the sea-water, hardens into a stone; and was therefore used to bank the sea, break the waves, and repel the force of them: that it was a place by the sea-side, may be learned from the sea being called after its name, *mare Puteolanum* [x], the sea of Puteoli; so Apollonius Tyaneus is said [y] to sail from this place to Rome, whither he came in three days; to this port the ships of Alexandria particularly used to come, and hither persons were wont to go to take shipping for Alexandria [z]; it is now called by the Italians Pozzuolo, and lies about eight miles from Naples; and according to the following story of the Jews', must be an hundred and twenty miles from Rome; who tell us [a], that "Rabban Gamaliel, and R. Eleazar ben Azariah, and R. Joshua, "and R. Akiba, went to Rome, and they heard the "noise of the multitude at Rome, from Puteoli, an "hundred and twenty miles:" the story is a fable designed to signify the vast number of people at Rome, and the noise, hurry, and tumult there; but perhaps the distance between the two places may not be far from truth: and as fabulous is the account which R. Benjamin [b] gives of this place Puteoli, when he says it was called Surentum, a great city which Tzintzan Hadarezer built, when he fled for fear of David.

Ver. 14. *Where we found brethren, &c.*] Christians; which is not to be wondered at, since it was a port much frequented, and where many came and went, of different countries and nations; particularly there were many Jews here, to whom the Gospel was first preached, and to some of them it was the power of God unto salvation in many places, and doubtless was so here: Josephus [c] speaks of Jews in this place, who were deceived by a false Alexander, who pretended to be the son of Herod, a prince of their nation. Patrobulus, the same with Patrobas in Rom. xvi. 14. who is reckoned one of the seventy disciples, is said to be bishop of this place; see the note on Luke x. 1. though we have no account of its church-state until the *fifth* century, when a bishop of the church at Puteoli is said to be in the council held at Ephesus against Eutyches, and sustained the place of Leo, pope of Rome: in the *sixth* century, a bishop of this church was in a council held at Rome, under Symmachus: in the *seventh* century, the bishop of Puteoli was in the sixth council at Constantinople [d]: *and were desired to tarry with them seven days*; that is, the Christians at Puteoli desired the apostle, and those that were with him, to stay a week with them, that they might have the advantage of a day of public worship together, and might enjoy much of their Christian conversation; and accordingly they did stay that time, no doubt by the leave, and with the consent of Julius the centurion; and which shews, that he used the apostle with great civility and courteousness, and was very ready to grant him favours; if he was not in this voyage converted by him, which is not unlikely, considering the whole of his conduct: *and so we went toward Rome*; after they had staid seven days at Puteoli, they set forward on their journey to Rome; for from hence they went thither on foot, though they might have gone from hence to Rome by sea, as Apollonius Tyaneus did; see the note on ver. 13. and so likewise Titus the son of Vespasian, who went from Rhegium to Puteoli in a merchant-ship, and from thence to Rome [e]; but it may be the ship unladed here, and there was no other going for Rome at that time: Rome was the metropolis of Italy, the seat of the empire, and mistress of the whole world; it is so well known, as not to need describing: it was built on seven hills, and had its name either from Romulus the founder of it; or from the Greek word Ρωμη, which signifies *strength* [f], from whence Romulus is supposed to have his name; with the Hebrews it has its name from its sublimity, height, and glory, from the word רום, which signifies to be high and exalted: some say it had its name from Roma, a daughter of Italus, who first laid the foundation of it, though Romulus and Remus brought it into the form of a city; it was built seven hundred and fifty years, and upwards, before the birth of Christ. The Jews make it to be of an earlier date; they say [g], that at the time Solomon married Pharaoh's daughter, Gabriel descended and fixed a reed in the sea, and brought up clay, and with it was built the great city, which is Rome; and in another place [h] it is said, in the day in which Jeroboam set up the two calves, one at Dan, and the other at Bethel, was built a certain cottage, which is Italy of Greece, that is, Rome; for it is elsewhere observed [i], Italy of Greece, this is the great city of Rome; and again [k], on the day in which Jeroboam set up the two calves, Remus and Romulus came and built two cottages in Rome.

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[q] Pausan. Messenica vel l. 4. p. 285. & Arcadica vel l. 8. p. 465.
[r] Nat. Hist. l. 31. c. 2.
[s] De locis Hebraicis, fol. 76. G.
[t] Antiqu. l. 18. c. 8. sect. 2.
[u] In Vita sua, sect. 3. p. 905.
[w] Plin. l. 35. c. 13. Alex. ab Alex. l. 5. c. 9. Isidor. de origin. l. 16. c. 1. p. 135.
[x] A. Gell. noct. Attic. l. 7. c. 8.
[y] Philostrat. Vit. Apollon. l. 7. c. 8.
[z] Philo in Flaccum, p. 969. & de leg. ad Caium, p. 1018. Senec. ep. 77.
[a] Echa Rabbati, fol. 59. 4. & T. Bab. Maccot, fol. 24. 1.

[b] Itinerar. p. 14.
[c] Antiqu. l. 17. c. 14. sect. 1.
[d] Magdeburg. Eccl. Hist. cent. 5. c. 2. p. 7. cent. 6. c. 2. p. 5. cent. 7. c. 2. p. 5.
[e] Sueton. Vita Titi, c. 5.
[f] Aur. Victor. Origo Gent. Rom. p. 228.
[g] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 21. 2.
[h] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 56. 2.
[i] T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 6. 1.
[k] T. Hieros. Avoda Zara, fol. 39. 3. Vid. Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 6. 2.

Ver. 15. *And from thence*, &c.] That is, from Rome, whither they were going: *when the brethren heard of us*; when the Christians at Rome heard that the apostle and his friends were landed at Puteoli, and were on their journey to Rome: these were the members of the church at Rome; for there was a church-state here before this time. The apostle had before this written a letter to them, called the Epistle to the Romans, in which he treats them as a church. The Papists say that the Apostle Peter was the first bishop of it, and pretend an uninterrupted succession from him; though it is questionable whether he ever was at Rome; and if he was, it is not probable that he should take upon him the care of a single church, which was not consistent with his office as an apostle: in the *first* century, the bishops or pastors of this church were as follow; after the martyrdom of Paul and Peter, Eusebius [l] says, Linus was the first bishop of it, the same that is mentioned in 2 Tim. iv. 21. and according to the same writer [m], Anencletus succeeded him, and then Clement, a fellow-labourer of the Apostle Paul's, Phil. iv. 3. who wrote two epistles to the Corinthians, which are still extant; though Eusebius [n], not consistent with himself, makes Clement in another place to succeed Linus; and some make Clement even to be before him; and some place one Cletus before Anencletus and him: such an uncertainty is there, and such a puzzle attends the first account of this uninterrupted succession; and which seems designed in Providence to bring it into contempt: in the *second* century, Euarestus succeeded Clement; and then followed him Alexander, Sixtus, or Xystus, Telesphorus, Hyginus, Pius, Anicetus, Soter, Eleutherius, and Victor: in the *third* century, Victor was succeeded by Zephyrinus; and after him were Calixtus, Urbanus, Pontianus, Anterus, Fabianus, Cornelius, Lucius, Stephanus, Sixtus, or Xystus II. Dionysius, Felix, Eutychianus, and Gaius: in the *fourth* century, Marcellinus succeeded Gaius; who was followed by Marcellus, Eusebius, Miltiades, Sylvester, Julius, Liberius, Felix II. Damasus, and Siricius [o]; and further than this age, it is not worth while to follow them; the man of sin began to grow apace, and in a century or two afterwards, proclaimed himself universal bishop: *they came to meet us as far as Appii Forum and the Three Taverns*: these were both of them towns that lay in the Appian way to Rome; the former of these Horace [p] makes mention of, in the account of his journey from Rome to Brundusium; first he says, he came to Aricia, or Rizza, which is about 160 furlongs, or 21 miles from Rome, and from thence to Appii Forum: that Appii Forum was further from Rome than the Three Taverns, appears from what Cicero says [q], who dates his letter to Atticus from Appii Forum, at four o'clock, and tells him, that he had sent him another a little before from *Tres Tabernæ*, or the Three Taverns; and indeed, Appii Forum was one-and-fifty miles from Rome, and the Three Taverns but three-and-thirty: so that the sense must be, that some of the brethren from Rome came as far as the Three Taverns, and others as far as Appii Forum; which, as before observed, were two towns upon the road: hence the former of these was not a statue of Appius, near the city of Rome, as some have [r] said; nor a market in the city itself, as says Jerom [s], or a writer under his name; whose words are, Appii Forum is the name of a market at Rome, from Appius, formerly a consul, and from whom the Appian way had its name: but this was a town at some distance; there were several towns in Italy of a like appellation; as Julii Forum, Cornelii Forum, now Imola, Livii Forum, now Forli: Pliny [t] makes mention of an Appii Forum; and there was a town in Calabria, called Taberna: and as the one was not a mere market-place, so the other does not design three houses for public entertainment; for the words should not be translated *three taverns*, nor indeed translated at all; nor are they by Luke, who retains the Latin name, as the name of a place; and here it was that Severus, the Roman emperor, was killed by Herculius Maximianus [u]; and this, in Constantine's time, was the seat of a bishop; for among the bishops assembled on account of Donatus, mention is made of one *Felix a Tribus Tabernis* [w], or Felix bishop of Tres Tabernæ, the same place we call *the Three Taverns: whom when Paul saw, he thanked God and took courage*; that is, when he saw the brethren that came to meet him, he gave thanks to God for the sight of them, which he had so much desired; and he took heart and courage, and went on cheerfully, and in high spirits, towards Rome; in hope of seeing the rest, and believing that God had some work for him to do there.

Ver. 16. *And when we came to Rome*, &c.] To the city itself: *the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard*; or general of the army; or, as some think, the governor of the *prætorian* band of soldiers, who attended the emperor as his guards: his name is thought to have been Burrhus Afranius; to him Julius the centurion delivered all the prisoners he brought from Cæsarea, excepting Paul, to be disposed of by him, in the several prisons, or gaols, to whom it belonged to take care of such persons: this clause is wanting in the Alexandrian copy, and in the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions: *but Paul was suffered to dwell by himself, with a soldier that kept him*: this was owing, either to the letter which Festus sent to Rome concerning him, and his case; by which it appeared, that he was no malefactor, and therefore to be used in a different manner from the rest of the prisoners; or rather to the intercession of the centurion, who had all along used him in a very civil and courteous manner; who requesting this favour had it granted, that Paul should not be put into the common prison with the rest, but should dwell in an apartment by himself: or, as the Ethiopic version renders it, *at his own will*; where he himself pleased, for he dwelt in his own hired house, ver. 30. only he was under the care and custody of a

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[l] Eccl. Hist. l. 3. c. 2.
[m] Ib. c. 13.
[n] Ib. c. 4. 15.
[o] Magdeburg. Eccl. Hist. cent. 2. c. 10. p. 165, &c. cent. 3. c. 10. p. 193, &c. cent. 4. c. 10. p. 726, &c.
[p] Sermonum, l. 1. Satyr 5.
[q] Ad Atticum, l. 2. ep. 11.
[r] Isidor. Pelusiot. Ep. l. 1. ep. 337.
[s] De locis Hebraicis, fol. 95. K.
[t] Nat. Hist. l. 14. c. 6.
[u] Aurel. Victor. Epitome, p. 346.
[w] Optat. de Schism. Donat. l. 1. p. 26.

soldier, who constantly attended him wherever he went; and which could not be otherwise, seeing he was chained, as in ver. 20. and his chain was put on his right hand, and fastened to the left hand of the soldier, that had him under his keeping; so that wherever he was or went, the soldier must be likewise: hence that passage in Seneca [x], "as the same chain "joins together the prisoner and the soldier, so those "things which are unlike go together; fear follows "hope."

Ver. 17. *And it came to pass, that after three days,* &c.] From his first coming to Rome, when he had hired himself a house, or lodging, and was settled in it, and was rested from the fatigue of his voyage and journey: *Paul called the chief of the Jews together;* he sent to the principal men among them; for though the Jews were expelled from Rome in the reign of Claudius, they were now returned, and had their liberty of residing there; very likely by means of Poppea, Nero's concubine, who favoured the Jews: but whether they had a synagogue, and these men were the chief and leading men in it, the doctors, rulers, and officers of it, are things not certain; however, these the apostle desired to come to him where he was, for whether he had the liberty of going about where he would, the soldier attending him, is not so clear a point: *and when they were come together;* to his house, or lodging: *he said unto them, men and brethren:* which was the usual form of address with the Jews; see ch. vii. 2. *Though I have committed nothing against the people and customs of our fathers;* meaning he had said nothing disrespectfully of the people of the Jews; nor had done any thing to the prejudice of their temporal, spiritual, and eternal good, but just the reverse; nor had he said or done any thing contrary to the laws and customs enjoined the Jews by Moses, even those that were of a ceremonial nature; for though he had everywhere declared that the Gentiles were not obliged to an obedience to them, yet he did not dissuade the Jews from the use of them; and oftentimes complied with them himself, things he had been charged with: *yet was I delivered prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans;* he was first seized by the Jews in the temple of Jerusalem, and then fell into the hands of Lysias, the chief captain; who bound him, and by whom he was sent to Cæsarea, where he was retained a prisoner both by Felix and Festus, Roman governors.

Ver. 18. *Who when they had examined me,* &c.] About the things laid to his charge, had heard what his accusers had to object to him, and the defence he made for himself: *would have let me go;* released him from his bonds, and set him at liberty to go where he pleased: *because there was no cause of death in me;* no crime proved upon him, which was worthy of death; and this was the sense of Lysias the chief captain, and of Felix and Festus the Roman governors, and of King Agrippa.

Ver. 19. *But when the Jews spake against it,* &c.] His being cleared and dismissed, and desired he might be sent back to Jerusalem, to be tried and judged there, to which Festus seemed inclined: *I was constrained to appeal to Cæsar;* to prevent the design of the Jews upon him, which was to way-lay him and kill him, or by what ways they could, right or wrong, take away his life; and to provide for his own safety: *not that I had ought to accuse my nation of;* meaning, that he had no ill design in this appeal against his country, to expose them, and bring them under reproach and censure, but to vindicate himself, defend his own innocence, and preserve his character and life; suggesting, that what he did was not of choice, but by constraint, and with reluctance; being no friend to Heathen tribunals, nor any enemy to the Jewish nation.

Ver. 20. *For this cause therefore have I called for you,* &c.] To let them know the true state of his case; that though he was a prisoner, it was not for any crime he had done, much less any of a capital nature; and that as he was no scandal to his country, so neither did he intend to raise any against it, or say or do any thing which might bring it into contempt and danger: as well as *to see you and speak with you;* and keep up and maintain a free and friendly conversation together: *because that for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain;* which was then upon him, and he pointed to; the true reason of which was, because he had preached that the Messiah the tribes of Israel were hoping and waiting for, and who is the only solid foundation of the hope of eternal life and salvation, was already come; and that he had suffered and died, and rose again from the dead, and that Jesus of Nazareth was he; see Jer. xiv. 8. and xvii. 13. And this title well agrees with Jesus Christ, who in the New Testament is called *our hope,* and *the hope of glory,* 1 Tim. i. 1. Col. i. 27. and he is the hope of every Israelite indeed, of every sensible sinner, of every regenerated person, whether Jew or Gentile; and such are encouraged to hope in him for grace here, and glory hereafter: and whereas they see themselves lost and undone, and that there is no salvation for them by their own works, and that there is salvation in Christ, they are directed and encouraged to hope in him for it; because it is a work finished by him, and is complete in him; it is of free grace and favour bestowed; it is wrought out for the chief of sinners; and such as they themselves are, are invited by himself to look to him for it; and the Gospel declaration is, that whoever believes in him shall be saved: they see themselves to be sinners, and that there is no hope of the forgiveness of their sins from an absolute God, or the absolute mercy of God out of Christ, but that the blood of Christ was shed for the remission of sins, and that God, for Christ's sake, does forgive sins: wherefore they hope in him for it; to which they are encouraged by the proclamation of the grace of God, as a forgiving God in Christ; by the promises of forgiveness in the covenant of grace; by the Gospel declaration of it; by its being entirely of free grace, through the blood of Christ; and by the many instances of the worst of sinners who have been favoured with it: these Israelites, indeed, also see themselves unrighteous creatures, and that they cannot be justified before God by works of righteousness done by them; but that there is a righteousness wrought out by Christ, which is acceptable and well-pleasing to God; is freely bestowed

[x] Epist. 5.

on men, and is imputed to all sorts of men, even to the ungodly; wherefore they hope in him for it, and lay hold on this object of hope set before them: in a word, they have hope of eternal life on his account, that being the gift of God through him; and it being the will of God, that whoever believes in him should have it; and it being in the power and right of Christ to bestow it; and they having also his spirit as the earnest and pledge of it; as well as have his righteousness as their title to it, his grace as their meetness for it, and have a share both in his intercession and in his preparations of it: moreover, the apostle taught that there would be a general resurrection of the dead, upon which would succeed a state of everlasting happiness for the righteous; and which was the hope of the tribes of Israel in common, especially of every Israelite indeed: now these things had irritated the carnal Jews against him, who could not rest till they had been the means of bringing him into the condition he now was; nor were they content with this, without having his life.

Ver. 21. *And they said unto him,* &c.] That is, the chief men of the Jews at Rome, whom Paul had called together, replied; either in a lying and dissembling way, or as expressing matter of fact; which last may be allowed: *we neither received letters out of Judea concerning thee:* which was very much, that the high-priest and sanhedrim had not wrote to the principal men of their religion at Rome; giving an account of the apostle, and his case unto them, in order to prejudice them against him, and to furnish them with charges and accusations; which if they could not prevail by them, so as to get him condemned by the emperor, yet might be a means of preventing any of their nation giving heed unto him, and embracing his sentiments and notions concerning Jesus of Nazareth: *neither any of the brethren that came* from *Jerusalem;* or any part of Judea, to Rome; meaning not the Christian Jews, for these they would not call brethren; but those who were of the same religion as well as nation, whom it was usual with the Jews to call brethren: *shewed or spake any harm of thee;* so that it looks as if they did make mention of him, but did not charge him with any thing that was wicked and criminal: this they said, to shew that they were not prejudiced against him by any person or means; and which carried in it a very considerable testimony of the apostle's innocence.

Ver. 22. *But we desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest,* &c.] What was his opinion and judgment concerning the Messiah, whether he was come or no, and whether Jesus of Nazareth was he; and concerning other principles relating to him, embraced by the Christians; and what he had to say for the clearing up, proving, and confirming his sentiments about these things: *for as concerning this sect;* or heresy, meaning the Christian religion; in saying so, they reproached it; for the Gospel, or Christian religion, is not an human device, the choice and option of man's free will, and what he pleases himself with, as an opinion and invention of his own, or of other men, as *heresy* signifies; but it is of God, and by revelation of Jesus Christ, and is a doctrine of the highest wisdom: nor does it deny or take away any fundamental article of true religion; either natural, as known by the Gentiles, or as revealed, with which the Jews were made acquainted, under the former dispensation; but establishes every such article, as the unity of the divine Being; the worship of the one only and true God of Israel, in a spiritual manner; the doctrine of the Messiah, his person, office, and grace; the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment; and therefore could not be chargeable with heresy: nor was it set up for any worldly gain, or popular applause, which are the things that authors and abettors of heresy have in view; nor was it designed to divide and separate persons from the true church of God, but to bring them to it, and unite them together in it; see ch. xxiv. 14. *We know that everywhere it is spoken against;* this they knew, both by letters they received, and by persons who came from different parts of the world; and which was fact, and was no other than what was foretold concerning Christ, that he should be a sign that should be spoken against, Luke ii. 34. and which the apostle found true of the Gospel preached by him, both among Jews and Greeks; it being to the one a stumbling-block, and to the other foolishness, 1 Cor. i. 23. and especially it was contradicted and blasphemed everywhere by the Jews; these in all places opposed themselves to it, and spoke evil of it, and of its preachers and professors: Christ, the author, sum, and subject of the Christian religion, was spoken against in his person; his deity and divine sonship were denied, as they still are; and his offices, as prophet, priest, and King; yea, his actions, even his works of mercy to the bodies of men, by healing their diseases, his conversing with sinners for the good of their souls, the several miracles he wrought, and the whole series of his life and conversation, were blasphemed and evil-spoken of: the doctrines of the Gospel in general were contradicted, as they now are by many, as absurd and irrational, and as tending to licentiousness; and in particular those which respect the father of Christ, as being the father of Christ, his everlasting love to the elect in him, and his distinguishing grace in the choice of them; and those which relate to Christ, as that he is truly God, and the son of God, and to his sacrifice, satisfaction, and imputed righteousness; and also which concern the spirit of God, as his deity and personality, and his operations on the souls of men; and such as relate to a future state, the resurrection of all the dead, and judgment to come: likewise the ordinances of the Christian religion, baptism and the Lord's supper, were despised and spoken against, and the professors of it treated as fools and wicked men; the reasons of all this are, because the Christian religion, and the doctrines of it, are not of men, are contrary to the lusts of men, and particularly to the pride of men; they subject them to reproach and persecution, and gather men out from among them.

Ver. 23. *And when they had appointed him a day,* &c.] When they should meet together, and when both sides might be better prepared to enter into a conversation on the subject of Christianity; and when there might be an opportunity for a more numerous assembly to hear: *there came many to him into his lodging;* the same very likely with his own hired house, ver. 30. hither a large number came at the time appointed, more than those whom Paul first sent

for: *to whom he expounded:* the Scriptures, the writings of Moses, and the prophets; and particularly such parts of them as concerned the Messiah; so our Lord expounded to his disciples in all the Scriptures, the things concerning himself, Luke xxiv. 27. *And testified the kingdom of God:* or the kingdom of the Messiah, which oftentimes signifies the Gospel, and the Gospel dispensation: he produced full and sufficient proofs and testimonies from prophecies, miracles, and facts, that the kingdom of the Messiah was come; which consisted not in outward pompous things, in temporal riches and honours, as they expected; but in the ministration of the Gospel, and in the administration of its ordinances; and in righteousness and holiness, which give the one a right unto, and the other a meetness for, the kingdom of heaven: and of this he testified, that it is the kingdom of God, of his preparing and of his giving, and is what he calls his people unto, and makes them meet for; and in which they shall reign with him, and enjoy him for ever: and the apostle could testify and make it evident, that there was such a kingdom, and such a future glorious state; from the promise of God, to which the twelve tribes of Israel hoped to come; from the prophecies of the Old Testament, which speak of everlasting life, and of the resurrection of the dead unto it; from the expectations of the saints of the former dispensation, who all died in the faith of it; and from the coming of the Messiah, his sufferings and death, and ascension to heaven, whereby he had brought life and immortality to the clearest light: *persuading them concerning Jesus;* endeavouring to persuade them, that Jesus was the true Messiah; that he was truly God, and the son of God, as well as man; that he was born of a virgin, and wrought miracles, and yielded perfect obedience to the law; that he laid down his life as a sacrifice for sin, and to make reconciliation and atonement for it; that he brought in an everlasting righteousness; that he rose again from the dead for justification; that he was ascended up to heaven, and was set down at the right hand of God, where he ever lives to make intercession, and will come again a second time to judge both quick and dead: these are some of *the things concerning Jesus,* as the words may be rendered, which the apostle endeavoured to persuade the Jews into a belief of; as also the blessings of grace which come by him, such as peace and pardon through his blood, reconciliation and atonement by his sacrifice, justification by his righteousness, and complete salvation in him: concerning these he persuaded the Jews, setting things in a clear light, using strong arguments to convince them, and giving full proof, as the nature of them would admit of; and which is no other than moral suasion, and is of itself ineffectual; efficacious persuasion is only of God; it is he that opens the heart to attend to these things, and gives faith to receive and embrace them: however, it is the duty of Gospel ministers to make use of arguments, and by them to endeavour to persuade men of their need of Christ, and of salvation by him, as the apostle did; see 2 Cor. v. 11. *Both out of the law of Moses;* not the law of the ten commandments, given on Mount Sinai to Moses, who delivered it to the children of Israel, and is opposed to the doctrine of grace and truth, which came by Jesus Christ, John i. 17. that accuses and convinces of sin, and pronounces guilty, and curses for it; but does not reveal Jesus Christ as a Saviour from it; no proof can be taken from thence of the things concerning Jesus; but the five books of Moses are here meant, in which he wrote of Christ, as our Lord himself says, John v. 46, 47. as he did particularly in Gen. iii. 15. and xlix. 10. and Deut. xviii. 15. also the types and sacrifices, recorded in his writings, might be made use of in proof of Jesus, and the things of him: *and out of the prophets;* such as Psal. xxii. 15, 16. and xvi. 10. and lxviii. 18. and cx. 1. Isa. vii. 14. and liii. Dan. ix. 24, 26. Mic. v. 2. Zech. ix. 9. and xiii. 7. with many others: and in this work he continued, *from morning till evening;* not that we are to suppose, that he carried on one continued discourse upon these subjects, without any intermission; but that he was all the day employed, either in expounding the Scriptures, proving that the kingdom of the Messiah was come, and using strong and persuasory arguments, to show that Jesus was he; or in answering the cavils and objections of the Jews, to what he said.

Ver. 24. *And some believed the things which were spoken,* &c.] By him, concerning the kingdom of God and Jesus Christ; even as many as were ordained unto eternal life, and to whom it was given to believe; for faith is the gift of God, and which comes by hearing of the word, when it is attended with a divine power; and then it is not only notionally understood, and barely assented to as truth, but is cordially believed and embraced, and cheerfully professed, and steadily held fast: this was not a mere historical faith, or a bare assent to the truth of the things spoken, nor a mere profession of faith in them, but a believing in Christ with the heart, the sum and substance of them; as they heard these things, their understandings were enlightened, and they saw their need of Christ, and the things of Christ, which were held forth in the ministry of the word; and so approved of them, savoured, relished, and fed upon them; and until this is the case, none can, nor will believe aright: *and some believed not;* notwithstanding the full proof, and clear evidence produced by the apostle: these were not of Christ's sheep, their eyes were blinded, and their hearts were hardened, as was prophesied of them, and therefore they could not believe; they were given up to a judicial blindness and hardness of heart, and were left under the power of obstinate and invincible unbelief: their disbelief of these things arose from the prejudices they had conceived about a worldly kingdom; from the sufferings and death of Jesus Christ, they imagining the Messiah would not die, but abide for ever; from the carnal reasonings of their minds, about divine and spiritual things; and from the ignorance that was in them, because of the obduracy of their hearts. The kingdom the apostle testified of was not an Utopian kingdom, nor any of the real kingdoms of this world, but the kingdom of the Messiah they were expecting; but that which he described, being not such an one as they imagined, they believed him not: the things he said concerning Jesus were not trivial, speculative, and indifferent things; but of the greatest moment and importance, and of which there was full proof in their own writings; and though spoken by Paul, were no

other than the word of God; and besides, were good news, and glad tidings, and yet they believed them not: this difference among them, some believing and some not believing, was not owing to the power and free will of man, as if some of themselves would, and did believe, and others would not, but to the distinguishing grace of God; for faith is not of man, it is the gift of God, it is the fruit of electing grace, and is given in consequence of it: nor is this any unusual thing, under the same ministration of the word, for one to believe, and another not believe: this is a common case, and is the usual success the Gospel meets with; so it always has been, and so it is, and will be; so it was in the times of Noah, he was a preacher of righteousness to the old world, even of the righteousness of faith, many were disobedient, few believed; and so it fared with the evangelical prophet Isaiah, and with Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Zechariah, and other prophets of the Old Testament; and with John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, and with Christ himself, as well as with our apostle; and this has been the case ever since his time, now is, and will be, as long as the Gospel is preached.

Ver. 25. *And when they agreed not among themselves, &c.*] One part believing what was said, and the other disbelieving; and such a division is the usual effect of the Gospel ministry; see Luke xii. 51, 52. Or this may be understood of the unbelieving party, who though they agreed in the main that Jesus was not the Messiah, yet might have different sentiments of the apostle; of the manner of his reasoning, and the nature of his proofs and arguments; and of some things which he delivered, which some might assent to, and others deny; as the Pharisees and Sadducees in the sanhedrim at Jerusalem disagreed about the doctrine of the resurrection: and the rather this may be thought to be the sense, because they not only departed, when very likely those that believed might stay longer, but because at their departure the apostle says something very cutting and stinging, and which he would not say in common of them all, of the believers; and besides, they are afterwards said to reason among themselves, ver. 29. *They departed;* from the apostle's lodging to their own houses, or to some other place, where they could call over, and debate among themselves, the things they had heard: *after that Paul had spoken one word;* a very remarkable one, and full to the purpose, and which he gave them just at parting with them: *well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers;* the passage referred to is in Isa. vi. 9, 10. which the prophet Isaiah delivered under the influence and by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, being moved by him, as all the holy men of God were; and which was very apposite, not only to the Jewish fathers in the times of Isaiah, but to their posterity in succeeding ages, in the times of Christ and his apostles; see Matt. xiii. 10, 11, 13, 14. John xii. 37—46. and were exceeding applicable to the present unbelieving Jews, who had been disputing with the apostle, and were now departing from him, in unbelief: and from hence it appears, that since it was the Holy Ghost that spake by Isaiah the prophet, and he that spoke to him and by him, was the Adon, Jehovah, and Lord of hosts, as is clear from Isa. vi. 1, 5, 8, 9. it follows, that the Holy Ghost is a divine person, truly God, and equal with the Father and the Son.

Ver. 26. *Saying, go unto this people, and say, &c.*] A message sent in wrath and judgment to the people of Israel, rejected from being the people of God, a *lo ammi* being written upon them; and therefore God does not call them *his*, but *this* people: and this message was sent by an evangelical prophet, who foretold, in the clearest manner, the Messiah's incarnation, and birth of a virgin, the work he was to do, the sufferings he should undergo, and the glory that should follow; and that after he had seen in a vision the glory of the King Messiah, the perfections of deity filling the temple of his human nature, him exalted on a throne, and attended and worshipped by angels; after he had had such a view of his beauty and excellency, that laid him low in his own sight, and humbled him under a sense of his own impurity and unworthiness; and after he had had a comfortable discovery and application of pardoning grace; and after he had expressed such a readiness and willingness to go on the Lord's errand: which one might have thought would have been of a different nature; and that he would have been sent, and have been made useful, to set forth the glories and excellencies of Christ's person, office, and grace, he had had such a view of; and to preach the comfortable doctrine of pardoning grace to men, which he had just now such a gracious experience of; but on the contrary, he is bid to say, *hearing ye shall hear;* with bodily ears, the Gospel preached by the Messiah and his apostles: *and shall not understand;* spiritually and experimentally, what they heard: to have an opportunity of hearing the Gospel, is a great blessing; seeing it is good news, glad tidings of good things, a joyful sound, and the voice of Christ himself; it is a distinguishing favour, and what all men at all times have not; when it is attended with a divine energy, the spirit of God is received through it, regeneration, quickening and sanctifying grace are by it; faith comes by hearing it, and Christ is found under the ministration of it; and, generally speaking, the understanding and knowledge of divine things, are by means of it: men are naturally without the understanding of spiritual things, and where the Gospel is not, they remain so; the ministers of the Gospel, and the word preached by them, are the means of leading men into a spiritual understanding of things, though only as, and when attended with the spirit of God, who is a spirit of wisdom and revelation, in the knowledge of Christ: and a special mercy it is when persons, whilst hearing the word, understand what they hear, and can distinguish truth from error; and approve of the truth, receive the love of it, feel the power, and taste the sweetness of it; find it and eat it, believe, embrace, and profess it, and bring forth fruits worthy of it: but on the contrary, when it is heard and not understood, it is an awful dispensation; for hence either they content themselves with bare hearing, and depend upon it for salvation; or they despise and speak evil of what they do not understand; and so their hearing, instead of being a blessing, is an aggravation of their condemnation: *and seeing ye shall see,* miracles wrought: *and not perceive;* them to be proofs of the things, for which they are wrought: so Jarchi expounds those

words, "ye shall see the wonders, or miracles I have "done for you, and shall not set your hearts to know "me:" from whence it appears that the Gospel preached in the clearest and most powerful manner, and even miracles wrought in confirmation of it, are insufficient for conversion; and nothing will effect it, but efficacious grace.

Ver. 27. *For the heart of this people is waxed gross,* &c.] Or *fat:* stupified with notions of carnal and temporal things, and become hardened against, and unsusceptible of, divine and spiritual things: *and their ears are dull of hearing;* the Gospel, and its joyful sound; to which they stop their ears, as the deaf adder to the voice of the charmer: *and their eyes have they closed;* and wilfully shut, against all evidence from facts, miracles, prophecies, and preaching: *lest they should see with* their *eyes, and hear with* their *ears, and understand with* their *heart, and should be converted;* that is, see the evidence of miracles, take in the truth of doctrine, understand the meaning of prophecy, and so be turned from darkness, ignorance, and unbelief, to light, knowledge, and faith: *and I should heal them;* or *have mercy on them,* as the Ethiopic version renders it; that is, forgive their sins: hearing the Gospel preached, is the ordinary means of understanding spiritual things; and the understanding being enlightened through the ministry of the word, by the spirit of God, whereby the sinner sees his lost state by nature, his impurity and impotency, the danger he is in, and the destruction that is imminent on him, and he is liable to, and also his need of Christ, and salvation by him; this issues in conversion, in the turning of a man from the evil of his ways, to believe in Christ, walk on in him, and worthy of him; when he is healed of the diseases of his soul, which are many, are natural, and hereditary, mortal and incurable, but by Christ the great physician; by whose stripes, wounds, and blood, there is healing, that is, pardon; for healing diseases, and pardoning iniquities, are one and the same; see Psal. ciii. 3. and at conversion, when a soul is enlightened, and made sensible of the evil of sin, and that there is no cure of this disease, by any thing that he or any creature can do, or prescribe for him, but only by the blood of Christ; a discovery of pardoning grace is made unto him; and he is made whole, and cured of every disease that attended him; from whence spring joy, peace, and comfort to him: but when through hearing the word, the understanding is not enlightened, and conversion does not follow upon it, there is no healing of the disease of sin, no pardon applied; and consequently such must be in a most deplorable and miserable condition, as all ignorant hearers and despisers of the Gospel are; see the notes on Matt. xiii. 14, 15.

Ver. 28. *Be it known therefore unto you,* &c.] Unbelievers and despisers, take this along with you at parting, and don't say you were never acquainted with it: *that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles;* meaning the Gospel, which is a publication and declaration of that salvation, which God contrived from all eternity; made provision for, and secured in the covenant of grace; which he appointed, called, and sent Christ to effect, in the fulness of time; and which he has accomplished, by his obedience, sufferings, and death; even a full, complete, spiritual, and eternal salvation, from sin, Satan, the world, the curse of the law, and eternal death; that that Gospel which proclaims this, and is the power of God unto it, to them that believe, is sent to the Gentile world, by God himself, who has ordered his ministers to turn to them, upon the rejection of it by the Jews: *and* that *they will hear it;* and do understand it and obey it, believe it and profess it: this the apostle could assert upon his own knowledge, who had preached it in many nations of the world; and could testify how gladly they heard it, with what pleasure they received it, how readily they obeyed it, and how cheerfully they professed it, and how steadily they held it; though the Jews despised and put it away from them, judging themselves unworthy of everlasting life: this the apostle says, reproaching them with their folly, stupidity, and infidelity; when the Gentiles, which knew not God, received the Gospel and are saved.

Ver. 29. *And when he had said these words,* &c.] Cited the prophecy of Isaiah, and declared the mission of the Gospel to the Gentiles, and their vocation by it; both which must greatly gravel and disturb the unbelieving part of his audience: *the Jews departed;* much displeased and uneasy: *and had great reasoning among themselves;* not only with them that believed, but with others, that seemed to incline towards the apostle, and who espoused and undertook to defend some principles of his, against the rest, as the doctrine of the resurrection; and particularly they might take into consideration the passage in Isaiah, the apostle had recited to them at parting, and which was so apposite to them; as well as the account he gave them of the preaching of the Gospel, and the success of it among the Gentiles, things which must be very grating to them: this whole verse is wanting in the Alexandrian copy, and in the Syriac version.

Ver. 30. *And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house,* &c.] In a house which he hired with his own money; in which his friends Luke, Aristarchus, and others, dwelt with him; where he was guarded by a soldier: whether at the expiration of these two years he was set at liberty, and for ten years afterwards travelled into Italy, France, and Spain, preaching the Gospel, as some think; or whether he then suffered martyrdom, is not certain; the latter is most probable: *and received all that came in unto him;* there, as the Syriac version reads, that is, into his lodging, as the Ethiopic version expresses it; which is not to be understood of his hospitality, for it cannot be thought that he should provide food and lodging for all that came unto him; but that he admitted all that would to come and hear him, and freely preached the Gospel to them: it should seem by this, as well as by what is said ver. 23. that many of the Jews came into his lodging, and heard him expound, that it was a large house he had hired and dwelt in; and such an one Jerom [y] thinks it was, like that he supposes he would have Philemon provide for him, which he desires in his epistle to him, ver. 22. namely, a house

[y] Comment. in Philemon. v. 22. Tom. 9. fol. 116. I.

in the most noted place in the city, for the conveniency of those that came to him; large enough to hold many; free from noise and disturbance; and not situated in a scandalous neighbourhood, nor near to shews and plays; and that the lodging should rather be on the floor than in an upper room: and such a house, with all the conditions that Jerom mentions, the Papists pretend to shew at Rome to this day; where, as their tradition is, Luke composed, or however finished this his history; which, as the above writer observes [z], reaches to the two years of Paul's stay at Rome; that is, until the fourth year of Nero; from whence, adds he, we learn that in the same city this book was composed: and it is certain, that Luke was with him, when the apostle wrote his second epistle to Timothy from Rome, and when the time of his martyrdom seemed to himself to be at hand, 2 Tim. iv. 7, 11.

Ver. 31. *Preaching the kingdom of God*, &c.] That is, the Gospel, as in Luke iv. 43. and xvi. 16. he preached up Jesus as the King Messiah, and declared that his kingdom was come, and opened the nature of it; that it consisted not in meats and drinks, but in righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost; which is the kingdom of grace here, and is within a man, in his heart, where grace reigns through righteousness, unto eternal life: and he gave them some account of the kingdom of glory, and the way unto it; and shewed, that without regeneration and sanctification, no one could be meet for it; and without the justifying righteousness of Christ, no man could have a right unto it, or be possessed of it: *and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ*; his person, as God and man; his office as Mediator, being prophet, priest, and King; his incarnation and birth; his life and miracles; his doctrine and obedience, sufferings and death; his resurrection, ascension, session at God's right hand; his intercession, and second coming to judgment; with all the truths of the Gospel, in which he has a concern; as redemption, peace, reconciliation, and pardon, by his blood and sacrifice, and justification by his righteousness, and salvation and eternal life through him. These things had been the subject of the apostle's ministry, throughout the whole of it: he began at Damascus with preaching Jesus as the son of God, and the true Messiah; and he ends at Rome, with teaching the things concerning him: at his first setting out in the work of the Lord, he determined to make known none but Christ, and him crucified; and in this resolution he continued through the whole course of his life, and abode by it to the end: and this he did *with all confidence*; with all freedom and liberty in his soul, though he was bound in his body with a chain; with all plainness, openness, and faithfulness; and with all courage and boldness, though in the midst of adversaries: *no man forbidding him*: not the Roman emperor, nor the Roman senate, nor any other magistrate; nor could the Jews hinder him, nor was his mouth to be stopped by any; nor could the open door of the Gospel be shut, or its course be impeded; for though the apostle was bound, the word of God was not, but ran and was glorified; and was made known, and even owned in Cæsar's palace; some say Nero's cupbearer, and Poppæa his concubine, were converted by him: and he not only continued preaching the Gospel during the two years of his imprisonment at Rome, but also wrote several epistles to churches, and particular persons; as the epistles to the Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and the Hebrews, and to Philemon, and the *second* epistle to Timothy: some copies add here, *Amen*: and at the close of the Alexandrian copy, stand these words, *the Acts of the holy Apostles*: and at the Syriac version these, *the End of the Acts of the blessed Apostles, that is, of their Histories.*

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO

THE ROMANS.

THOUGH this epistle is in order placed the first of the epistles, yet it was not first written; there were several epistles written before it, as the two epistles to the Thessalonians, the two to the Corinthians, the first epistle to Timothy, and that to Titus: the reason why this epistle stands first, is either the excellency of it, of which Chrysostom had so great an esteem that he caused it to be read over to him twice a week; or else the dignity of the place, where the persons lived to whom it is written, being Rome, the imperial city: so the books of the prophets are not placed in the same order in which they were written: Hosea prophesied as early as Isaiah, if not earlier; and before Jeremiah and Ezekiel, and yet stands after them. This epistle was written from Corinth, as the subscription of it testifies; and which may be confirmed from

[z] Catalog. Script. Eccl. sect. 17. fol. 91. C.

the apostle's commendation of Phœbe, by whom he sent it, who was of Cenchrea, a place near Corinth; by his calling Erastus, the chamberlain of the city, who abode at Corinth, 2 Tim. iv. 20. and Gaius his host, who was a Corinthian, Rom. xvi. 23. 1 Cor. i. 14. though at what time it was written from hence, is not so evident: some think it was written in the time of his three-months' travel through Greece, Acts xx. 2, 3. a little before the death of the Emperor Claudius, in the year of Christ 55; others, that it was written by him in the short stay he made at Corinth, when he came thither, as is supposed, from Philippi, in his way to Troas, where some of his company went before, and had been there five days before him: and this is placed in the second year of Nero, and in the year of Christ 56; however, it was not written by him during his long stay at Corinth, when he was first there, but afterwards, even after he had preached from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum: and when he was about to go to Jerusalem, with the contributions of the churches of Macedonia and Achaia, to the poor saints there, ch. xv. 19, 25, 26. The persons to whom this epistle was sent were Roman saints, both Jews and Gentiles, inhabiting the city of Rome; of which city and church see the notes on Acts xxviii. 14, 15. by whom the Gospel was first preached at Rome, and who were the means of forming the church there, is not very evident. Irenæus, an ancient writer, says [a], that Peter and Paul preached the Gospel at Rome, and founded the church; and Gaius, an ecclesiastical man, who lived in the time of Zephyrinus, bishop of Rome, asserts the same; and Dionysius, bishop of the Corinthians, calls the Romans the plantation of Peter and Paul [b]: whether Peter was ever at Rome is not a clear point with many; and certain it is, that the Apostle Paul had not been at Rome when he wrote this epistle, at least it seems very probable he had not, by several expressions in ch. i. 10—15. and yet here was a church to which he writes, and had been a considerable time; for their faith was spoken of throughout the world, ver. 8. and when the apostle was on the road to this city, the brethren in it met him, Acts xxviii. 5. The chief design of this epistle is to set in a clear light the doctrine of justification: shewing against the Gentiles, that it is not by the light of nature, and works done in obedience to that, and against the Jews, that it was not by the law of Moses, and the deeds of that; which he clearly evinces, by observing the sinful and wretched estate both of Jews and Gentiles: but that it is by the righteousness of Christ imputed through the grace of God, and received by faith; the effects of which are peace and joy in the soul, and holiness in the life and conversation: he gives an account of the justified ones, as that they are not without sin, which he illustrates by his own experience and case; and yet are possessed of various privileges, as freedom from condemnation, the blessing of adoption, and a right to the heavenly inheritance; he treats in it concerning predestination, the calling of the Gentiles, and the rejection of the Jews; and exhorts to the various duties incumbent on the saints, with respect to one another, and to the world, to duties of a moral and civil nature, and the use of things indifferent; and closes it with the salutations of divers persons.

CHAP. I.

THIS chapter contains the inscription of the epistle, and salutation, the preface to it, and the grand proposition of justification by faith, so much enlarged on afterwards; and that this could not be by the law of nature, and the works of it among the Gentiles, is demonstrated by a detail of their horrible wickedness, impiety, and unrighteousness. In the inscription an account is given of the author of the epistle, who is described in ver. 1. by his name Paul: by his relation to Christ, a servant of his; and by his office, an apostle, whose business and concern were with the Gospel, to which he was separated. This Gospel is commended from the author of it, who is God himself; and from the antiquity of it, ver. 2. being as ancient as the writings of the prophets; and from the subject of it, being the Lord Jesus Christ; who is described by his relation to God, his son, by his dominion over the saints, their Lord, by both his natures, human and divine; his human nature, as being of the seed of David, his divine nature, being the son of God, ver. 4. which is declared by the power he is possessed of, by the spirit of holiness that is in him, by his resurrection from the dead, and by the apostles receiving from him grace to fit them for their office, and by the office itself: the end of which was to make some among all nations obedient to him, ver. 5. among whom were the saints at Rome, who were called by him, and after his name, ver. 6. which introduces the account of the persons to whom this epistle is written, who are described, ver. 7. by the place of their abode, Rome; by their interest in the love of God; and by the effect, fruit, and evidence of it, their effectual vocation; and then follows the apostle's usual salutation, as in all his epistles, in which he wishes grace and peace for them, from God the father, and from Christ. The preface begins ver. 8. in which are a thanksgiving to God, through Christ, for all the saints at Rome, particularly on account of their faith, for which they were everywhere so famous; an appeal to God, ver. 9. for the truth of his incessant prayers for them, and particularly, ver. 10. that this was a request he made, that if it was the will of God, he might have a speedy and prosperous journey to them; an expression of strong affection to them, and of his great desire to see them, ver. 11. his end in which was partly for their sakes, to communicate spiritual things to them for their establishment, and partly for his own comfort, and the increase of the mutual faith of both, ver. 12. also a vindication of himself, ver. 13. shewing, that it was not any fault of

[a] Adv. Hæres. l. 3. c. 1. Vid. Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. 5. c. 8.

[b] Apud Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. 2. c. 25.

his, or any neglect of them by him, that he had not been with them as yet, but some things hindered him, in the execution of his purpose to come to them; to which he was moved, partly by the hope of having fruit among them, as among others, and partly through the obligation that lay upon him by virtue of his office, to preach the Gospel to all sorts of men, ver. 14. he expresses his willingness and readiness to preach the Gospel to them at Rome, as soon as an opportunity would offer, ver. 15. which was his work and office, what he delighted in, was closely attached to, and by no means ashamed of, ver. 16. partly because of the nature of it, it was the Gospel, good news and true: and partly because of the author and subject of it, Christ; as also because of the efficacy of it in the salvation of Jews and Gentiles; and likewise because of a principal doctrine revealed in it, ver. 17. the doctrine of justification by faith, in the righteousness of Christ, confirmed and illustrated by a passage out of Hab. ii. 4. and which he particularly mentions, because he intended to dwell upon it in this epistle: and in order to shew that the Gentiles could not be justified in the sight of God by their obedience to the law, and the light of nature, he observes, that they were the objects of the wrath of God, ver. 18. and that very justly, because they sinned knowingly; they had some knowledge of the truth, but they would not profess it: and that they had such knowledge of it, he proves from the author of it, God, who shewed it to them, ver. 19. and from the means of it, by which they must, and did arrive to some degree of it, namely, the works of creation, ver. 20. The apostle goes on to expose the ingratitude of them, the vanity of their minds, the pride and folly of their hearts, ver. 21, 22. the gross idolatry they were guilty of, ver. 23. for which idolatry they were given up to their own hearts' lusts, to commit the foulest and most scandalous iniquities, even to commit sodomitical practices, and unnatural lusts, both men and women, ver. 24, 25, 26, 27, 28. And so far were they from having a righteousness to justify them before God, that they were filled with all unrighteousness; and a large list of the vilest sins, being committed by them, is given; and a catalogue of the worst of sinners, as among them, ver. 29, 30, 31, 32. All which are aggravated by their knowledge of the will of God, through the light of nature, that these things were contrary to it, and were deserving of death; and yet they both did them, and were delighted with those that committed them also: the inference which he leaves to be deduced from hence, and which may easily be deduced, is, that therefore there can be no justification of such persons in the sight of God by their own works.

Ver. 1. *Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ,* &c.] The name of the author of this epistle is Paul, who formerly was called Saul. Some think his name was changed upon his own conversion; others, upon the conversion of the Roman deputy Sergius Paulus, Acts xiii. 7, 9. others, that he was so called from the littleness of his stature; but rather it should seem that he had two names, which was usual with the Jews; one by which they went among the Gentiles, and another by which they were called in their own land; see more of this on Acts xiii. 9. *A servant of Jesus Christ;* not a servant of sin, nor of Satan, nor of man, nor of Moses and his law, nor of the traditions of the elders, but of Jesus Christ; and not by creation only, but by redemption, and by powerful efficacious grace in conversion; which is no ways contrary to true liberty; nor a disgraceful, but a most honourable character; and which chiefly regards him as a minister of the Gospel: *called to be an apostle:* an apostle was one that was immediately sent by Christ, and had his authority and doctrine directly from him, and had a power of working miracles from him, in confirmation of the truth of his mission, authority, and doctrine; all which were to be found in the author of this epistle, who did not thrust himself into this office, or take this honour to himself, of which he always judged himself unworthy, but was *called* to it according to the will, and by the grace of God: *separated unto the Gospel of God.* This may regard either God's eternal purpose concerning him, his pre-ordination of him from eternity to be a preacher of the Gospel, to which he was separated from his mother's womb, Gal. i. 15. or the separation of him to that work made by the order of the spirit of God, Acts xiii. 2. The phrase used is either in allusion to the priests and Levites, who were separated from their brethren the children of Israel, to their sacred employments; or rather to the apostle's having been פרוש, *a Pharisee,* which signifies *one separated,* as he was now; only with this difference, before he was separated to the law, but now *to the Gospel,* to preach and defend it, which he did with all faithfulness and integrity; the excellency of which Gospel is signified by its being called *the Gospel of God:* he is the author of it; his grace is the subject of it; and he it is who commits it to men, qualifies them for the preaching of it, and succeeds them in it.

Ver. 2. *Which he had promised afore,* &c.] The Gospel is here further commended from the antiquity of it: it was no novel doctrine, an upstart notion, but what God had conceived in his own breast from eternity. This mystery was hid in him from the beginning of the world, and was ordained before the world was; in time God was pleased to make it known to the sons of men; he *promised* it, he spoke of it, and declared it by *his prophets,* Isaiah and others, *afore* the Apostle Paul was called forth to be a preacher of it; which promise, or promises of it, lie *in the Holy Scriptures:* the books of the Old Testament, so called from the author, matter, and usefulness of them. The apostle speaks in the language of his nation, for the Jews frequently call the Bible, writings, holy ones; *for,* say they, כל כתובים קדש, *all the Scriptures are holy*[e], and style them, כתבי הקדש, *Scriptures of holiness,* or holy Scriptures[f].

Ver. 3. *Concerning his son Jesus Christ our Lord,* &c.] These words are in connection with *the Gospel of God,* ver. 1. and express the subject-matter of it, the son of God, Jesus Christ our Lord; for Christ, as the son of God, the Saviour of sinners, the only Mediator between God and men, who is Lord both of the dead and living, is the sum and substance of the Gospel: he is here described by his relation to God, his *son,* of the same nature with him, equal to him, and

[e] Misn. Yadaim, c. 3. sect. 5.

[f] Misn. Parah, c. 10. sect. 3. T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 116. 1.

distinct from him; by his usual names, *Jesus Christ*, the one signifying a *Saviour*, the other *anointed*, and both, that he was anointed of God to be the Saviour of his people; and by his dominion over the saints *our Lord*, not merely by creation, but by redemption and grace, and happy is the person that can claim interest in him, as is here done; and by the distinction of natures in him: *which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh;* this respects Christ in his human nature, who was *made* flesh, and of a woman; and shews his existence before his incarnation, and the immediate power and hand of God in it; and which was done, not by transmutation of him into flesh, but by an assumption of human nature into union with his divine person: he is said to be made *of the seed of David:* this points out the family from whence he sprung; designs the posterity of David, particularly Mary; has regard to the promise made to David, which God fulfilled; and shews the royal descent of Christ: 'tis added, *according to the flesh;* that is, according to his human nature; which phrase does not denote the corruption, but the truth of that nature; and supposes that he had another nature, otherwise there would have been no need of this limiting and restrictive clause.

Ver. 4. *And declared to be the son of God*, &c.] Not *made* as he is said to be before, when his incarnation is spoken of; nor did he begin to be the son of God, when he was made of the seed of David, but he, the son of God, who existed as such, from everlasting, was manifested in the flesh, or human nature: and this his divine sonship, and proper deity, are declared and made evident, *with*, or *by* his *power;* which has appeared in the creation of all things out of nothing; in upholding all things in their beings; in the government of the world, and works of Providence; in the miracles he wrought; in his performing the great work of redemption; in the success of his Gospel, to the conversion of sinners; and in the preservation of his churches and people: here it seems chiefly to regard the power of Christ in raising the dead, since it follows, and which is to be connected with this clause, *by the resurrection from the dead;* and designs either the resurrection of others, as of Lazarus, and some other persons, in his life-time, and of some at his resurrection, and of all at the last day: or the resurrection of his own body, which dying he had power to raise up again, and did; and which declared him to be, or clearly made it appear that he was the son of God, a divine person, truly and properly God: and this was done *according to the spirit of holiness;* which may be understood of the Holy Spirit, the third person in the Trinity, who is holy in himself, and the author of holiness in the saints; and who is the declarer of Christ's sonship, partly by bearing a testimony to it in the word, and in the hearts of believers, and chiefly by being concerned in the resurrection of the body of Christ from the dead; or else by the spirit of holiness may be meant the divine nature of Christ, which, as it is holy, so by it Christ offered himself to God, and by it was quickened, or made alive, when he had been put to death in the flesh; and which must be a clear and strong proof of his being truly the son of God.

Ver. 5. *By whom we have received grace and apostleship*, &c.] That is, either by the Holy Spirit, from whom all grace and gifts come, qualifying for the discharge of any office; or by the Lord Jesus Christ, who is full of grace and truth, has received gifts for, and gives them to men to fit them for whatsoever service he is pleased to call them to. By *grace and apostleship* may be meant, either one and the same thing, the favour and honour of being the apostles of Christ; or different things, and the one in order to the other. Grace may design special saving grace in vocation, justification, pardon, and adoption, and sanctification, which was received in common with other saints, and is absolutely necessary to an apostle, and to any ordinary minister of the word; or the doctrine of grace, which they received from Christ, and dispensed to others; or rather the gifts of grace, and the various measures thereof, which they received from their ascended Lord and King, by which they were furnished for apostleship, that is, the work and office of apostles; to which they were called by Christ, and from whom they received a commission to execute it. The apostle takes in others besides himself, and says, *we have received*, partly for the sake of modesty, and partly to keep up his equal title with others to this office; and since this is had in a way of receiving, which supposes giving, and excludes boasting, it obliges to make use of all grace and gifts to the glory of Christ, by whom they are received. The end for which they received such an office, and grace to fit them for it, was, *for obedience to the faith;* that men might be brought by the ministry of the word to obey the faith, Christ the object of faith; to submit to his righteousness, and the way of salvation by him, and to be subject to his ordinances; or to obey the doctrine of faith, which is not barely to hear it, and notionally receive it, but to embrace it heartily by faith, and retain it, in opposition to a disbelief and contempt of it; and which is the end and design of the Gospel ministration to bring persons to. Moreover, by *obedience to the faith*, or *obedience of faith*, as it may be rendered, may be meant the grace of faith, attended with evangelical obedience; for obedience, rightly performed, is only that which is by faith, and springs from it. Now grace and apostleship were received, in order to be exercised *among all nations;* not in Judea only, to which the first commission of apostleship was limited, but in all the nations of the world, as the commission renewed by Christ after his resurrection ordered; and that some among all nations of the earth might, by the power of divine grace accompanying the word, be brought to faith and obedience: and all this, the qualifications for the office, the due exercise of it in all the world, and the success that attended it, were *for his name:* for the honour and glory of Christ, in whose name they went, and which they bore and carried among the Gentiles, out of whom he was pleased *to take a people for his name*, Acts xv. 14.

Ver. 6. *Among whom are ye also*, &c.] The Romans, though they were the chief, were among the nations of the world to whom the apostles were sent; and since Paul was called to be an apostle, and had, as others, grace and apostleship, and particularly the apostleship of the uncircumcision, or was ordained a teacher of the Gentiles, more especially he was an apostle to

them, and as such was to be regarded by them. This seems to point out what they were originally; they were among all nations which lay in darkness; and were without Christ and hope, and God in the world; but now, *the called of Jesus Christ*. The calling here spoken of is not to an office, or a mere external one by the ministry of the word, but an internal special call by the grace of God; and which is irresistible, efficacious, and unchangeable, and is an high, holy, and heavenly one; by it persons are called out of darkness into light, out of bondage into liberty, out of the world, from the company of the men of it, and the sinful pleasures thereof, to fellowship with Christ and his saints, and off a dependence on themselves, and their own righteousness, to the grace and righteousness of Christ, and to eternal glory. The persons so called are the elect of God, who are secured in Christ, and redeemed by him, and who has a concern with the Father and Spirit in the vocation of them: hence they are styled, *the called of Jesus Christ*; they are called by him, and after his name; he has an interest in them; as they were before his chosen and redeemed ones, they are now his called ones; as Jacob and Israel of old were named of God, מקראי, *my called*, Isa. xlviii. 12. so these were named Christ's called ones; and who by calling came to be partakers of him and of his grace.

Ver. 7. *To all that be in Rome*, &c.] These words contain both the inscription of the epistle, and the apostle's usual salutation, as in all his epistles. The inscription of it is not to the Roman emperor, nor to the Roman senate, nor to all the inhabitants in Rome; but to all the saints there, whether rich or poor, bond or free, male or female, Jew or Gentile, without any distinction, being all one in Christ Jesus: and these are described as *beloved of God*: not for any loveliness there was in them, nor because of any love in them to God, nor on account of their obedience and righteousness; but through the free favour and sovereign will and pleasure of God, who loved them before he called them, even from eternity, and will love them to eternity; which love of his is the source and spring of all the blessings of grace, and, among the rest, of effectual vocation: hence this character is set before the following one, *called* to be *saints*; not born so, nor become so through their own power, but were so by calling grace, as a fruit of everlasting love; men are first beloved of the Lord, and then called to be his saints. The salutation follows; the things wished for in it are, *grace to you, and peace*: by *grace* is not meant ministerial gifts, which are not common to all the saints; nor the Gospel, which was at Rome already; nor the love and favour of God, which these persons were sharers in, as appears from their above characters; nor the principle of grace, which was now formed there in their effectual calling; but an increase of grace, as to its degrees, acts, and exercise; every grace is imperfect in this respect, and those who have the most stand in need of more; there is such a thing as growing in grace, which is very desirable, and may be expected from God, who is able to make all grace to abound, and has promised to give more: by *peace* is meant, peace with God through Christ; peace in their own consciences, and with one another; all manner of prosperity inward and outward here, and eternal happiness hereafter. The persons from whom these are desired are, *God our father and the Lord Jesus Christ*. God the father of Christ is spoken of as *our father*, which is by adoption; partly to engage fear and reverence of him at his throne; and partly to encourage freedom and boldness there, and an expectation of receiving every blessing of grace from him: *the Lord Jesus Christ* is mentioned, as being the person through whom, and for whose sake, all the blessings of grace and peace are communicated to us; and being put upon a level with the father in these petitions, shews him to be equal with him, and so truly and properly God. *Grace* may be thought to be particularly wished for from the father, though not exclusive of Christ, since he is the God of all grace, who has treasured up a fulness of it in his son. And *peace* may be considered as desired to be had from Christ, though not exclusive of the father; since the covenant of peace was made with him, the chastisement of peace was laid on him, and he has made peace by the blood of his cross, and is the giver of it to his people.

Ver. 8. *First, I thank my God, through Jesus Christ, for you all*, &c.] After the inscription and salutation, follows a thanksgiving, which begins the epistle: it is usual with the apostle in all his epistles to make requests for the churches, with thanksgivings for mercies; his view in it was, to glorify God, to testify his affection to the saints, and to shew that all they had must be referred to the grace of God. The object of thanksgiving is *God*: not merely as a creator and preserver, but as a father, the father of Christ, and our father in Christ; as the one God, and our God, Father, Son, and Spirit. The apostle styles him, *my God*; which distinguishes him from all others, points out his particular interest in him, expresses his knowledge of him and faith in him, and demonstrates that what he did now, he did in faith. The person through whom thanks are given is Jesus Christ. There's no coming to God but through Christ, nor is any sacrifice either of prayer or praise acceptable without him, and since all we have come through him, 'tis but reasonable that thanks for them should be returned by and through him; the persons for whom this thanksgiving is made were all the Romans, all the saints at Rome, the members of the church there, of whatsoever rank and degree, and in whatsoever, state and condition; the thing for which the apostle was thankful for particularly was, not that their city was mistress of the whole world, and their fame for power, wealth, and grandeur, was spread abroad far and near: but, says he, *that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world*: which shews that faith is a grace of great account: God has put an honour upon it, by making it the receiver of all his gifts, and that gives glory to God, and without it nothing is acceptable to him; it answers many excellent uses and purposes in experience; it is that by which saints live upon Christ in this world, and look to the glories of another. This also shews that the saints at Rome did not hide their faith in their breasts, but declared it to others; a public profession both of the grace and doctrine of faith is to be made, and constantly held; both are to be shewn forth to others, by deeds as well as words; which greatly re-

dounds to the honour of such churches, causes joy in other churches, and in all the ministers of the Gospel, and is the occasion of many thanksgivings to God.

Ver. 9. *For God is my witness, whom I serve, &c.*] These words are an appeal to God, and carry in them the nature and form of an oath; the reason of the apostle's using it was, because he was personally unknown to the Romans, and they to him, and so might doubt of his affectionate regard unto them; and therefore for the confirmation thereof he uses it: this was a case which was only known to God and himself, and hence he appeals to him for the truth of it. The object of his oath or appeal, or by which he speaks, is not himself, or any thing that belonged to him, nor any creature in heaven or on earth, but God; who in a solemn oath is only to be appealed to and sworn by: he describes him as the God *whom* he *served*, to distinguish him from all false gods, and to shew that he that takes an oath, should be one that fears and serves the Lord; what he served him *in* was not the law, but *the Gospel of his son:* Jesus Christ, who is the author, minister, and subject-matter of it: he served him in it, by preaching, spreading, and defending it. This is a service, and a very laborious one, and makes for the honour and glory of God. The manner in which he served him was, as he says, *with my spirit:* either with the spirit of God, which was given to him; or in a spiritual manner, in opposition to the carnal worship of the Jews; internally, in opposition to bodily exercise only, and voluntarily, with his whole heart, soul, and spirit. The matter or substance of his appeal or oath was, *that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers;* whence may be observed, that prayer to God ought to be constant; and that we should be concerned for others as well as for ourselves; all the saints should share therein.

Ver. 10. *Making request, if by any means now at length, &c.*] A principal thing, which he incessantly and importunately requested at the throne of grace, was, that he might have an opportunity of coming to them; that God in his providence would open a way for him; and that he might have a safe and comfortable journey in a very little time; all which he submits to the will of God, as a good man ought to do; and which he thus expresses, *I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God, to come unto you;* see James iv. 13, 14, 15.

Ver. 11. *For I long to see you, &c.*] Not the city of Rome, which was one of Austin's three wishes to have seen in its glory; nor the emperor of it, nor the senate in it, nor its populous inhabitants, fine buildings, riches and grandeur; but the poor saints there, which were the excellent men of the earth, of the whole Roman empire, and in whom was his delight: his desire to see them was not to gratify his curiosity, nor to spend his time in idle chat with them, nor with a view to enrich himself by them; but, says he, *that I may impart some spiritual gift;* not any extraordinary gift of the spirit; but spiritual light, knowledge, peace, and comfort, through the exercise of his ministerial gift: whence it may be observed, that that which qualifies men for the preaching of the word to the profit of others, is a gift, a gift by grace; a spiritual one, which comes from the spirit of God, and may be, and is to be imparted to others in the free use and exercise of it; and that, *to the end that* saints *may be established;* for such who are called by grace, need establishing. They are indeed in a safe state and condition; they are encircled in the arms of everlasting love, they are fixed in the hands of Christ, secured in an everlasting covenant, established on the rock of ages, and settled in a state from whence they can never fall; yet, notwithstanding this, they are sometimes very unstable in their hearts, in their frames, in the exercise of grace, and the discharge of duty, and in professing and adhering to the doctrines of the Gospel; wherefore they need establishing, as to a more firm persuasion of interest in the love of God, and in the covenant of grace, as to a more stable exercise of grace in Christ, and as to a more constant discharge of duty, and steady profession of adherence to the truths of the Gospel; to all which the ministration of the word has a tendency, with a divine blessing.

Ver. 12. *That is, that I may be comforted together with you, &c.*] This is a further explanation of his view, in being desirous of coming to them, and preaching the Gospel among them; for what makes for establishment, makes for comfort; and what makes for comfort, makes for establishment; and when souls are established, ministers are comforted as well as they; and whilst ministers are imparting their spiritual gifts for the use of others, they themselves are sometimes comforted of God in their work, and particularly when they find there's an agreement between their doctrine, and the experience of the saints: *by the mutual faith both of you and me.* The grace of faith is the same in all the saints, and so is the doctrine of it, as dispensed by Christ's faithful ministers, and experimentally received and embraced by his people; the consideration of which has a very great influence on the comfort and establishment of each other; nor are any so perfect, but they may receive benefit from others, even though inferior to them.

Ver. 13. *Now I would not have you ignorant, brethren, &c.*] The apostle calls them *brethren*, because many of them were Jews, his brethren and kinsmen according to the flesh, and all of them were his brethren in a spiritual relation; and this he does to express his affection to them, and engage their attention and credit to him, and particularly to this matter which he now acquaints them with, being unwilling they should be ignorant of it; *that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you:* it was not a sudden start of mind, or a desire that lately arose up in him, but a settled resolution and determination, and which he had often made: *but was let hitherto;* either by God, who had work for him to do in other places; or by Satan, who sometimes by divine permission has had such power and influence; see 1 Thess. ii. 18. or through the urgent necessities of other churches, which required his stay with them longer than he intended: his end in taking up at several times such a resolution of coming to them was, says he, *that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles:* by *fruit* he means, not any reward of his labour, either temporal or eternal; but the conversion of sinners, the edification of saints, and the fruitfulness of believers in grace and works. The apostle seems to allude to the casting of seed into

the earth: Christ's ministers are husbandmen, who sow the seed of the word, which lies some time under the clods; wherefore patience is necessary to wait its springing up, first in the blade, and then in the ear, then in the full corn in the ear, when it brings forth fruit; all which depend on the blessing of God: and when he adds, *as among other Gentiles*, his design is not so much to let them know that they were as other Gentiles, upon a level with them, had no pre-eminence as citizens of Rome, over other saints, being all one in Christ Jesus; as to observe to them his success in other places, where he had been preaching the Gospel of the grace of God.

Ver. 14. *I am a debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians*, &c.] The meaning is, that he was obliged by the call he had from God, the injunction that was laid upon him by him, and the gifts with which he was qualified, to preach the Gospel to all sorts of men; who are here distinguished into Greeks and Barbarians: sometimes by Greeks are meant the Gentiles in general, in opposition to the Jews; see ver. 16. but here they design only a part of the Gentiles, the inhabitants of Greece, in opposition to all the world besides; for the Greeks used to call all others that were not of themselves Barbarians[e]: or else by Greeks are meant the more cultivated nations of the world, and by Barbarians the ruder and more uncivil parts of it; to which agrees the next division of mankind, *both to the wise and to the unwise*. The Gospel was to be preached *to the wise*: such who thought themselves to be so, and were so with respect to human wisdom and knowledge; though it should be despised by them, as it was, and though few of them were called by it, some were, and still are, though not many; and such wisdom there is in the Gospel, as the wisest of men may learn by it, will be entertaining to them, is far beyond their contempt, and what will serve to exercise their talents and abilities, to search into the knowledge of, and rightly to understand; and it must be preached *to the unwise*; for such God has chosen to confound the wise; these he calls by his grace, and reveals his Gospel to, whilst he hides it from the wise and prudent; and there is that in the Gospel which is plain and easy to the weakest mind, enlightened by the spirit of God.

Ver. 15. *So, as much as in me is, I am ready*, &c.] This explains what he was a debtor to one and another for, namely, *to preach the Gospel*; expresses the readiness of his mind to that work, whatever difficulties lay in his way; and declares what a willing mind he had to preach it also to the Romans, as elsewhere: *to you that are at Rome also*; the metropolis of the Roman empire, a very public place, the seat of Satan, and where was the heat of persecution.

Ver. 16. *For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ*, &c.] The reason why he was so ready and willing to preach it, even where he ran the greatest risk of his character and life, was, because it was *the Gospel of Christ* he preached, and he was *not ashamed* of it. This supposes that some were, though the apostle was not, ashamed of the Gospel; as all such are who hide and conceal it, who have abilities to preach it, and do not; or who preach, but not the Gospel; or who preach the Gospel only in part, who own that in private, they will not preach in public, and use ambiguous words, of doubtful signification, to cover themselves; who blend the Gospel with their own inventions, seek to please men, and live upon popular applause, regard their own interest, and not Christ's, and can't bear the reproach of his Gospel. It expresses, that the apostle was not ashamed of it; that is, to preach it, which he did fully and faithfully, plainly and consistently, openly and publicly, and boldly, in the face of all opposition: and it designs more than is expressed, as that he had the utmost value for it, and esteemed it his highest honour that he was employed in preaching it: his reasons for this were, because it was *the Gospel of Christ*; which Christ himself preached, which he had learnt by revelation from him, and of which he was the sum and substance: and because *it is the power of God*; not essentially, but declaratively; as the power of God is seen in making men ministers of it, in the doctrines held forth in it, in the manner in which it was spread in the world, in the opposition it met with, in the continuance and increase of it notwithstanding the power and cunning of men, and in the shortness of time, in which so much good was done by it in the several parts of the world: it is the power of God organically or instrumentally; as it is a means made use of by God in quickening dead sinners, enlightening blind eyes, unstopping deaf ears, softening hard hearts, and making of enemies friends; to which add, the manner in which all this is done, suddenly, secretly, effectually, and by love, and not force: the extent of this power is, *unto salvation*; the Gospel is a declaration and revelation of salvation by Christ, and is a means of directing and encouraging souls to lay hold upon it. The persons *to* whom it is so, are in general, *every one that believeth*: this does not suppose that faith gives the Gospel its virtue and efficacy; but is only descriptive of the persons to whom the Gospel, attended with the power and grace of God, is eventually efficacious: and particularly it was so, *to the Jew first*; who as they had formerly the advantage of the Gentiles, much every way, through the peculiar privileges which were conferred on them; so the Gospel was first preached to them by Christ and his disciples; and even when it was ordered to be carried into the Gentile world, it was to begin with them, and became effectual for the salvation of many of them: *and also to the Greek*; to the Gentile; for after the Jews had rejected it, as many being called by it as Jehovah thought fit, at that time, it was preached to the Gentiles with great success; which was the mystery hid from ages and generations past, but now made manifest.

Ver. 17. *For therein is the righteousness of God revealed*, &c.] By *the righteousness of God*, is not meant the essential righteousness of God, the rectitude of his nature, his righteousness in fulfilling his promises, and his punitive justice, which though revealed in the Gospel, yet not peculiar to it; nor the righteousness by which Christ himself is righteous, either as God, or as Mediator; but that righteousness which he wrought out by obeying the precepts, and bearing the penalty of the law in the room of his people, and by which

[e] Cornel. Nepos, l. 1. c. 2, 7. & 9, 3. & 3. 6. & 4. 1. & passim. Quint. Curtius, l. 3. c. 4, 7. & 6. 5. & passim.

they are justified in the sight of God: and this is called *the righteousness of God*, in opposition to the righteousness of men; and because it justifies men in the sight of God; and because of the concern which Jehovah, Father, Son, and Spirit, have in it. Jehovah the Father sent his Son to work it out, and being wrought out, he approves and accepts of it, and imputes it to his elect: Jehovah the Son is the author of it by his obedience and death; and Jehovah the Spirit discovers it to sinners, works faith in them to lay hold upon it, and pronounces the sentence of justification by it in their consciences. Now this is said to be *revealed* in the Gospel, that is, it is taught in the Gospel; that is the word of righteousness, the ministration of it; it is manifested in and by the Gospel. This righteousness is not known by the light of nature, nor by the law of Moses; it was hid under the shadows of the ceremonial law, and is brought to light only by the Gospel; it is hid from every natural man, even from the most wise and prudent, and from God's elect themselves before conversion, and is only made known to believers, to whom it is revealed: *from faith to faith*; that is, as say some, from the faith of God to the faith of men; from the faith of preachers to the faith of hearers; from the faith of the Old to the faith of the New Testament saints; or rather from one degree of faith to another; for faith, as it grows and increases, has clearer sights of this righteousness, as held forth in the Gospel. For the proof of this, a passage of Scripture is cited, *as it is written*, Hab. ii. 4. *the just shall live by faith*; a *just*, or righteous man is, not every one who thinks himself, or is thought by others to be so; nor are any so by their obedience to the law of works; but he is one that is made righteous by the righteousness of Christ imputed to him, which is before said to be revealed in the Gospel. The life which this man lives, and *shall live*, does not design a natural or corporeal life, and a continuance of that, for such die a natural death, as other men; nor an eternal life, for though they shall so live, yet not by faith; but a spiritual life, a life of justification on Christ, of holiness from him, of communion with him, and of peace and joy; which spiritual life shall be continued, and never be lost. The manner in which the just lives, is *by faith*. In the prophet Habakkuk, the words are, *the just shall live* באמונתו, *by his faith*; which the Septuagint render, *by my faith*: and the apostle only reads, *by faith*, omitting the affix, as well known, and easy to be supplied: for faith, when given by God, and exercised by the believer, is his own, and by it he lives; not upon it, but by it upon Christ the object of it; from whom, in a way of believing, he derives his spiritual life, and all the comforts of it.

Ver. 18. *For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven*, &c.] The apostle having hinted at the doctrine of justification by faith in the righteousness of Christ; and which he designed more largely to insist upon in this epistle, and to prove that there can be no justification of a sinner in the sight of God by the deeds of the law, in order to set this matter in a clear light, from hence, to the end of the chapter, and in the following ones, represents the sad estate and condition of the Gentiles with the law of nature, and of the Jews with the law of Moses; by which it most clearly appears, that neither of them could be justified by their obedience to the respective laws under which they were, but that they both stood in need of the righteousness of God. By *the wrath of God* is meant the displicency and indignation of God at sin and sinners; his punitive justice, and awful vengeance; the judgments which he executes in this world; and that everlasting displeasure of his, and wrath to come in another world, which all through sin are deserving of, some are appointed to, God's elect are delivered from, through Christ's sustaining it, in their room and stead, and which comes and abides on all impenitent and unbelieving persons. This is said to be *revealed*, where? not in the Gospel, in which the righteousness of God is revealed; unless the Gospel be taken for the books of the four Evangelists, or for the Gospel dispensation, or for that part of the ministry of a Gospel preacher, which represents the wrath of God as the desert of sin, the dreadfulness of it, and the way to escape it; for the Gospel, strictly taken, is grace, good news, glad tidings, and not wrath and damnation; though indeed in Christ's sufferings for the sins of his people, which the Gospel gives us an account of, there is a great display of the wrath of God, and of his indignation against sin: but this wrath of God is revealed in the law, it is known by the light of nature, and to be perceived in the law of Moses, and may be observed in the Scriptures, where are many instances and examples of divine wrath and displeasure; as in the punishment of the old world, the burning of Sodom and Gomorrah, turning Lot's wife into a pillar of salt, the plagues of Egypt, and the several instances mentioned in this chapter. This wrath is said to be God's wrath *from heaven*, by the awful blackness which covers the heavens, the storms and tempests raised in them, and by pouring down water or fire in a surprising manner, on the inhabitants of the world; or *from heaven*, that is, openly, manifestly, in the sight of all; or from God who is in heaven, and not from second causes; and more especially it will be revealed from heaven, when Christ shall descend from thence at the day of judgment: the subject-matter or object of it, *against*, or *upon* which it is revealed, are, *all ungodliness, and unrighteousness of men*; that is, all ungodly and unrighteous men; or all men who are guilty of ungodliness, the breach of the first table of the law, which respects the worship of God, and of unrighteousness, the breach of the second table of the law, which regards our neighbours' good: and these persons are further described as such, *who hold the truth in unrighteousness*; meaning either such who know the Gospel, which is *the truth*, and don't profess it openly, but hold and imprison it in their minds, which is a great piece of unrighteousness; or if they do profess it, don't live up to it in their lives: or rather the Gentile philosophers are designed, who are spoken of in the following verse; who had some knowledge of the truth of the divine Being, and his perfections, and of the difference between moral good and evil; but did not like to retain it themselves, nor communicate all they knew to others, nor did they live according to that knowledge which they had.

Ver. 19. *Because that which may be known of God*, &c.] There are some things which could not be known of God by the light of nature; as a trinity of persons in the Godhead; the knowledge of God in Christ as

Mediator; the God-man and Mediator Jesus Christ; his incarnation, sufferings, death, and resurrection; the will of God to save sinners by a crucified Jesus; the several peculiar doctrines of the Gospel, particularly the resurrection of the dead, and the manner of worshipping of God with acceptance: but then there are some things which may be known of God, without a revelation. Adam had a perfect knowledge of him; and his sons, though fallen, even the very Heathens have some notion of him, as that there is a God; and by the light of nature it might be known that there is but one God, who is glorious, full of majesty, and possessed of all perfections, as that he is all-powerful, wise, good and righteous: and this *is manifest in them*, or *to them*; by the light that is given them: it is light by which that which may be known of God is manifest; and this is the light of nature, which every man has that comes into the world; and this is internal, it is in him, in his mind and conscience, and is communicated to him by God, and that by infusion or inspiration; see Job xxxii. 8. *for God hath shewed* it *unto them*: what may be known of him by that light; and which is assisted and may be improved by a consideration of the works of creation and Providence.

Ver. 20. *For the invisible things of him*, &c.] Not the angels, the invisible inhabitants of heaven: nor the unseen glories of another world; nor the decrees of God; nor the persons in the Godhead; but the perfections of God, or his *properties*, as the Arabic version reads it; and which are explained by *his eternal power and Godhead*: these, *from the creation of the world are clearly seen*; this is no new discovery, but what men have had, and might, by the light of nature, have enjoyed ever since the world was created; these *being understood*, in an intellectual way, by the discursive faculty of the understanding, *by the things that are made*: the various works of creation; all which proclaim the being, unity, and perfections of God their Creator, *so that they are without excuse*; the very Heathens, who have only the light of nature, and are destitute of a revelation, have no colour or pretext for their idolatrous practices, and vicious lives; nor have they, nor will they have any thing to object to God's righteous judgment against them, or why they should not be condemned.

Ver. 21. *Because that when they knew God*, &c.] Though they had such a knowledge of the being and perfections of God, *yet they glorified him not as God*. They neither thought nor spoke honourably of him; nor did they ascribe those perfections to him, which belonged to him; they did not adhere to him as the one and only God, nor honour him as the Creator of all things out of nothing, and as the sole Governor of the universe; they did not glorify him by the internal exercise of fear of him, love to him, or trust in him, nor by any external worship suitable to his nature, and their own notions of him. Seneca is an instance of this, of whom Austin[f] says, "that he "worshipped what he found fault with, did what he "reproved, and adored that which he blamed." *Neither were thankful*: neither for the knowledge of things they had, which they ascribed to themselves; nor for their mercies, which they imputed to second causes: *but became vain in their imaginations*: the vanity of their minds was the spring and source of their evil conduct; which may design the wickedness of their hearts, and the imaginations thereof, which were evil, and that continually: the pride of their natures, the carnality and weakness of their reasonings, and the whole system of their vain philosophy; and hence they ran into polytheism, or the worshipping of many gods: *and their foolish heart was darkened*: where they thought their great wisdom lay: darkness is natural to the hearts and understandings of all men, which is increased by personal iniquity; Satan is concerned in improving it, and God sometimes gives up the hearts of persons to judicial blindness, which was the case of these men.

Ver. 22. *Professing themselves to be wise*, &c.] The learned men among the Gentiles first called themselves Σοφοι, *Sophi*, wise men: and afterwards, to cover their wretched pride and vanity, Φιλοσοφοι, *Philosophers*, lovers of wisdom; but notwithstanding all their arrogance, their large pretensions to wisdom, and boast of it, *they became fools*: they appeared to be so; they shewed themselves to be such in those very things they prided themselves with the knowledge of: as, for instance, Socrates, after he had asserted the unity of God, and is said to die a martyr for the truth; yet one of the last actions of his life was sacrificing a cock to Æsculapius, at least he desired his friend Crito to do it.

Ver. 23. *And changed the glory of the incorruptible God*, &c.] God is incorruptible and immortal in his nature, and so is opposed to all corruptible creatures and things: he has a glory which is essential to him, and a manifestative one in the creatures, and which is relative, and of right belongs to him: his absolute essential glory cannot be changed, cannot be taken away from him, nor given to another; but his relative glory may be said to be changed, when another is worshipped in his stead, and called by his name. So Philo the Jew[g] speaks of "some, who, leaving the true God, make to "themselves false ones, and impose the name of the in- "created and incorruptible upon created and corruptible "beings." *Into an image made like to corruptible man*: which was worshipped in different forms by the several nations of the world: and *to birds*; as the dove by the Samaritans, the hawk, the ibis, and others by the Egyptians: *and four-footed beasts*; as the ox, and other creatures: *and creeping things*; such as beetles, serpents, and others, by the same.

Ver. 24. *Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness*, &c.] Not by putting any into them, but by leaving them to the pollution of their nature; by withdrawing his providential restraints from them, and by giving them up to judicial hardness: *through the lusts of their own hearts*. The heart of man is the source of all wickedness; the lusts that dwell there are many, and these tend to *uncleanness* of one sort or another: by it here is meant particularly bodily uncleanness, since 'tis said they were given up *to dishonour their own bodies between themselves*: either alone, or with others; so that as they changed the glory of God, and dishonoured him, he left them to dishonour themselves

[f] De Civitate Dei, l. 6. c. 10.

[g] De Vita Mosis, l. 3. p. 678, 679.

by doing these things which were reproachful and scandalous to human nature.

Ver. 25. *Who changed the truth of God into a lie,* &c.] Not the truth of the Gospel, which they were unacquainted with; but that which might be known of God as true, and was known of them by the light of nature; or the true God himself, whom they *changed into a lie*: by ascribing to false deities, which were lying vanities, those things which were known of God; and by worshipping them instead of him: for they *worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator*; or *above him*, or *against him*, in opposition to him, or *besides him*, others along with him; or neglecting him, and not worshipping him at all; which is aggravated in that what they worshipped was a creature, either of their own, or of God's making, and whom they neglected was the Creator of them: *who is blessed for ever, Amen*: is blessed in himself, and the fountain of all blessedness to his creatures; which is so glaring a truth, that every one ought to say and set his *Amen* to it.

Ver. 26. *For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections,* &c.] Because of their idolatrous practices, God left them to very dishonourable actions, *sodomitical* ones, both among the men and women: *for even the women did change the natural use into that which is against nature*; either by prostituting themselves to, and complying with the *sodomitical* embraces of men, in a way that is against nature [h]; or by making use of such ways and methods with themselves, or other women, to gratify their lusts, which were never designed by nature for such an use: of these vicious women, and their practices, Seneca [i] speaks, when he says, *libidine vero nec maribus quidem cedunt, pati natæ: Dii illas Deæque, male perdant; adeo perversum commentæ, genus impudicitiæ, viros ineunt*: also Clemens Alexandrinus [k] has respect to such, saying, γυναικες ανδριζονται παρα φυσιν, γαμουμεναι τε και γαμουσαι γυναικες: and such there were among the Jews, whom they call נשים המסוללות זו בז [l], and whom the priests were forbidden to marry.

Ver. 27. *And likewise also the men leaving the natural use of the women,* &c.] The very sin of *sodomy* is here designed, so called from Sodom, the place where we first hear of it, Gen. xix. 14. the men of which place, because they *burned in their lust one towards another*, as these Gentiles are said to do, God rained upon them fire and brimstone from heaven: an exceeding great sin this is, contrary to nature, dishonourable to human nature, and scandalous to a people and nation among whom it prevails, as it did very much in the Gentile world, and among their greatest philosophers; even those that were most noted for moral virtue are charged with it, as Socrates, Plato, Zeno, and others [m]: it is a sin which generally prevails where idolatry and infidelity do, as among the Pagans of old, and among the Papists and Mahometans now; and never was it so rife in this nation as since the schemes of deism and infidelity have found such a reception among us. Thus God, because men dishonour him with their evil principles and practices, leaves them to reproach their own nature, and dishonour their own bodies: *men with men working that which is unseemly*; and of which nothing like it is to be observed in the brutal world: *receiving in themselves the recompence of their error, which was meet*: God punishes sin with sin: for as the Jews say [n], as "one commandment "draws on another, so one transgression draws on "another; for the reward of the commandment is the "commandment, ושכר עבירה עבירה, *and the reward "of transgression is transgression.*"

Ver. 28. *And even as they did not like,* &c.] This accounts for the justness of the divine procedure in leaving them to commit such scandalous iniquities; that since they had some knowledge of God by the light of nature, and yet did not care to *retain* God *in their knowledge*: or to own and acknowledge him as God, to worship and glorify him as such; but took every method to erase this knowledge out of their minds, and keep it from others: *God gave them over to a reprobate mind*; a vain empty mind, worthless, good for nothing devoid of all true knowledge and judgment; incapable of approving what is truly good, or of disapproving that which is evil; a mind that has lost all conscience of things, and is disapproved of by God, and all good men: *to do those things which are not convenient*; which are neither agreeably to the light of nature, nor convenient to, or becoming the honour of human nature; things which the brutes themselves, who are destitute of reason, do not do.

Ver. 29. *Being filled with all unrighteousness,* &c.] From hence, to the end of the chapter, follows a large and black list and catalogue of the sad characters of the Gentiles, and of the best men they had among them; for the apostle is all along speaking, not of the common people, but of their wise professors, and moral instructors; than which there never was a wickeder set of men that ever lived upon the face of the earth; who under the guise of morality were guilty of the greatest pride and covetousness, and of the most filthy debaucheries imaginable: they were *filled with all unrighteousness*. This word includes in it all manner of sin and wickedness in general; fitly expresses the condition of fallen men, destitute of a righteousness; designs every violation of the law respecting our neighbour; and is opposed to that vain conceit of righteousness which these men had: particular branches of it follow; as, *fornication*; which sometimes includes adultery and all unchastity; simple fornication was not reckoned a sin among the Gentiles: *wickedness*; or mischief, which intends not so much the internal wickedness of the heart, as that particular vice, by which a man is inclined and studies to do hurt to others, as Satan does: *covetousness*; this may intend every insatiable lust, and particularly the sin which goes by this name, and is the root of all evil, and was a reigning sin among the Gentiles. Seneca, the famous moralist, was notoriously guilty of this vice, being one of the greatest

[h] Vid. R. Sol Jarchi in Gen. xxiv. 16.
[i] Epist. 95.
[k] Pædagog. l. 3. p. 225.
[l] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 65. 2. Piske Tosaph. ib. artic. 266. Yevamot, fol. 76. 1. & Piske Tosaph. ib. art. 141. Maimonides in Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 7. sect. 4. & Hilchot Issure Bia, c. 21. sect. 8, 9.
[m] A. Gellius Noct. Attic. l. 2. c. 18. Laert. Vit. Philosoph. l. 2. in Vit. Socrat. & l. 3. in Vit. Platon.
[n] Pirke Abot, c. 4. sect. 2.

usurers that ever lived: *maliciousness;* the word denotes either the iniquity of nature in which men are conceived and born; or that desire of revenge in men, for which some are very notorious: *envy;* at the superior knowledge and learning, wealth and riches, happiness, and outward prosperity of others: *murder:* which sometimes arose from envy, wherefore they are put together. There's an elegant *paranomasia* in the Greek text: *debate;* strife about words more than things, and more for vain glory, and a desire of victory, than for truth: *deceit;* through their empty notions of philosophy; hence *philosophy and vain deceit* go together, Col. ii. 8. making large pretences to morality, when they were the vilest of creatures: *malignity;* moroseness; having no courteousness nor affability in them, guilty of very ill manners; as particularly they were who were of the sect of the Cynics. Now they are said to be *filled with,* and *full of,* these things; not filled by God, but by Satan and themselves; and it denotes the aboundings of wickedness in them, and which was insatiable. The apostle goes on to describe them, as *whisperers;* who made mischief among friends, by privately suggesting, and secretly insinuating things into the mind of one to the prejudice of another.

Ver. 30. *Backbiters,* &c.] Who more publicly defamed the characters of their neighbours, and hurt their good name, credit and reputation, though behind their backs: *haters of God;* some read it, *hated of God;* as all workers of iniquity are; but rather this expresses their sin, that they were deniers of the being and providence of God, and shewed themselves to be enemies to him by their evil works: *despiteful;* both by opprobrious words, and injurious actions: *proud;* of their natural knowledge, learning, eloquence and vain philosophy: *boasters;* of their parts, abilities, wisdom and works; all which they attributed to themselves, and to the sharpness of their wit, their sagacity and industry: *inventors of evil things;* of evil schemes of morality and philosophy, and of evil practices, as well as principles: *disobedient to parents;* which was acting contrary to the light of nature.

Ver. 31. *Without understanding,* &c.] Of God, of his nature and worship, of things divine and even moral, being given up to a reprobate mind: *covenant-breakers;* had no regard to private or public contracts: *without natural affection;* to their parents, children, relations and friends: *implacable;* when once offended there was no reconciling of them: *unmerciful;* had no pity and compassion to persons in distress.

Ver. 32. *Who knowing the judgment of God,* &c.] Either of the law of God, the law and light of nature, by which they might in some measure know the difference between good and evil, and what was right and wrong; or the judiciary sentence of God against sin; *that they which commit such things are worthy of death;* at least of corporeal death: *not only do the same, but have pleasure in those that do them;* all which greatly aggravated their wickedness, since they sinned against light and knowledge, with approbation and good-liking of their own sins, and took pleasure in the sins of others. The Jews have a saying [p], "that no man is suspected "of a thing but he has done it; and if he has not done "the whole of it, he has done part of it, and if he has "not done part of it, he has thought in his heart to "do it, and if he has not thought in his heart to do "it, ראה אחרים שעשו ושמח, *he has seen others do "it, and has rejoiced.*" And if such a man is a wicked man, how much more wicked are such who commit sin themselves, and delight in the sins of others? now from this whole account we see the insufficiency of the light of nature to guide persons in the way of salvation; what need there was of a divine revelation: and how impossible it is that such men should ever be justified before God, by any works of seeming righteousness done by them; which the apostle had in view, in giving this account of the depraved nature and conduct of the Gentiles, and of those among them who professed to be, and were the wisest and most knowing of them.

CHAP. II.

THIS chapter contains, in general, a vindication of the justice and equity of the divine procedure against men, such as are described in the preceding chapter; and a refutation of the several pleas that might be made by the Gentiles, who had not the law, and by the Jews who had it; and concludes with exposing the wickedness of the latter, and with shewing who they are that are properly Jews, and circumcised persons, in the account of God. It begins, in ver. 1. with an inference deduced from what had been said in the latter part of the foregoing chapter; concluding that such, be they who they will, Jews or Gentiles, are inexcusable, who do the things they condemn others for: but though the judgment of such persons is wrong, the apostle observes, ver. 2. that the judgment of God, in the condemnation of them, is right, of which he, and others, were fully assured; and which judgment is commended, by the rule of it, being according to truth; by the objects of it, criminals, who are left without excuse, and by the inevitableness of it, ver. 3. being such as cannot possibly be escaped: and though some men might hope to escape it, because not immediately punished, but loaded with the blessings of Providence, and peculiar benefits of divine goodness; yet this was to be ascribed to the forbearance of God for the present; and that if these favours were despised, and they had not a good effect upon them to bring to repentance, but instead thereof were more and more hardened under them, as their guilt would be increased, so wrath would be secretly laying up for them, which will be revealed in the day of judgment, ver. 4, 5. at which time justice will be done to every man as his works will be found to be, ver. 6. then follows a description of the several sorts of persons

[p] T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 18. 2.

that will be judged, and of the different things that will be their portion: as that eternal life will be given to good men, ver. 7. and the wrath of God poured down on bad men, whether they be Jews or Gentiles, ver. 8, 9. The happiness of good men is repeated again, and explained, and promised to the Jew first, and then to the Gentile, ver. 10. and a reason given of this just and equal distribution, taken from the nature of God, who is no respecter of persons, ver. 11. an instance of which is produced in both Jews and Gentiles, that sin; the one perishing with, the other without the law, ver. 12. since it is not barely having and hearing the law, but acting up to it, which only can justify before God, ver. 13. upon which the apostle proceeds to refute the plea that might be made by the Gentiles, in favour of themselves, why they should not be condemned, taken from their not having the written law; for though they had not the law written on tables of stone, as the Jews had, yet they had, as he observes, the law of nature written on their hearts, against which they sinned: this he proves by the effects of it, discernible in many of them by their outward lives and conversations, in conformity to the law; and by the inward testimony of their consciences, approving of good deeds, and reproaching for bad ones, ver. 14, 15. which two verses being put into a parenthesis, ver. 16. is connected with ver. 13. and points at the time when the doers of the law shall be justified, even at the day of judgment: which judgment is described by the author of it, God; by the subject of it, the secrets of men's hearts; by the person employed in the divine procedure, Jesus Christ; and by the evidence and certainty of it, the Gospel preached by the apostle: and then follow a description of the Jews, an account of their profession of religion, and an ironical concession of the several characters they assumed to themselves: they are described by their name, a Jew; by their religion, which lay in trusting in the law of Moses, and in boasting of their interest in God, as the God of Israel, ver. 17. by their knowledge of the will of God, and approbation of the excellent things of his law, ver. 18. and by the characters they took to themselves, ver. 19, 20. from which the apostle takes an occasion to expose the wickedness of some of their principal men, even their teachers, ver. 21, 22. by whose wicked lives and conversations God was dishonoured, and his name blasphemed among the Gentiles, ver. 23, 24. hence it appears, that their name, profession, and character, would not justify them before God; wherefore the apostle goes on, to remove their plea taken from circumcision, shewing that could be of no use to them, but became void through their breach of the law, ver. 25. and that, on the other hand, an uncircumcised Gentile, by keeping the law from right principles, and to a right end, appeared to be the true circumcision, ver. 26. wherefore the circumcised Jew that broke the law, stood condemned by the uncircumcised Gentile that fulfilled it; so far was circumcision from being any part of his justification, or a plea in favour of it, ver. 27. Then the apostle concludes the chapter, by giving a definition of a real Jew, and of true circumcision; which he does first negatively, that it is not any thing external that makes him a Jew, or any thing in the flesh that is right circumcision; but secondly, positively, that it is an inward work of grace that denominates a man a Jew, in a spiritual sense, or an Israelite indeed; and that it is the circumcision of the heart, which is wrought by the spirit of God, that is true and genuine: and such a Jew, and such a circumcision, are approved of by God, and commended by him, when the other have only praise of men, ver. 28, 29. and therefore, however such persons may be justified before men, they cannot be justified in the sight of God; which is the drift and design of the apostle in the whole.

Ver. 1. *Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man,* &c.] Some think, from the connexion of these words with the preceding chapter, that the Gentiles are here meant; and particularly those among them who seemed to be virtuous, and took upon them to be the reprovers of others, and yet did the same things themselves, as Socrates, Cato, Seneca, and others; and therefore must be inexcusable, because they knew better, and would be thought to have been so; wherefore such could never be justified before God by their works, but might be justly condemned by him, nor shall they escape his righteous judgment. Others think the Jews are meant, who despised and condemned the Gentiles, and thought themselves to be righteous persons, and justified in the sight of God; and who, though they were secretly guilty of many abominable iniquities, yet were very severe upon the sins of others, and therefore inexcusable: others think that magistrates are designed, whether among Jews or Gentiles, who reprove and punish sin in others, and therefore must be supposed to know the law, and the nature of sin, and so are inexcusable and self-condemned when they do the same things; wherefore though they may pass with impunity among men, they shall not escape the judgment of God. Rather the words respect every man, of whatsoever nation, office, or place; and may be particularly applied to hypocrites, and seem designed to correct censoriousness, and hasty judging, and to throw confusion on such who value themselves on being the censurers and reprovers of others: *whosoever thou art that judgest;* whether a Jew or a Gentile, a public magistrate or a private person: *for wherein thou judgest another;* that is, in what case or instance; the Complutensian edition and the Arabic version read, *in* or *with what judgment thou judgest another;* as in Matt. vii. 2. see the note there, *thou condemnest thyself;* by judging them: *for thou that judgest dost the same things;* art guilty of the same thing condemned in others, and therefore must be self-condemned.

Ver. 2. *But we are sure that the judgment of God,* &c.] By *the judgment of God,* is not meant what is exercised on and towards men in this life, but what will follow after death; which is called judgment to come, is represented as certain, will be universal as to persons and things, and is here called *the judgment of God,* in opposition to the judgment of men; and because it will be carried on by God only, who is omniscient and omnipotent, and will be definitive: this *is* and will be, *according to truth, against them which commit such things;* in opposition to all hypocrisy and unrighteousness: and it may design the law and light

of nature by which the Gentiles, the law of Moses by which the Jews, and the Gospel of Christ by which all have enjoyed the Gospel revelation, will be judged; or the truth of their own consciences in them all: now we may be sure of this judgment; and of its being according to truth, from reason, from Scripture, and from the being and perfections of God.

Ver. 3. *And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same,* &c.] Some men may be so vain as to imagine, that though they do the same things which they condemn in others, they *shall escape the judgment of God*: but such will find themselves most sadly mistaken; there's no avoiding the general judgment; all men must come to it; there will be no eluding it through craftiness and deceit, through bribery and corruption; there will be no escaping condign punishment, through might in the criminal, or through the judge's ignorance of his crimes, or want of ability and power to punish.

Ver. 4. *Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness,* &c.] The apostle anticipates an objection against what he had said, taken from the prosperity of these persons; who might conclude from thence, that they were not so wicked as he had represented them; and that they should escape the judgment of God, otherwise they would have been punished by God in this life, and not have prospered as they did; which objection is removed by observing, that it was not their innocence, but *the riches of* divine *goodness, and long-suffering and forbearance*, which were the causes of their prosperity: by *the riches of* God's *goodness*, are not meant the riches of his special, spiritual, and eternal goodness, which his own people are only partakers of: but the general riches of his temporal and providential goodness, which the men of the world have commonly the greatest share of; they have it in great plenty, which is signified by *riches*: and by his *long-suffering* and *forbearance* are designed, not his forbearance of his chosen ones and his long-suffering to them, which issue in their salvation; but his forbearance of sinners, and long-suffering towards them, in not as yet pouring down his wrath and displeasure on them; all which are *despised* by them; *the riches of* his goodness, when he is not glorified for his providential mercies, and in them, and when these are abused to the lusts of men. The *forbearance* of God is despised, when men on account of it harden themselves in sin; and his *long-suffering*, when they deny his concern in Providence, or a future judgment, and promise themselves impunity. Moreover, the apostle obviates the above objection by asserting that God's end in his goodness, forbearance, and long-suffering, was not to testify to their innocence, as they imagined, but to lead them to repentance, of which they were ignorant; *not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance.* This is to be understood not of a spiritual and evangelical repentance, which is a free-grace gift, and which none but the spirit of God can lead, or bring persons to; but of a natural and legal repentance, which lies in an external sorrow for sin, and in an outward cessation from it, and reformation of life and manners, which the goodness of God to the Jews should have led them to; who had a large share of the good things of life, a land flowing with milk and honey, and many outward privileges which other nations had not, as the giving of the law, the covenant and promises, the word and ordinances; and repentance here chiefly designs, as it may respect the Gentiles, a change of mind and practice in them relating to idolatry and superstition. Now the providential goodness of God has a tendency to lead persons to repentance on this account; but of this end of divine goodness the Gentiles were ignorant; nor was this end answered thereby; which shews the wretched depravity of human nature; see Acts xiv. 15, 16, 17.

Ver. 5. *But after thy hardness and impenitent heart,* &c.] The apostle goes on to shew, that such persons who promise themselves impunity on the score of prosperity, shall not always go unobserved and unpunished; for there is a day of wrath and righteous judgment hastening on, and will take place after they have filled up the measure of their iniquity. There is a natural *hardness* of the heart in every son and daughter of Adam; and there is an acquired habitual hardness, which is increased by sinning; and a judicial one, which God, for sin, sometimes gives persons up unto. An *impenitent heart* is not only an heart which does not repent, but such an one as cannot repent, being harder than the nether millstone. Now men, by such hardness and impenitence, *treasure up unto* themselves *wrath*: they are the authors of their own destruction; by which is meant the wrath of God, in opposition to the riches of his goodness, despised by them: and is in reserve for wicked men: and is laid up *against*, and will be brought forth in *the day of wrath*; which the Scriptures call *the evil day*; the day fixed by God, when he will call men to an account for their sins, and stir up all his wrath against them: *and revelation*; that is, the day of revelation, when Christ shall be revealed from heaven in flames of fire, the sins of men shall be revealed, and the wrath of God against them: *and the righteous judgment of God*; so some copies read; that is, the day of the righteous judgment; so the Arabic version reads, *and of the appearance of God, and of his righteous judgment*: for the judgment will be at the appearance of Christ, who is God, and at his kingdom, 2 Tim. iv. 1. The Alexandrian copy reads, *and of the retribution of the righteous judgment of God*; and so the Ethiopic version seems to have read, rendering the words, *if so*, or *seeing thy retribution may come upon thee*, and *if the judgment of God may befall thee*; for when the judgment of God shall come, as there will be a revelation of men's sins, and of the wrath of God against them, there will be a just retribution according to their works. Or *the revelation of the righteous judgment of God*; that is, when the judgment of God, which is now hid, shall appear; and which is said to be *righteous*, because it will be carried on in a righteous manner, and proceed upon, and be executed according to the strictest rules of justice and equity.

Ver. 6. *Who will render to every man according to his deeds.*] God will be the Judge, who is righteous, holy, just, and true; every man in particular will be judged; as the judgment will be general to all, it will be special to *every* one, and will proceed according to their works; for God will render to wicked men according to their

demerit of their sins, the just recompense of reward, eternal damnation; and to good men eternal life, not according to the merit of their good works, which have none in them, but according to the nature of them; such who believe in Christ, and perform good works from a principle of grace, shall receive the reward of the inheritance, which is a reward of grace, and not of debt. In other words, God will render to evil men according to the true desert of their evil deeds; and of his own free grace will render to good men, whom he has made so by his grace, what is suitable and agreeable to those good works, which, by the assistance of his grace, they have been enabled to perform.

Ver. 7. *To them who by patient continuance in well-doing*, &c.] These words are descriptive of one sort of persons, to whom God will render according to their works; and must be understood not of the Gentiles, the best and most moralized among them; for they sought after worldly things, after human wisdom, and popular applause, and not after God, his honour and glory, nor after immortality, which is only brought to light by the Gospel; nor of the pharisaical Jews, who sought for righteousness by the works of the law, and honour and glory from men, and not from God; nor of any unregenerate persons, but only of such who have the true principles of grace implanted in them, whether Jews or Gentiles: now the things which these men seek after are *glory*; not the glory of this world, nor any from the men of it; but the glory of God and Christ; to be glorious within and without, by the grace and righteousness of Christ here, and to enjoy eternal glory with him hereafter. *Honour*; not that which Adam had in innocence, and did not abide in; but that which is, and abides with Christ, and which all the saints have, and shall have. *Immortality*; not the immortality of the soul, which is common to all; but the incorruption of the body, or the glorious resurrection of it to everlasting life at the great day, or the incorruptible crown, and never-fading inheritance of the saints in light. The manner in which these things are sought is, *by patient continuance in well-doing*; by doing good works, and by doing these good works well, from a principle of faith and love, and with a view to the glory of God; and by patiently enduring reproaches and sufferings for well-doing, and by persevering therein: not that these things are to be had, or are expected by the saints to be had for the sake of patience and well-doing; yet they may be sought for, and looked unto, as an encouragement to well-doing, and continuance therein; and though not *for*, yet *in* well-doing there is a reward. These words do not express that for the sake of which glory is had; but only describe the persons who seek, and the manner in which they seek for it, to whom God will render *eternal life*, which he of his rich grace promised them before the world was, and of his free favour has put into the hands of Christ for them, and which, as a pure gift of grace, he bestows on them through him.

Ver. 8. *But unto them that are contentious*, &c.] This is a description of the other sort of persons to whom God will render according to their deeds, *who are of the contention*; who contend for victory, and not truth; strive about words to no profit; are quarrelsome, and sow discord among men, and in churches; *and do not obey the truth*; neither attend to the light of nature, and to that which may be known of God by it; nor regard and submit to the Gospel revelation; and so design both the Gentiles, which knew not God, and Jews, and others, who obey not the Gospel: *but obey unrighteousness*; are servants of sin: to these God renders *indignation and wrath*; wrathful or fiery indignation, the hottest of his fury.

Ver. 9. *Tribulation and anguish*, &c.] These, with the foregoing words, are expressive of the second death, the torments of hell, the worm that never dies, and the fire that is not quenched: which will fall *upon every soul of man that doth evil*; whose course of life and conversation is evil; for *the soul that sins shall die*; unless satisfaction is made for his sins by the blood of Christ: *of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile*; no regard being had to what nation they belong.

Ver. 10. *But glory, honour, and peace*, &c.] Which are so many words for the everlasting happiness of the saints; which is a *crown of glory* that fadeth not away; an honour exceeding that of the greatest potentates upon earth, since such that enjoy it will be kings and priests, and sit with Christ on his throne to all eternity; and is a peace that passes all understanding: all which will be rendered *to every man that doth good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile*; which none without Christ, and his grace, and by the strength of nature, does, or can do; not that good works are causes of salvation, but are testimonies of faith, and fruits of grace, with which salvation is connected, whether they be found in Jews or Gentiles; for neither grace nor salvation are peculiar to any nation, or set of people.

Ver. 11. *For there is no respect of persons with God.*] It won't come into consideration, at the day of judgment, of what nation men are; or from what parents they are descended; nor of what age and sex persons be; nor in what state and condition they have lived in this world; nor will it be asked to what sect they have belonged, and by what denomination they have been called; or whether they have conformed to such and such externals and rituals in religion; but only whether they are righteous men or sinners; and accordingly as they appear under these characters, judgment will proceed. Some object from hence, though without any reason, to the doctrine of particular election of certain persons to everlasting salvation. This passage respects matters of strict justice, and is a forensic expression relating to courts of judicature, where persons presiding are to have no regard to the faces of men, but do that which is strictly just between man and man; and does not respect matters of grace and free favour, such as giving alms, forgiving debts, &c. A judge, as such, is to regard no man's person, but to proceed in matters before him, according to the rules of law and justice; should he do otherwise, he would be chargeable with being a respecter of persons; but then he may bestow alms on what objects he pleases; and forgive one man who is personally indebted to him, and not another, without any such imputation. This, applied to the case in hand, abundantly clears it; for though God, as a Judge, respects no man's

person; yet in matters of grace he distinguishes one person from another, as it is plain he does by the bounties of his Providence. Besides, God is not bound to any person by any laws, but acts as a Sovereign; he is not moved by any thing in the creature; as his choice is not confined to persons of any particular nation, family, sex, or condition, so neither does it proceed upon any thing, or a foresight of any thing in them, or done by them; and as there is no worthiness in them that are chosen, and saved above others, so no injury is done to the rest: add to all this, that those that are saved by virtue of electing grace, are saved in a way of righteousness agreeably to the holy law, and strict justice of God; so that no complaint can be made against the distinguishing methods of grace, upon the foot of strict justice.

Ver. 12. *For as many as have sinned without law*, &c.] This is an instance of the strict justice of God, and proves him to be no respecter of persons; for the Gentiles, who were *without law*, the written law of Moses, not without the law of nature in their breasts, nor without some civil laws and statutes of their own; inasmuch as they *sinned* against the God of nature, and the law and light of nature, they *shall also perish without law*: not that their condemnation and perdition will be illegal, or not in due course of law; but it will not proceed upon, or according to the law of Moses, they never had; and much less for not believing in Christ, of whom they never heard; but their perdition will be for their sins committed without the law of Moses, against the law of nature: their not having the written law of Moses will be no plea in their favour, or be a reason why they should not be condemned; their persons will not be regarded as with or without the law, but their sins committed by them, to which facts their consciences will bear witness: *and*, so on the other hand, *as many as have sinned in the law*: who have been in and under the law of Moses, and have sinned against it, meaning the Jews: *shall be judged by the law*; and condemned by it, as they were in this world, and will be hereafter: their having this law will be no bar against their condemnation, but rather an aggravation of it; their hearing of it will be no plea in their favour; nor their doing of it neither, unless they could have done it to perfection; for perfect obedience it requires, as a justifying righteousness, otherwise it curses, condemns, and adjudges to death.

Ver. 13. *For not the hearers of the law* are *just before God*, &c.] The apostle here shews, that the Jews were justly condemned, notwithstanding their having and hearing of the law; since hearing without doing it, will never denominate persons righteous in the sight of God, however it might recommend them in the sight of men: regard seems to be had either to the first delivery of the law by Moses to the people of Israel, when he read it to them, and they hearkened to it, and promised obedience; or rather to the reading and hearing it every sabbath-day; and may include a speculative knowledge of it, without a practical obedience to it; and which therefore must fall greatly short of entitling them to a justifying righteousness; since not these, *but the doers of the law, shall be justified*: by whom are meant, not such who merely literally and externally fulfil the law, as they imagine; for the law is spiritual, and regards the inward as well as the outward man, and requires internal holiness, as well as external obedience; and the apostle is speaking of justification before God, who sees the heart, and not before men, who judge according to outward appearance: nor are such designed who are imperfect doers of the law; for the law requires a perfect obedience, and what is not perfect is not properly righteousness; nor does it, nor can it consider an imperfect righteousness as a perfect one; for it accuses of, pronounces guilty, curses, and condemns for every transgression of it. But such only can be intended, who are doers of it spiritually, internally, as well as externally, and that perfectly. Adam, in his state of innocence, was a perfect doer of the law; he sinning, and all his posterity in him, none of them are righteous, but all pass under a sentence of condemnation. The best of men, even believers in Christ, are not without sin in themselves; and when any of the saints are said to be perfect, it must be understood in a comparative sense, or as they are considered in Christ. There never was but one since Adam, and that is Christ, who has fulfilled, or could perfectly fulfil the law; the thing is impossible and impracticable for fallen man: hence these words must be understood either hypothetically, thus, not the hearers of the law, but if there were any perfect doers of it, they would be justified before God; or else of such persons who are considered in Christ, by whom the whole perfect righteousness of the law is fulfilled in them, and who may be reckoned as perfect doers of it in him, their substitute, surety, and representative.

Ver. 14. *For when the Gentiles which have not the law*, &c.] The objection of the Gentiles against their condemnation, taken from their being without the law, is here obviated. The apostle owns that they had not the law, that is, the written law of Moses, and yet intimates that they had, and must have a law, against which they sinned, and so deserved punishment, and which they in part obeyed; for these men *do by nature the things contained in the law*. The matter and substance of the moral law of Moses agrees with the law and light of nature; and the Gentiles in some measure, and in some sort, did these things *by nature*: not that men by the mere strength of nature, without the grace of God, can fulfil the law, or do any thing that is acceptable to God; and indeed, what these men did was merely natural and carnal, and so unacceptable to God. Some understand this of nature assisted by grace, in converted Gentiles, whether before or after the coming of Christ; others expound the phrase, *by nature*, freely, willingly, in opposition to the servile spirit of the Jews, in their obedience to the law; though it rather seems to design the dictates of natural reason, by which they acted: and so *these having not the law*, the written law, *are a law to themselves*; which they have by nature and use, and which natural reason dictates to them. So Plato distinguishes the law "into written and unwritten[q]; the written law is that which was used in "commonwealths; and that κατὰ ἔθη γινόμενος, *which was*

[q] Laertii Vit. Philosoph. l. 3. in Vita Platon.

"*according to custom* or nature, was called unwritten, "such as not to go to market naked, nor to be clothed "with women's clothes; which things were not for- "bidden by any law, but these were not done because "forbidden by the unwritten law; which he calls unwritten, because not written on tables, or with ink; otherwise it was written in their minds, and which by nature and use they were accustomed to.

Ver. 15. *Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts*, &c.] Though the Gentiles had not the law in form, written on tables, or in a book, yet they had *the work*, the matter, the sum and substance of it in their minds; as appears by the practices of many of them, in their external conversation. The moral law, in its purity and perfection, was written on the heart of Adam in his first creation; was sadly obliterated by his sin and fall; upon several accounts, and to answer various purposes, a system of laws was written on tables of stone for the use of the Israelites; and in regeneration the law is reinscribed on the hearts of God's people; and even among the Gentiles, and in their hearts, there are some remains of the old law and light of nature, which as by their outward conduct appears, so by the inward motions of their minds, *their conscience also bearing witness*: for, as the Jews say[r], נשמתו של אדם מעידה בו, *the soul of a man witnesses in him*: for, or against him: *and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another*; and this the Heathens themselves acknowledge, when they[s] speak of "ταμειον δικαστηριον και κριτηριον της συνειδησεως, *the conclave*, "*tribunal and judgment of conscience*; and which they "call δικαστην δικαιοτατον, *the most righteous judge*; whose "judgment reason receives, and gives its suffrage to, "whether worthy of approbation or reproof; when "it reads in the memory as if written on a table the "things that are done, and then beholding the law as "an exemplar, pronounces itself either worthy of ho- "nour or dishonour."

Ver. 16. *In the day when God shall judge*, &c.] These words are to be read in connexion with ver. 13. and express the time when both Jews and Gentiles will be judged, called a *day*, both because of the clearness and evidence of the judgment that will be made, and because a certain time is fixed, though not known, which will surely come; also the matter of the judgment, which will be, *the secrets of men*: whether good or bad, which are only known to God and themselves, and which may have been done ignorantly by them; *for God shall bring every work into judgment with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil*, Eccl. xii. 14. which is so interpreted by the Jews[t], "when R. Jochanan came to that Scripture, he "wept; *for God shall bring every work into judgment* "*with every secret thing*;" upon which the gloss says, yea, for those things which are hidden from him, which he has committed through ignorance, will he bring him into judgment; every thing, even the least thing in a literal sense, but not for such silly trifling things they mention in the same place; doubtless the Holy Ghost means the secrets of men's hearts and actions, and the hidden things of darkness which are contrary to the holy law of God. The person by whom this awful judgment will be carried on is, *Jesus Christ*: to whom all judgment is committed, who is ordained Judge of quick and dead, and is every way fit for that office, being God as well as man, and so both omniscient and omnipotent: and this the apostle says will be, *according to my Gospel*: his meaning is not that the Gospel will be the rule of judgment, because he is speaking of the judgment of the Gentiles, as well as of the Jews, who never heard of the Gospel; but that what he had said concerning a day of judgment, of Christ's being the Judge, and of God's judging by him the secrets of men, were as true and as certain as the Gospel which he preached was; and was *conformable*, or agreeable to it, as the Arabic version reads it, and might be learned and proved from it. This he calls, *my Gospel*; not because the author or subject of it; but because it was committed to his trust, and was preached by him; and in opposition to, and to distinguish it from the Gospel of the false apostles. Eusebius says[u], that the Apostle Paul had used to call the Gospel according to Luke his Gospel, and that it is said, that whenever he makes mention of his Gospel, he designs that.

Ver. 17. *Behold, thou art called a Jew*, &c.] From hence to the end of the chapter the Jews are particularly addressed; their several privileges and characters are commemorated, which by an ironical concession are allowed them; several charges are brought against them, even against their principal men; and the plea in favour of them, from their circumcision, is considered; and the apostle's view in the whole, is to shew that they could not be justified before God by their obedience to the law of Moses: *behold*: take notice, observe it, this will be granted: *thou art called a Jew*; thou art one by name, by nation, and by religion; but no name, nor outward religion, nor a mere profession, will justify before God: *and restest in the law*: which may be understood of their having the law and the knowledge of it, what is to be done and avoided easily, without any fatigue and labour; of their pleasing and applauding themselves with the bare having and hearing of it; of their trust and confidence in it; and of their inactivity and security in it, as persons asleep; and so of their coming short of the knowledge of the Gospel, and of Christ the end of the law for righteousness, their whole confidence being placed in that: so the Targumist in Jer. viii. 8. paraphrases the words, "we are wise, *and in the law of the Lord*, אנרנא רחיצין, "*do we trust*;" *and makest thy boast of God*. There is a right boasting of God in opposition to boasting in the creature, when men ascribe all the blessings of nature and grace to the Lord alone, and praise him for all their enjoyments, temporal and spiritual; and when they trust in, and glory, and make their boast of Christ as the Lord their righteousness, in whom alone they are, and can be justified. But the boasting here spoken of, was such that was not right; these men boasted of their bare external knowledge of the one God, when the Gentiles around them were ignorant of him; of their being the covenant people of God, when others were aliens and strangers; and of their having the word

[r] T. Bab. Chagigah, fol. 16. 1. & Taanith, fol. 11. 1.
[s] Hierocles in Carmina Pythagor. p. 81, 206, 209, 213, 214.
[t] T. Bab. Chagigah, fol. 5. 1.
[u] Eccles. Hist. l. 3. c. 4. p. 73.

and worship of the true God, which other nations were unacquainted with; and on these external things they depended, which was their fault.

Ver. 18. *And knowest his will*, &c.] Not the secret will or purpose of God; nor his revealed will in the Gospel, for of this they were ignorant; but his declared will in the law, shewing what is to be done, and what is not to be done: to know which in express terms was a privilege, that other people had not; but then the bare knowledge of this will be of no avail: for persons may know their Lord's will, as the Jews did, and not do it, and so be worthy to be beaten with many stripes: *and approvest the things that are more excellent*: or *triest the things that differ*: from one another, and from the will and law of God; or as the Syriac, *discernest* ולירתא, *things that are convenient*; agreeable, which are fit and ought to be done: and having tried and discerned them, they approved of them in their judgment as the things more excellent; but then they did not put these excellent things in practice which they approved of; and the knowledge and approbation they had of these things, arose from their being *instructed out of the law*, and not the Gospel; for the excellent things of the Gospel, they had no discerning, knowledge and approbation of; see Phil. i. 10.

Ver. 19. *And art confident that thou thyself*, &c.] Being vainly puffed up in their fleshly minds, they were strongly persuaded that they were very fit persons to be a *guide to the blind*: all men are by nature blind, as to the knowledge of divine and spiritual things; the meaner sort of the people among the Jews seem to be intended here; or else the ignorant Gentiles, whom the Jews were very fond of making proselytes to their religion and laws; but miserable guides were they, whether to their own people, or others; blind guides of the blind. Gospel ministers best deserve this title: *a light of them that are in darkness*; so Christ, John the Baptist, the disciples of Christ, and all Gospel ministers are; but these men, who arrogated such characters to themselves, were dim lights, and dark lanterns. The apostle seems to have respect to those very high and exalted characters the Jews give of their doctors, as when they call one, בוצינא דנהורא, *the lamp of light*[w]; another, בוצינא קדישא, *the holy lamp*[x]; and a third, נר ישראל, *the lamp of Israel*[y]; with many others of the same kind; see the notes on Matt. v. 14. and John v. 35.

Ver. 20. *An instructor of the foolish*, &c.] All men in a state of unregeneracy are foolish, and need instruction; here the common people among the Jews, who knew not the law, are meant; it was very usual to call any one of their doctors and masters מורה, *an instructor*: it follows, *a teacher of babes*: either in age or in understanding; such who taught either of them were called by the Jews מלמדי תינוקות, *teachers of babes*. Thus they paraphrase the text in Dan. xii. 3. "*they that be wise, shall shine as the brightness of the* "*firmament*. This is the Judge who judges the "judgment of truth truly, and the collectors of alms: "*and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars* "*for ever and ever*; these are, מלמדי תנוקות, *the* "*teachers of babes*[z]." Though these are said[a] to be inferior to the wise men, or doctors: *which hast the form of knowledge, and of the truth in the law*: they had not a true knowledge of the law; only a draught and scheme, the outward form of the law, and a mere shadow and appearance of the knowledge of the truth of it. From hence the apostle would have it concluded, that though the Jews had the law, and in some sense knew it, yet inasmuch as they did not perform it, they could not be justified by it; and that even their teachers, their greatest masters and doctors, were very deficient, as appears from what follows; and since they could not be justified by it, who taught others the knowledge of it, the hearers of it could not expect justification from it.

Ver. 21. *Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself?* &c.] Several charges are here brought against the Jews, even against their teachers; for though they are put by way of question, they are to be considered as so many assertions and matters of fact; thus, though they taught others, they did not *teach themselves*; they were blind leaders of the blind; they were ignorant of the law, of the spirituality of it; they were desirous to be teachers of the law, understanding neither what they said, nor whereof they affirmed: they were ignorant of the righteousness of God, of whom they boasted; and of the more excellent things of Moses, and the prophets, they pretended to explain; and of the Messiah, of whom their prophecies so much spoke: and besides, what they did understand and teach, they did not practise themselves; than which nothing is more shameful, or more betrays stupidity and ignorance; for as they themselves[b] say, "he that *teaches* "men, בדבר שהוא לא יעשה, *that which he himself does* "*not do*, is like a blind man who has a lamp in his "hand, and enlightens others, but he himself walks in "darkness." And such teachers they own were among them. "Beautiful (say they[c]) are the words which "come out of the mouths of them that do them: Ben "Assai was a beautiful preacher, but did not well observe;" *i. e.* to do what he said. *Thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal?* some understand this figuratively, of stealing, or taking away the true sense of the law, and putting a false one upon it; of which these men were notoriously guilty: but rather, it is to be understood literally, not only of the inward desires and motions of their minds after this sin, and of their consenting to, and conniving at theft and robbery, but of their doing it themselves; who, under pretence of long prayers, *devoured widows' houses*: plundered and robbed them of their substance: no wonder that these men preferred Barabbas, a thief and a robber, to Jesus Christ.

Ver. 22. *Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery*, &c.] Adultery here is to be taken not figuratively for adulterating the word of God, and mixing it with their own inventions; but literally for the sin of adultery, and that not in heart only, but in act: *dost thou commit adultery?* an iniquity which greatly prevailed

[w] T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 17. 1.
[x] Zohar passim.
[y] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 28. 2.
[z] T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 8. 2. & 21. 1, 2. Maimon. Hilchot Talmud Tora, c. 2. sect. 1.

[a] Gloss. in Sota, fol. 49. 1.
[b] Sepher Hamaalot, p. 67. Apud Buxtorf. Heb. Florileg. p. 75.
[c] Bereshit Rabba, fol. 30. 2.

among the Jews at this time of day; hence Christ calls them *an adulterous generation*: and that to such a degree, that by the advice of their great Rabbi, R. Jochanan ben Zaccai, they left off the trial of the suspected woman, cases of this nature being so very numerous: and this sin prevailed not only among the common people, but among their principal doctors; as may be learnt from their own writings, and from that conviction of this iniquity which the Scribes and Pharisees were brought under by Christ, when the woman, taken in adultery, was had before him by them, John viii. 9. *Thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege?* for though at this time they abhorred idolatry, to which their forefathers were so much inclined, and so often fell into, yet they were guilty of sacrilege; by violating the worship of God, and polluting it with their own inventions; by pillaging or withholding, or not offering the sacrifices they ought; and by plundering the temple, and converting the sacred things of it to their own use.

Ver. 23. *Thou that makest thy boast of the law*, &c.] Of their having it, which other nations had not; of their knowledge of it, which many of their own people were without, or had but a small share of; and of their keeping of it even to perfection: *through breaking of the law dishonourest thou God?* sin sometimes is expressed by a word which signifies a *fall*; sometimes by another, which signifies missing of the mark, or straying from it; sometimes by another, which signifies a *contrariety to the law* of God; and here, by one which signifies a *passing over it*, and the bounds which it has set, as the rule of man's obedience; and hereby God, the lawgiver, is dishonoured; for as God is glorified by good works, when rightly performed, he is dishonoured by evil ones; for his authority, as a lawgiver, is trampled upon and despised. Now persons guilty of such iniquities as here mentioned, could not be justified before God, or accepted by him on account of any works of righteousness done by them.

Ver. 24. *For the name of God is blasphemed*, &c.] The being and perfections of God, such as his holiness, omniscience, and omnipotence, are denied, or evil-spoken of; and also the law of God, and the forms of worship instituted by him: *among the Gentiles through you*: through their iniquities, who when they observe them, conclude that the God of Israel is not omniscient, or he would know, and take notice of these things; and that he is not holy, or he could not bear them; nor omnipotent, or he would revenge them: *as it is written*: the passage or passages referred to are not mentioned, but are perhaps Isa. lii. 5. Ezek. xxxvi. 20, 23. In the former of these texts the words are, *they that rule over them make them to howl: saith the Lord, and my name continually every day is blasphemed*; which are spoken of the rulers of the people, either of their ecclesiastical or political rulers, or both; and so Aben Ezra interprets them of גדולי ישראל, *the great men of Israel*; and here by the apostle are applied to their doctors and wise men: and in the latter are these words, *thus saith the Lord God, I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for my holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the Heathen*; that is, by their unbecoming walk and conversation, and especially by the disagreeable conduct of their principal men; and the Jews own the same things, and complain of them in much the same language the apostle here does, saying, "they disgrace the law before the people of the earth, (the common people, or else the Gentiles,) how? a wise man sits and expounds in the congregation, saying, thou shalt not lend upon usury, and he lends upon usury; he says, thou shalt not commit a robbery, and he commits a robbery; he says, לא תגנוב, *thou shalt not steal, and he steals*: says R. Berechiah, it happened to one man that his cloak was stolen from him, and he went before the judge about it, and he found it spread upon his bed or couch; and, says the same Rabbi, it happened to a certain man that his pot was stolen from him, and he went before the judge about it, and he found it upon his hearth: hence it is said, *as they were increased they sinned against me, therefore will I change their glory into shame*, Hos. iv. 7 [a]."

Ver. 25. *For circumcision verily profiteth*, &c.] The plea from circumcision in favour of the Jews, and their acceptance with God, and justification before him, is here, and in the following verses, considered. The apostle allows that circumcision was profitable; which must be understood whilst it was in force, before the abrogation of it, for since, it is not profitable but pernicious; and then it was only profitable, in case the law was kept: *if thou keepest the law*: that is, perfectly; for circumcision obliged persons to keep the whole law. Now the circumcised Jews did not keep it in such sense; wherefore circumcision was of no use to them, but, on the contrary, was an hand-writing against them. *But if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision*: that is, it is not accounted circumcision; it is of no avail; such a man was all one as an uncircumcised Gentile, and appeared to be uncircumcised in a spiritual sense: the apostle perhaps alludes to a practice among some of the Jews, to bring on and draw over the foreskin, after they had been circumcised; see the note on 1 Cor. vii. 18.

Ver. 26. *Therefore if the uncircumcision keep*, &c.] These words are spoken hypothetically; if any such persons could be found among the Gentiles who keep the whole law of God; and can only be absolutely understood of such, who from a principle of grace act in obedience to the law; as in the hands of Christ, and who look to Christ as the fulfilling end of it, for righteousness; in whom they keep the *righteousness of the law* perfectly: *shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision?* by this question 'tis suggested, that an uncircumcised Gentile, who keeps the law as in the hands of Christ, and under the influences of his spirit and grace, and keeps it in Christ, is reckoned a circumcised person in a spiritual sense, and must be preferable to a circumcised Jew that breaks it.

Ver. 27. *And shall not uncircumcision which is by nature*, &c.] That is, the Gentiles, who are by nature uncircumcised; for as circumcision was by the command of God, and performed by the art of men, uncir-

[a] Debarim Rabba, sect. 2. fol. 236. 2.

cumcision is by nature, and what men naturally have. Now *if it*, such persons, *fulfil the law* in Christ, they will *judge thee*, the circumcision: and condemn, as Noah condemned the old world, and the men of Nineveh, and the queen of the south will condemn the men of that generation, in which Christ lived. *Who by the letter and circumcision transgress the law:* that is, either by the law, which is *the letter*, and *by circumcision*, or by *circumcision which is in the letter*, ver. 29. sin being increased by the prohibitions of the moral law, and the rituals of the ceremonial law, and the more so by a dependence upon an obedience to either of them, or both, for justification.

Ver. 28. *For he is not a Jew which is one outwardly*, &c.] The apostle removes the plea in favour of the Jews, taken from their name and privilege, by distinguishing between a Jew and a Jew, and between circumcision and circumcision: *he is not a Jew which is one outwardly:* by mere name, nature, nation, religion, and profession: *neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh:* which takes away the flesh of the foreskin, but not the carnality of the heart; leaves a mark upon the flesh, but no impression on the mind. This is nothing, is not the true, solid, substantial, spiritual circumcision, which only avails in the sight of God.

Ver. 29. *But he is a Jew which is one inwardly*, &c.] Who has an internal work of grace upon his soul: who has not only an outward name, but an inward nature; not the law of God in the hand, but in the heart; not an external righteousness only, but internal holiness; and who is not a mere outward court-worshipper, but a worshipper of God in spirit and in truth. The Jews have a [e] saying themselves, "that whosoever denies "idolatry, נקרא יהודי, *is called a Jew:*" so that, according to them, this is a name that is not confined to themselves, but belongs to all such who truly fear and worship God; and they say, in the same place, that Pharaoh's daughter was called יהודית, *a Jewess*, because she denied idolatry, and went down to wash herself from the idols of her father's house. And elsewhere [f], "that faith does not depend upon circum-"cision, but upon the heart: he that believes not as "he should, circumcision does not make him a Jew; "and he that believes as he ought, he indeed is a Jew, "though he is not circumcised." *And circumcision is that of the heart;* which God requires, and he himself promises to give, Deut. x. 16. and xxx. 6. Jer. iv. 4. upon which last passage, a very noted Jew [g] has this observation, זאת היא מלת הלב, *this is the circumcision of the heart;* the very phrase the apostle here uses: circumcision of the flesh was typical of this, which lies in a godly sorrow for sin, in a putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, and in renouncing a man's own righteousness in the business of justification. The ancient Jews had some notion of this typical use of circumcision. So Philo the Jew says [h], that circumcision taught ἡδονῶν καὶ παθῶν πασῶν ἐκτομήν, *the cutting off of all pleasures and affections:* and elsewhere he says [i], it is a symbol of two things particularly: the one is the cutting off of pleasures, as before; and the other is the removal of arrogancy, that grievous disease of the soul: and in another place [k] he calls purity, or chastity, περιτομῆς περιτομήν, *the circumcision of circumcision*. Now this our apostle says is *in the spirit;* meaning either the spirit or soul of man, which is the seat and subject of it; or the spirit of God, who is the author of it: the Ethiopic version reads it, *by the Holy Ghost: and not in the letter;* or *by the letter* of the law; but the Holy Ghost produces this spiritual work instrumentally, by the preaching of the Gospel. To which the apostle adds, *whose praise is not of men, but of God;* referring not to circumcision immediately spoken of before, but to the Jew who is one inwardly: and alludes to the name Judah, from whence the Jews are called, which comes from the word ידה, which signifies to *praise;* and intimates here, that such persons must not expect praise from men, who are only taken with outward things, but from God, who searches and knows the heart.

CHAP. III.

IN this chapter are an answer to several objections which follow one upon another, relating to what the apostle had said concerning the equality of the Gentiles with the Jews; and various proofs out of the Psalms and Prophets, shewing the general depravity and corruption of mankind, of the Jews as well as of the Gentiles; and the conclusion from all this, that there is no justification by the works of the law, but by the righteousness of God received by faith, of which a large and clear account is given. The first objection is in ver. 1. and is taken from the unprofitableness of being a Jew and a circumcised person, if that is true which is asserted in the preceding chapter; to which an answer is given, ver. 2. shewing that though many things might be instanced in, in which the Jew had the advantage of the Gentile in external things; this might be mentioned as one for all, and taken as a sufficient answer, that the Jews had the oracles or word of God committed to their trust, by which they became acquainted with the will of God. The apostle foreseeing that another objection would arise upon this; what signifies their having the oracles of God, when these are not believed by them? prevents it by observing, ver. 3. that though some did not believe, some did, and as for the unbelief of others, the truth and faithfulness of God in his word were not made void by it; for however false and deceitful men are, God is always true to his word, ver. 4. and which is confirmed by a passage of Scripture, cited out of Psal. li. 4. from hence arises another objection, that if the righteousness of God is commended and illustrated by the unrighteousness of man, then it would be unjust in God to take

[e] T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 13. 1.
[f] Nizzachon, ad Gen. xvii. Apud Maji Theolog. Jud. p. 252.
[g] R. David Kimchi in Jer. iv. 4.
[h] De Migrat. Abraham, p. 402.
[i] De Circumcisione, p. 811.
[k] De Somniis, p. 1111.

vengeance on men for their sins, ver. 5. which is removed with abhorrence, and answered by observing, that if there was any truth in it, the world could not be judged by God, as it certainly will, ver. 6. but still the objection is continued and strengthened, ver. 7. that if God is glorified through the sins of men, not only men ought not to be punished for them, but they should not be reckoned sinners, or as doers of evil things, but of good things, and be indulged in them; to which is replied, that this was the common calumny cast upon the doctrine of the apostle, and persons of such principles and practices are deserving of damnation, ver. 8. Having removed these objections, the apostle reassumes his former assertion, and supports it, that a carnal circumcised Jew is no better than a carnal uncircumcised Gentile; it being already sufficiently made to appear, that they are both under the power and guilt of sin; and as a further evidence of it, he produces several passages out of the book of Psalms, and out of the prophecies of Isaiah, which fully express the sad corruption of human nature, and especially of the Jews; and this account begins in ver. 10. and ends in ver. 18. and which account he suggests, ver. 19. carries in it such a full conviction of the truth of what he had said, that all men are under sin, that no one would be able to open his mouth in his own defence, but all must acknowledge themselves guilty before God: and then he proceeds to the conclusion he meant to draw from all this, that there is no justification of any before God by the deeds of the law; giving this as a reason for it, because the law discovered sin, but not a justifying righteousness, ver. 20. that is revealed in another way, by the Gospel, and not the law, though both law and prophets bear a testimony to it, ver. 21. which righteousness is described by the author of it, God; by the means through which it comes to the use and comfort of men, the faith of Christ; and by the subjects of it, them that believe; in the justification of which there is no difference, ver. 22. of which a reason is given, ver. 23. taken from the general state of men, as sinners, and bereaved of the image of God: the several causes, ways, means, and end of the justification of such persons are suggested; the moving cause is the free grace of God, the meritorious or procuring cause the redemption that is in Christ, ver. 24. and his propitiatory sacrifice, ver. 25. which is owing to the eternal purpose of God, whose end in it was to declare his purity, holiness, and justice; which end is repeated and enlarged on, in ver. 26. upon which the apostle asks, ver. 27. what's become of boasting in the creature? and answers himself by saying, it was excluded, not by the doctrine of works, but by the doctrine of faith, and particularly the doctrine of justification by faith in the righteousness of Christ; wherefore the conclusion stands firm and just, from the premises, that justification is by faith without the works of the law, ver. 28. and it is further confirmed, that Jews and Gentiles, with respect to their state and condition Godward, are on a level; he is the God of the one, as well as of the other, ver. 29. and this appears by his justifying both in one and the same way, through faith in the righteousness of his son, ver. 30. and the chapter is concluded by obviating an objection that might be made, that through this doctrine of justification by faith the law is made void, and is of no use, ver. 31. to which the apostle answers, that this is so far from being fact, that the law is established by it.

Ver. 1. *What advantage then hath the Jew?* &c.] If he is not properly a Jew, who is born of Jewish parents, and brought up in the customs, rites, and religion of the Jewish nation, but any one of whatsoever nation, that is born again of water, and of the spirit; where's the superior excellency of the Jew to the Gentile? A man may as well be born and brought up a Heathen as a Jew; the one has no more advantages than the other by his birth and education: it may be rendered, *what hath the Jew more?* or *what has he superfluous or abundant?* the phrase answers to the Hebrew מה יתרון לאדם, in Eccl. i. 3. which is rendered, *what profit hath a man?* and in Eccl. vi. 8. מה יותר לחכם, *what hath a wise man more*, &c. and in ver. 11. מה יתר לאדם, *what is a man better?* the first of these passages the Septuagint render by τις περισσεια, *what abundance?* and the last by τι περισσον, *what more*, or *superfluous*, or *abundant?* the phrase used by the apostle here: *or what profit is there of circumcision?* since that which is outward in the flesh profits not unless the law is kept, otherwise circumcision is no circumcision; and if an uncircumcised Gentile keeps the law, he is a better man than a circumcised Jew; yea, he judges and condemns him; for the only true circumcision is internal, spiritual, and in the heart. To this the apostle answers in the following *verse*.

Ver. 2. *Much every way*, &c.] The circumcised Jew has greatly the advantage of the uncircumcised Gentile, מכל פנים, *in all respects*, על כל צד, *on every side*, as the Rabbins speak; phrases to which this in the text answers: *chiefly*; more especially, particularly, and in the first place; *because that unto them were committed the oracles of God*: by which are meant the law of Moses, and the writings of the prophets, the institutions of the ceremonial law, and the prophecies of the Messiah and the Gospel church-state; and in a word, all the books of the Old Testament, and whatsoever is contained in them; which are called so, because they are of divine inspiration, contain the mind and will of God, and are infallible and authoritative: and it was the privilege and profit of the Jews that they were intrusted with them, when other nations were not, and so had the advantage of them; they had them for their own use; for hereby they had a more clear and distinct knowledge of God than the Gentiles could have by the light of nature; and besides, became acquainted with the doctrines of a trinity of persons in the Godhead, of the sonship and deity of the Messiah, of the sacrifice, satisfaction, and righteousness of the Redeemer, and of salvation by him; and also with the manner of worshipping of God according to his will; all which the Gentiles were ignorant of. Moreover, they had the honour of being the keepers of these sacred books, these divine oracles, and of transmitting them to posterity, for the use of others.

Ver. 3. *For what if some did not believe?* &c.] 'Tis suggested, that though the Jews enjoyed such a privilege, some of them did not believe; which is an aggravation of their sin, that they should have such means of light, knowledge, and faith, such clear and full evidences of things, and yet be incredulous: though

it should be observed that this was the case only of *some*, not of all; and must be understood, not of their disbelief of the Scriptures being the word of God, for these were always received as such by them all, and were constantly read, heard, and attended to; but either of their disobedience to the commands of God required in the law, or of their disregard to the promises of God, and prophecies of the Messiah, and of their disbelief in the Messiah himself when he came: but now this was no objection to the advantage they had of the Gentiles, since this was not owing to want of evidence in the word of God, but to the darkness and unbelief of their minds: and, *shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?* no, their unbelief could not, and did not make void the veracity and faithfulness of God in his promises concerning the Messiah, recorded in the oracles of God, which they had committed to them; for notwithstanding this, God raised up the Messiah from among them, which is another advantage the Jews had of the Gentiles; inasmuch as *of them, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is God over all, blessed for evermore.* Rom. ix. 5. and he sent him to them, to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, as a prophet and minister; he sent his Gospel to them first, and called out by it from among them his elect, nor did he take it from them until he had done this: and he took it away only, until *the fulness of the Gentiles* is brought in; and then the Gospel shall come to them again with power, and *all Israel shall be saved.*

Ver. 4. *God forbid, yea, let God be true, but every man a liar*, &c.] Let no such thing ever enter into the minds of any, that the truth of God can be, or will be made of none effect by the want of faith in man; let it be always asserted and abode by, that God is true, faithful to his word, constant in his promises, and will always fulfil his purposes; though *every man is a liar*, vain, fallacious, and inconstant; referring to Psal. cxvi. 11. *as it is written*, Psal. li. 4. *that thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged.* This is a proof that God is true, and stands to his word, though men are fallacious, inconstant, and wicked. God made a promise to David, that of the fruit of his body he would set upon his throne; that the Messiah should spring from him; that he would of his seed raise up unto Israel a Saviour. Now David sinned greatly in the case of Bathsheba; but his sin did not make of no effect the truth and faithfulness of God: though David shewed himself to be a weak sinful man, yet God appeared true and faithful to every word of promise which he had sworn in truth to him; and therefore when he was brought to a sense of his evil, and at the same time to observe the invariable truth and faithfulness of God, said, *I acknowledge my transgression*, &c. *against thee, thee only have I sinned and done this evil in thy sight*, which confession of sin I make, *that thou mightest be justified in thy sayings*: or *when thou speakest*, which is all one; that is, that thou mightest appear to be just, and faithful, and true in all thy promises, in every word that is gone out of thy mouth, which shall not be recalled and made void, on account of my sins; for though I have sinned, thou abidest faithful; and this also I declare with shame to myself, and with adoring views of thine unchangeable truth and goodness: *that thou mightest overcome*; that is, put to silence all such cavils and charges, as if the faith of God could be made void by the unfaithfulness of men: *when thou art judged*; when men will be so bold and daring to arraign thy truth and faithfulness, and contend with thee about them. This now is brought as a full proof, and is a full proof of this truth, that God is always true to his word, though men fail in theirs, and fall into sin. God kept his word with David concerning the stability of his kingdom, his successor, and the Messiah that should spring from him, though he acted a bad part against God. There is some little difference between these words as they stand in the Hebrew text of Psal. li. 4. and as they are cited and rendered by the apostle, in the last clause of them; in the former it is, *that thou mightest be clear*; in the latter, *that thou mightest overcome.* Now to vindicate the apostle's version, let it be observed, that the Hebrew word זכה signifies to *overcome*, as well as to *be clear*; of which instances may be given out of the Jewish writings. Says [l] Rabba, concerning an argument used by R. Chanina, in a controversy with other Rabbins, by this R. Chanina ben Antigonus, זכנהו, *hath overcome them*: and in another place [m], whosoever דזכי, *overcomes* a king, they cast him into an empty ditch; where the gloss upon it is, נוצח, he that overcomes a king by words, that is, by disputing with him, which is a disgrace to a king. So the word is used in the Syriac language in John xvi. 33. Luke xi. 22. Rom. xii. 21. Heb. xi. 33. 1 John ii. 13, 14. and iv. 4. and v. 4. Moreover, the sense is the same, be it rendered either way; for as a man, when he overcomes his adversary, and carries his point against him, is clear of his charges and cavils, so God, when he overcomes in judgment, is clear of the imputations of wicked men. Another difference in the citation is, that what in the psalm is rendered *when thou judgest*, is by the apostle, *when thou art judged*; the word, which is used by the Psalmist, בשפטך, may be rendered either way; either *when thou judgest*, as a word of the same form is rendered, *when thou speakest*, in the same verse; or *when any one judges of thee*, or *when thou art judged*; a like instance is in Psal. xlvi. 2. and so it is rendered by the Septuagint, and followed by the apostle, though the word he uses may be considered in the middle voice, and may have an active signification in it; and the phrase, ἐν τῷ κρίνεσθαί σε, may be rendered, *when thou judgest*, and then both agree.

Ver. 5. *But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God*, &c.] Hence it appears, that the unrighteousness of men commends the righteousness, or faithfulness of God; and yet all unrighteousness is sin; the wrath of God is revealed against it; and would exclude from heaven, were it not for pardon through the blood of Christ; and besides, the one is contrary to the other, and of itself, of its own nature, cannot influence and affect the other: wherefore this can only be understood of the manifestation and illustration of the righteousness of God by it; which is dis-

[l] T. Bab. Niddah, fol. 52. 2.

[m] T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 10. 2. Sanhedrin, fol. 39. 1. & Becoroth fol. 8. 2.

covered and commended, in punishing the unrighteousness of men; in setting forth Christ to be a propitiation for sin; and in fulfilling his promises, notwithstanding the failings of his people, of which the case of David is a pregnant proof; just as the love of God is illustrated and commended, by the consideration of the sins of men, for whom Christ died, and his grace and mercy in the conversion of them: but if this be true, *what shall we say?* shall we allow the following question to be put? this answers to מאי איכא למימר, *what is there to say*, or *to be said?* a way of speaking, often used by the Talmudists[n]: *is God unrighteous, who taketh vengeance?* if the premises are true, this is a just consequence of them; whereas God does take vengeance on men for their unrighteousness, both here and hereafter, it must be a piece of unrighteousness in him so to do; since that for which he takes vengeance on them commends his own righteousness; but that you may know as well by what follows, that this is not an inference of his own, but another's, he adds, *I speak as a man;* כלשון בני אדם, *according to the language of the children of men*, a phrase often used by the Jewish doctors[o]. The apostle did not speak the sentiments of his own mind, he personated another man, and spoke in the language of an adversary.

Ver. 6. *God forbid, for then how shall God judge the world?*] חלילה, *far be it:* such a notion is detestable and abominable, nor can it be fairly deduced from what is asserted; for 'tis the unrighteousness of his own people, on whom he takes no vengeance personally, and not the unrighteousness of others, on whom he does take vengeance, which commends his righteousness; and supposing it was that of others, God cannot be unrighteous in performing his threatenings, in a way of righteousness: moreover, unrighteousness is sin, and does not of itself but by accident, illustrate the righteousness of God; wherefore God is not unjust in punishing it; for *how should God judge the world?* whereas nothing is more certain than that he will do it, and that this will be done in righteousness; which could not be, was he unrighteous in taking vengeance; which will be one considerable part of that righteous judgment.

Ver. 7. *For if the truth of God*, &c.] The *truth of God* is the same with *the righteousness of God*, ver. 5. and means his faithfulness; of which it is hypothetically said, it *hath more abounded;* or has been more illustrated, *through my lie to his glory;* nothing is more opposite to truth than a lie; a lie of itself can never be of any advantage to truth, or to the God of truth; nothing is more contrary to the nature of God, and more abominable to him; a lie is of the devil, and punishable with eternal death; wherefore it may seem strange, that the truth of God should abound through it to his glory: now let it be observed, that the apostle is not speaking of himself, nor of his lie of unbelief, in his state of unregeneracy; but in the person of a sinful man, for every man is a liar, as he says, *I speak as a man;* personating a wicked man, who from what was before said, might collect this as the sense of it, that the truth of God is illustrated by the lies of men: and so much may be owned as the apostle's sense, that the truth of God is commended, illustrated, and made to abound, when 'tis asserted, that he is true and faithful, and every man is a liar, fallacious, and deceitful; *let God be true, and every man a liar:* moreover, the truth of God may be allowed to abound through the lies of men, in a comparative sense, the one being set against the other; and so as contraries do, illustrate each other: this may be assented to, as that sometimes a lie has been overruled by God, for the accomplishing of his purposes and promises, in which his truth and faithfulness have been displayed, as in the cases of Jacob and the Egyptian midwives; but then this does not arise from its nature and tendency, but from the overruling wisdom and providence of God, and therefore not to be excused hereby from sin; and consequently the inference from it is not just, that therefore *no man can, or ought to be, judged as a sinner;* since his sin turns to such account, as to make for the glory of God, which is intimated in the question: *why yet am I also judged as a sinner?* if this be the case, I ought not to be reckoned a sinner, or to be treated as such here, or judged and condemned as one hereafter, which is a most wicked, as well as weak consequence; for though God is true and faithful to his promises, notwithstanding the sins of his people, which are as a foil, to set off the lustre of his truth the more, yet their sins are nevertheless sins, and are taken notice of by him as such, and they are corrected for them; and however God may overrule, in a providential way, the sins of others for his glory, this is no excuse for their sins, nor will it be an exemption of them from punishment. This is the sense of the passage; unless by *the truth of God* should be meant, the Gospel, the word of truth, which is of God; and which through the apostle's *lie*, as the Jews might call his ministration of it, *abounded to the glory* of God; being spread far and near, and made useful for the conversion of sinners, for turning men from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God; and for the planting of churches in the Gentile world, as well as in Judea; which much conduced to the honour of God, and the interest of true religion: and then the meaning of the last clause is, *why yet am I also judged as a sinner?* why am I accounted and condemned as an heretic? as an apostate from the faith? as he was by the Jews, and who are used to call heretics sinners: so *the sinner* in Eccles. vii. 26. is thus interpreted[p], אלו המינים *these are the heretics;* and elsewhere it[q] is observed, that concerning the heretics it is said, Prov. x. 7. *the name of the wicked shall rot:* and I very much suspect this to be the sense of the word in John ix. 24. *we know that this man is a sinner;* an heretic, a man of bad principles; and in ver. 31. *now we know that God heareth not sinners;* men of corrupt minds; since this character stands opposed to a worshipper of the God of Israel.

Ver. 8. *And not rather, as we be slanderously reported*, &c.] These are the apostle's own words, in answer to the objector he personated; and it is as if he should say, why don't you go on? why do you stop here? *and not rather* say, as we are evil-spoken of, and our doctrine is blasphemed: *and as some affirm;* ignorantly

[n] T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 4. 1. & passim.
[o] T. Bab. Ceritot, fol. 11. 1. & passim.

[p] Midrash Kohelet, fol. 77. 1.
[q] Juchasin, fol. 130. 2.

and audaciously enough: *that we say;* and teach: *let us do evil that good may come;* a slander cast upon the apostle's doctrine of unconditional election, free justification, and of God's overruling the sins of men for good; and is the same which is cast on ours now, and is no small proof of the likeness and sameness of doctrines: *whose damnation is just;* whose judgment would have been right, and their censure of our doctrines just, had it been true that we held such a principle, taught such a doctrine, or encouraged such a practice: or their condemnation is just, for aspersing our principles and practices in so vile a manner; and all such persons are deserving of damnation, who teach such things, or practise after this sort.

Ver. 9. *What then? are we better than they?* &c.] The apostle returns to what he was treating of in the beginning of the chapter, and suggests, that though the Jew has the advantage of the Gentile, with respect to some external privileges, yet not with regard to their state and condition Godward, and as in his sight; *are we Jews better than they* Gentiles? *no, in no wise:* upon no consideration whatever, neither as men, nor as Jews; which is directly opposite to a notion that people have of themselves: "in mankind (they say [r]) "there are high degrees, one higher than another, and "the Israelites למעלה מכל מין אדם, *are above all* "*mankind;* they are the head, and the nations of the "world are the tail, and are like to a serpent, for "they come from the filth of the old serpent." Again, they say [s], "worthy are the Israelites, for the holy "blessed God hath given to them holy souls, from an "holy place, *above all the rest of the people,* that they "may do the commandments, and delight in the law." And elsewhere [t] it is observed on those words, Gen. i. 24. *the living creature,* or *the soul of the living creature,* by R. Aba; "these are the Israelites, for they are the "children of the holy blessed God, and their holy souls "come from him; the souls of the rest of the people, "from what place are they? says R. Eleazar, from the "side of the left hand, which is defiled; for they have "polluted souls, and therefore they are all defiled, and "defile whoever comes nigh them:" but they are no better, especially with regard to their estate by nature: *for we have before proved;* in the preceding chapters, by full instances to a demonstration; and if that can't be thought sufficient, he goes on to give more proof in the following verses: *that both Jews and Gentiles are under sin;* under the power and guilt of sin, and a sentence of condemnation for it; which is equally true of the Jews, who were no better than the Gentiles, for being Abraham's seed, for being circumcised, for having the ceremonial law, and other outward privileges; for they were equally born in sin, and by practice sinners, as the Gentiles: and this is true of God's elect in all nations, who are no better by nature, by birth, than others; as deserving of the wrath of God as the rest; no better in their tempers and dispositions, or in the endowments of their minds, or outward circumstances of life; nor better qualified to receive and improve the grace of God bestowed on them, than others.

Ver. 10. *As it is written, there is none righteous, no, not one.*] The several passages cited here, and in some following verses, are taken out of the Psalms and Isaiah; and are brought to prove, not only that the Jews are no better than the Gentiles, being equally corrupt and depraved as they; but also to shew the corrupt state and condition of mankind in general: and the words are not always literally expressed, but the sense is attended to, as in this passage; for in the original text of Psal. xiv. 1. it is, *there is none that doth good;* from whence the apostle rightly infers, *there's none righteous;* for he that does not do good, is not righteous; and therefore if there's none on earth that does good and does not sin, there's none righteous upon earth, *no, not one* single person. The Jews allegorizing that passage in Gen. xix. 31. *there's not a man in the earth to come into us,* remark [u] on it thus, "אין איש צדיק "בארץ, *there's not a righteous man in the earth;* and "there's not a man that rules over his imagination." There's none righteous as Adam was, in a state of innocence; for all have sinned, and are filled with unrighteousness, and are enemies to righteousness; none are righteous by their obedience to the law of works; nor are there any righteous in the sight of God, upon the foot of their own righteousness, however they may appear in their own eyes, and in the sight of others; nor are any inherently righteous, for there's none without sin, sanctification is imperfect; nor is it, either in whole or in part, a saint's justifying righteousness; indeed there's none righteous, no, not one, but those who are justified by the righteousness of Christ imputed to them.

Ver. 11. *There's none that understandeth,* &c. This is rightly concluded, from what the Psalmist says, Psal. xiv. 2. *The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men,* on all the children of men, Jews and Gentiles, *to see if there were any that did understand;* and it appears, upon this survey of them, there was not one understanding person among them: man thinks himself a very wise and understanding creature, though he's born a very ignorant one: true indeed, he has not lost by sin the natural faculty of the understanding, so as to become like the horse and mule, which are without any; and it must be allowed, that natural men have some understanding of things natural, civil, and moral; though there's none that understands even these, as Adam did: but then they have no understanding of things spiritual; no spiritual knowledge of God; no true sense of themselves, their sin and misery; nor do they truly know the way of salvation by Christ; nor have they any experience of the work of the spirit of God upon their souls; nor any experimental knowledge of the doctrines of the Gospel: no man can understand these of himself, by the mere strength of reason, and light of nature; nor can even a spiritual man fully understand them in this life; in consequence of this account and character of men it follows, that *there is none that seeketh after God;* that worships him in spirit and in truth, or prays to him with the spirit, and with the understanding; who seek him chiefly, and in the first place, with their whole hearts, ear-

[r] Tzeror Hammor, fol. 103. 2. Vid. Nishmat Chayim, orat. 2. c. 7. fol. 61. 1.
[s] Zohar in Lev. fol. 26. 2.
[t] Zohar in Gen. fol. 31. 1.
[u] Midrash Haneelam in Zohar in Gen. fol. 68. 1.

nestly, diligently, and constantly; who seek him in Christ, and under the assistance of the spirit; who seek after the knowledge of God in Christ, communion with him through the Mediator, or his honour and glory.

Ver. 12. *They are all gone out of the way, &c.*] In Psal. xiv. 3. 'tis said, *they are all gone aside*: as persons in debt: man had a considerable stock of righteousness, holiness, knowledge, &c. but he has run through all, has contracted large and numerous debts, has been obliged to hide himself, has been used as a bankrupt, and turned out of house and home: Christ indeed has undertook to pay, and he has paid all the debts of his people; and has put them into a better state than ever Adam was in: in Psal. liii. 3. 'tis rendered, *every one of them is gone back*: that is, from God; from his commands, and from their former state and condition: here the phrase is rendered by the apostle, *they are all gone out of the way*: that is, out of the way of God and his precepts, out of the way of holiness and righteousness, of light and life; into their own ways, the ways of sin, Satan, and the world of darkness, and of death: so Aben Ezra explains it, *out of the right way*; Kimchi and Ben Melech paraphrase it, *out of the good way*: *and so they are together become unprofitable*; the word נאלחו, in Psal. xiv. 3. and liii. 3. is translated, *they are become filthy*; which R. Aben Ezra interprets by נשחתו, *they are corrupt*: and R. Solomon Jarchi by נהפכו לקלקול, *they are turned to corruption*; the metaphor is taken from stinking flesh, which is tainted and corrupted, and so good for nothing, hence here rendered *unprofitable*; for so men being corrupted by sin, are of no use, service, and advantage to God, to men, or to themselves; but, on the contrary, nauseous to God, and to all that are good, and hurtful to themselves and others: for there's *none that does good, no, not one*; and therefore must be unprofitable. There's none that can do good in a spiritual manner, without the grace of God, strength from Christ, and the assistance of the Spirit; and there is not even a spiritual man, that can do good perfectly, and without sin.

Ver. 13. *Their throat is an open sepulchre, &c.*] The several vices of the instruments of speech are here, and in the following verse, exposed: *the throat* is said to be *an open sepulchre*, as in Psal. v. 9. so called, for its voracity and unsatiableness; both as an instrument of speech, for the words of the wicked are devouring ones; and as an instrument of swallowing, and so may denote the sinner's eager desire after sin, the delight and pleasure he takes in it, the abundance of it he takes in, and his insatiable greediness for it; likewise for its filthy stench, the communication of evil men being corrupt; and because, as by an open grave, persons may fall unawares to their hurt, so the evil communications of wicked men, as they corrupt good manners, are dangerous and hurtful: R. Aben Ezra explains it by אבדן מיד, *immediate destruction*, or sudden death: *with their tongues they have used deceit*: which may design the sin of flattery, for the words in Psal. v. 9. the place referred to, are, *they flatter with their tongue*: either God or men, themselves or others, their princes or their neighbour; for there are flatterers in things sacred and civil, there are self-flatterers, court-flatterers, and flattering preachers, and all abominable and mischievous; or the phrase may design the sin of lying, either politically, officiously, perniciously, and religiously; and in this latter way, either with respect to doctrine or practice: *the poison of asps is under their lips*; or as in Psal. cxl. 3. *adders' poison is under their lips*. The asp is but a small creature, and so is the tongue, James iii. 5. but there's a world of mischief in it, signified by poison; which, as that, is latent and secret, is under it; and as that stupifies and kills insensibly, so an evil tongue does, and that in a deadly and incurable manner: oftentimes the Jews speak of the evil imagination, or corruption of nature entering into persons, and operating in them, כארס בכעס, *as poison in an angry serpent**.

Ver. 14. *Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness.*] These words are taken from Psal. x. 7. by *cursing* is meant, cursing of God, which is sometimes internal with the heart, and sometimes external with the mouth, as here; and of all good men, though without cause, and to no purpose with respect to the persons they curse, since God has blessed them, and they are blessed, and greatly to their own detriment, for, in the issue, their curses will be turned against themselves. There is also a cursing of superiors, as parents, masters, magistrates, kings, and governors; which is a sore evil, and attended with bad consequences; likewise of themselves, and their fellow-creatures: and *the mouth* being *full* of it, denotes the frequency of the sin; scarce any thing else comes out of it but cursing; which discovers the sad corruption of the heart; *for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh*. By *bitterness* is meant, either sin in general, which is an *evil and bitter* thing, in its nature and effects; or sinful words, such as oaths, curses, imprecations, all wrathful and deceitful words.

Ver. 15. *Their feet are swift to shed blood.*] The sins of the heart and mouth are before described, and now the sins of action are taken notice of; for *the feet* are the instruments of motion and action: and when these are said to be *swift to shed blood*, it denotes the readiness and eagerness of men, to murder innocent creatures; which shews the dreadful malice and hatred that is in them. The words are cited from Isa. lix. 7. and seem to point at the times of Menasseh, who shed so much innocent blood, as to fill Jerusalem with it from one end to the other.

Ver. 16. *Destruction and misery are in their ways.*] This passage also is to be found in Isa. lix. 7. and may be understood either actively thus: all the ways they take, and methods they pursue, are to make their fellow-creatures miserable, to ruin and destroy them; or passively, that by their sinful ways and vicious course of life, they themselves are brought to destruction and misery: the way they are walking in is, *the broad way, that leadeth to destruction*; the end of it, what it issues in, is eternal death, the destruction of the body and soul in hell, which will be attended with endless and inexpressible misery.

Ver. 17. *And the way of peace have they not known.*] This is a citation from Isa. lix. 8. and expresses the

* T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 62. 2. Yoma, fol. 9. 2.

ignorance of mankind, with regard to true peace, and the way unto it: men are naturally ignorant of the way of peace with God; of the first step which God took towards it; of the council and covenant of peace, in which the scheme of it was drawn, and the method fixed; of Christ the peacemaker, and of the way in which he has made it; and of the Gospel, which reveals and publishes it. They are ignorant of the true way of enjoying peace of conscience; they have no true peace of mind, their consciences are often tortured; and though they may have a stupid and secure peace, yet nothing that is true, real, and solid; for they are without the spirit, whose fruit is peace; and without faith in Christ, by which true peace only is enjoyed; nor are they spiritually minded, which is life and peace; nor have they any knowledge of the way to have it; they are ready to think it must be had by doing something of their own, and not that it is to be had only in Christ, in his blood and righteousness. They are ignorant of the paths of wisdom, which are peace; peace is enjoyed in them, they lead unto it, and issue in it: they know not the way to eternal peace; they imagine something done by the creature is the way; and are ignorant that Christ is the only way of salvation, the true way to eternal life, everlasting peace and happiness: yea, they know not the way of peace among men, and one another; nor will they do that which is just and right, in order to support and maintain it, but are unjust, deceitful, and quarrelsome; they don't study peace, but rather contention, which they like and approve of. The Jews talk[x] much of their good nature, affability, and condescension, and of their doing this and that, and the other thing, מפני דרכי שלום, *because of the ways of peace.*

Ver. 18. *There is no fear of God before their eyes.*] The place referred to is Psal. xxxvi. 1. by the *fear of God*, is not meant a fear of God's wrath, of hell and damnation; nor a fearful distrust of his presence, power, providence, and grace; much less an hypocritical fear; but a reverential affection for God, and which is peculiar to the children of God, which springs from a sense of divine goodness, is attended with holiness of heart and life, is consistent with faith, even full assurance of it, and with spiritual joy in its highest degree; it stands opposed to pride and haughtiness, and is a blessing of the covenant of grace: now this is not to be found in unregenerate men, for this springs from grace, and not nature, and is only implanted in the heart in conversion; it appears from the whole life and conversation of unconverted men, that the fear of God is not in their hearts, nor before their eyes.

Ver. 19. *Now we know that what things soever the law saith, &c.*] By *the law* is meant, not the law of nature, nor the civil law of nations, nor the ceremonial law of the Jews, nor barely the five books of Moses, nor the book of Psalms, of the Prophets, or the writings of the whole Old Testament; but the moral law, as it appears in the whole word of God, which every man is bound to observe, of which all are transgressors, by which is the knowledge of sin, which no man can be justified by, and which Christ was made under, and came to fulfil. This law is represented as a person speaking, and saying many things, some of which are here mentioned; so, אמרה תורה, *the law says* so and so, is an usual phrase with Jewish writers[y]. The persons it speaks *to*, are *them that are under the law*; the Jews were in a peculiar sense under it, as it was given to them by Moses; all mankind are under it, as to the matter of it: they are under obligation to obedience to it, and, through disobedience, come under its sentence of condemnation. The elect of God themselves were, and are in some sense under it; not indeed as a covenant of works, or as in the hands of Moses, nor as a yoke of bondage; nor are they obliged to seek for justification by it, and are entirely delivered from the curse and condemnation of it by Christ. They were under it, and that as a covenant of works, as in Adam, the federal head and representative of all mankind; and came under its sentence of condemnation and death, for his sin, and their own actual transgressions; which is consistent with the everlasting love of God to them in Christ, the covenant of grace made with them in him, as their head and surety, and their justification by him: and they are now under it, as in the hands of Christ; and look upon themselves as obliged, by the love of Christ, to yield a cheerful obedience to it: here it means such as are transgressors of the law, and so under obligation to punishment, without any regard to Jew or Gentile, or any distinction God has made in his own breast: and the things it says to such are, it charges them with sin, and convicts them of it, both of its pollution and guilt: so *that every mouth may be stopped*; and have nothing to say of the purity of their nature, which appears to be so sadly stained; nor of their works of righteousness, which are so few, and so very imperfect. The law makes such a representation of things to them, that their mouths are stopped from glorying in themselves, and in their works, which are far from being adequate to the demands of the law; and from complaining against the righteous judgment of God, should he proceed against them in the most rigorous manner: *and all the world may become guilty before God*; Jews and Gentiles; all the individuals of mankind are guilty before God, and will be found to be so, sooner or later: some read it, *subject to God*, and understand it of a subjection to his grace, being brought to see their need of it, and of salvation by it; but this is not the case of all the world, rather ὑπόδικος, signifies a subjection to that justice, vengeance, and wrath of God, to which all men are liable in their own persons; since they are all found guilty by the law, and will appear to be so, and therefore can never be justified by their obedience to it; which is what the apostle is aiming at in all he here says, as appears from what follows; all which we *know* to be true, and are fully assured of, who know the nature and spirituality of the law, and to whom it has come with light and power.

Ver. 20. *Therefore by the deeds of the law, &c.*] Hence it most clearly appears, that there can be no justification before God by the law, since it stops the mouths of men, and pronounces them guilty: *by the*

[x] Misn. Gittin, c. 5. sect. 8, 9. T. Hieros. Demai, fol. 24. 1. Maimon. Obede Cochabim, c. 10. sect. 5.

[y] T. Bab. Roshhashanah, fol. 16. 1. Taanith, fol. 21. 2.

deeds of the law are meant, works done in obedience to it, as performed by sinful men, which are very imperfect; not as performed by Adam in innocence, or by Christ in our nature, whose works were perfect; but as performed by sinful men, and of themselves, and not as performed in and by Christ for them, who is the fulfilling end of the law for righteousness to all believers: now by such works as these, whether wrought before or after conversion, with or without the strength and grace of Christ, *there shall no flesh be justified in his sight;* that is, no one person: *flesh* designs men, and men as corrupt and carnal, in opposition to God, who is a spirit pure and holy; and may have respect to the vain opinion of Jews and Gentiles, who were vainly puffed up in their fleshly mind; the one on account of their wisdom and learning, the other on account of their righteousness; and includes all the individuals of human nature: the word *justified*, does not signify being made righteous by the infusion of a righteousness, for the infusion of a righteousness, or holiness, is sanctification, which is a work of the spirit of God, is internal, and imperfect, and so not justifying: but it is a forensic word, or law-term, and stands opposed to a being condemned; and signifies to be acquitted, discharged, and made righteous in a law-sense, which can never be done by an imperfect obedience to the law: men may be justified hereby in their own sight, and in the sight of others, but not in *his sight;* in the sight of God, who is omniscient, and sees not as man seeth; who is pure, holy, and righteous, and whose judgment is according to truth: this is said in direct contradiction to the Jews[z], who say, "a man is not justified for ever, but by the words of "the law:" but in his sight none can be justified, but by the perfect obedience and righteousness of Christ. The reason for it is, *for by the law is the knowledge of sin;* it discovers to a man, by the light of the spirit of God, and as under his influence, and attended with his power, the sins both of his heart and life; and so he is convinced by it as a transgressor, and finds himself guilty, and liable to condemnation and death; wherefore he can never hope for and expect justification by it. The Jews ascribe such an use as this to the law, which they suppose it performs in a very gentle manner; "he that rises in the night (say they[a]), "and studies in the law, אוריתא קא מודעא ליה חובה, "*the law makes known to him his sin;* but not in a "way of judgment, but as a mother makes known to "her son in tender language:" but this is generally done in a rougher way, for *the law works wrath.*

Ver. 21. *But now the righteousness of God,* &c.] The apostle having proved that all men are unrighteous, and that no man can be justified in the sight of God by his obedience, either to the law of nature or of Moses, proceeds to give an account of that righteousness, which does justify before God; and so returns to his former subject, ch. i. 17. concerning *the righteousness of God,* the revelation of which he makes to be peculiar to the Gospel, as he does here; since he says, that it *without the law is manifested:* meaning, either that this righteousness is without the law, and the deeds of it, as performed by sinful men; or that the manifestation of it is without the law, either of nature or of Moses; for the law discovers sin, but not a righteousness which justifies from sin: it shews what righteousness is, but does not direct the sinner where there is one to be had, that will make him righteous in the sight of God: this is made known without the law, and only in the Gospel: *being witnessed by the law and the prophets;* a testimony is borne to the justifying righteousness of Christ, both *by the law*, particularly in the five books of Moses; which testify of Christ, of his obedience, sufferings, and death, by which he brought in life and righteousness; see Gen. iii. 15. compared with Dan. ix. 24. and Gen. xv. 6. with Rom. iv. 9, 10, 22, 23, 24, 25. and Gen. xxii. 18. with Gal. iii. 8, 9, 14. and Deut. xxx. 11—14. with Rom. x. 5—10. *And the prophets:* Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, and others; see Isa. xlii. 21. and xlv. 24, 25. and xlvi. 12, 13. and li. 5, 6, 8. and liii. 11. Jer. xxiii. 6. Dan. ix. 24.

Ver. 22. *Even the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ,* &c.] A further account is given of this righteousness: why it is called *the righteousness of God,* and in what sense revealed and manifested, see the note on Rom. i. 17. Here it is said to be *by faith of Jesus Christ;* not by that faith which Christ himself had as man, but by that faith, of which he is the author and object: the Alexandrian copy reads, *by faith in Jesus Christ:* and not by that as the cause of justification; for faith is neither the efficient, nor the moving, nor meritorious cause of it; no, nor the instrumental cause of it on the part of God or Christ: nor is faith the matter of a justifying righteousness; for faith is a part of sanctification, is itself imperfect, is a man's own, as it is implanted in him, and exercised by him; is here and elsewhere distinguished from righteousness; something else, and not that, as the obedience and blood of Christ, are said to be what men are made righteous and justified by: but faith is a means of apprehending and receiving righteousness; it views the excellency of Christ's righteousness; it owns the sufficiency of it; the soul by it renounces its own righteousness, submits to Christ's, rejoices in it, and gives him the glory of it: now this is by, or through faith, *unto all, and upon all:* not all men, for all have not faith, nor are all justified and saved: but *all that believe;* which must be understood, not of believing any thing, nor of any sort of believing; but of such, who truly and with the heart believe in Christ for salvation; and who are here opposed to the wise philosophers among the Gentiles, and to all self-righteous persons among the Jews. Though this character does not design any cause or condition of justification, but is only descriptive of the persons, who are declaratively interested in a justifying righteousness, which is said to be *unto*, and *upon* them: that is, it is appointed, provided, and wrought out for them, and is directed and applied unto them, and put upon them as a garment, and that upon all of them; *for there is no difference:* of nation, age, or sex, or of state and condition; no respect is had to persons or works; nor is there any difference with respect to weak or strong believers; the righteousness is equally applied to one

[z] Zohar in Lev. fol. 33. 3.

[a] Zohar in Lev. fol. 10. 2.

as to another, and one is as much justified by it in the sight of God as another.

Ver. 23. *For all have sinned*, &c.] This is the general character of all mankind; all have sinned in Adam, are guilty by his sin, polluted with it, and condemned for it; all are sinners in themselves, and by their own actual transgressions; this is the case of the whole world, and of all the men in it; not only of the Gentiles, but of the Jews, and the more righteous among them: hence there is no difference in the state and condition of men by nature; nor is there any reason from and in themselves, why God saves one and not another; nor any room to despair of the grace and righteousness of Christ, on account of persons being, in their own view, the worst of sinners: *and* hence it is, that they are all *come short of the glory of God:* either of glorifying of God; man was made for this purpose, and was capable of it, though now through sin incapable; and 'tis only by the grace of God that he is enabled to do it: or of glorying before him; sin has made him infamous, and is his shame; by it he has forfeited all external favours, and has nothing of his own to glory in; his moral righteousness is no foundation for boasting, especially before God: or of having glory from God; the most pure and perfect creature does not of itself deserve any glory and praise from God; good men, in a way of grace, will have praise of God; but sinners can never expect any on their own account: or of the glorious grace of God, as sanctifying and pardoning grace, and particularly the grace of a justifying righteousness; man has no righteousness, nor can he work out one; nor will his own avail, he wants a better than that: or of eternal glory; which may be called the glory of God, because it is of his preparing, what he calls persons to by his grace, and which of his own free grace he bestows upon them, and will chiefly lie in the enjoyment of him; now this is represented sometimes as a prize, which is run for, and pressed after; but men, through sinning, come short of it, and must of themselves do so for ever: or rather of the image of God in man, who is called *the image and glory of God*, 1 Cor. xi. 7. which consisted externally in government over the creatures; internally, in righteousness and holiness, in wisdom and knowledge, in the bias of his mind to that which is good, and in power to perform it; of all which he is come short, or deprived by sinning.

Ver. 24. *Being justified freely by his grace*, &c.] The matter of justification is before expressed, and the persons that share in this blessing are described; here the several causes of it are mentioned. The moving cause of it is the free grace of God; for by *the grace of God* here, is not meant the Gospel, or what some men call the terms of the Gospel, and the constitution of it; nor the grace of God infused into the heart; but the free love and favour of God, as it is in his heart; which is wonderfully displayed in the business of a sinner's justification before him: it appears in his resolving upon the justification of his chosen ones in Christ; in fixing on the method of doing it; in setting forth and pre-ordaining Christ to be the ransom; in calling Christ to engage herein; in Christ's engaging as a surety for his people, and in the father's sending him to bring in everlasting righteousness; in Christ's coming to do it, and in the gracious manner in which he wrought it out; in the father's gracious acceptation, imputation, and donation of it; in the free gift of the grace of faith, to apprehend and receive it; and in the persons that partake of it, who are of themselves sinners and ungodly. The meritorious cause of justification is, *the redemption that is in Jesus Christ:* redemption supposes a former state of captivity to sin, Satan, and the law, in which God's elect were by nature, and is a deliverance from it; it is of a spiritual nature, chiefly respects the soul, and is plenteous, complete, and eternal: this is *in* and by Christ; he was called unto it, was sent to effect it, had a right unto it, as being the near kinsman; and was every way fit for it, being both God and man; and has by his sufferings and death obtained it: now, as all the blessings of grace come through redemption by Christ, so does this of justification, and after this manner; Christ, as a Redeemer, had the sins of his people laid on him, and they were bore by him, and took away; the sentence of the law's condemnation was executed on him, as standing in their law-place and stead; and satisfaction was made by him for all offences committed by them, which was necessary, that God might appear to be just, in justifying all them that believe: nor is this any objection or contradiction to the free grace of God, in a sinner's justification; since it was grace in God to provide, send, and part with his son as a Redeemer, and to work out righteousness; it was grace in Christ, to come and give himself a sacrifice, and obtain salvation and righteousness, not for angels, but for men, and for some of them, and not all; and whatever this righteousness, salvation, and redemption cost Christ, they are all free to men.

Ver. 25. *Whom God had set forth to be a propitiation*, &c.] Redemption by Christ is here further explained, by his being *a propitiation;* which word may design either Christ the propitiator, the author of peace and reconciliation; or the propitiatory sacrifice, by which he is so; and both in allusion to the mercy-seat, which was a type of him as such. The apostle here uses the same word, which the Septuagint often render כפרת, *the mercy-seat*, by; and Philo the Jew calls it by the same name, and says it was a symbol, τῆς ἵλεω τοῦ Θεοῦ δυνάμεως, *of the propitious power of God*[b]. Christ is the propitiation to God for sin; which must be understood of his making satisfaction to divine justice, for the sins of his people; these were imputed to him, and being found on him, the law and justice of God made demands on him for them; which he answered to satisfaction, by his obedience and sacrifice; and which, as it could not be done by any other, nor in any other way, is expressed by *reconciliation*, and *atonement:* whence God may be said to be pacified, or made propitious; not but that he always loved his people, and never hated them; nor is there, nor can there be any change in God, from hatred to love, any more than from love to hatred: Christ has not, by his sacrifice and death, procured the love and favour of God, but has removed the obstructions which lay in the way of

[b] Philo de Vita Mosis, l. 3. p. 668.

love's appearing and breaking forth; there was a law broken, and justice provoked, which were to be attended to, and Christ by his sacrifice has satisfied both; so that neither the wrath of God, nor any of the effects of it, can fall upon the persons Christ is the propitiation for, even according to justice itself; so that it is not love, but justice that is made propitious: for this is all owing to the grace and goodness of God, who *hath set him forth*, for this intent, in his eternal purposes and decrees; in the promises of the Old Testament, in the types, shadows, and sacrifices of the old law; by the exhibition of him in our nature, and in the ministration of the Gospel; and this is said to be *through faith in his blood*. The *blood* of Christ is that, by which Christ is the propitiation: for without the shedding of that blood, there's no redemption, no peace, no reconciliation, or remission of sin; and *faith* in his blood is the means by which persons become partakers of the benefits of his propitiation; such as peace, pardon, atonement, justification, and adoption: and the end of Christ's being set forth as a propitiation, on the part of God's people, is, *for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God*: by *sins that are past*, are meant, not sins before baptism, nor the sins of a man's life only, but the sins of Old-Testament saints, who lived before the incarnation of Christ, and the oblation of his sacrifice; and though this is not to be restrained to them only, for Christ's blood was shed for the remission of all his people's sins, past, present, and to come; yet the sins of the saints before the coming of Christ, seem to be particularly designed; which shews the insufficiency of legal sacrifices, sets forth the efficacy of Christ's blood and sacrifice, demonstrates him to be a perfect Saviour, and gives us reason under the present dispensation to hope for pardon, since reconciliation is completely made: *remission* of sin does not design that weakness which sin has brought upon, and left in human nature, whereby it is so enfeebled, that it cannot help itself, and therefore Christ was set forth, and sent forth, to be a propitiation; but rather God's passing by, or overlooking sin, and not punishing for it, under the former dispensation; or else the forgiveness of it now, and redemption from it by the blood of Christ, *through the forbearance of God*: in deferring the execution of justice, till he sent his son, and in expecting satisfaction of his son; which shews the grace and goodness of God to his people, and the trust and confidence he put in his son: the other end on the part of God, in setting forth Christ to be a propitiation, was *to declare his righteousness*: meaning either the righteousness of Christ, which was before hid, but now manifested; or rather the righteousness of God the father, his faithfulness in his promises relating to Christ, his grace and goodness in the mission of his son, the holiness and purity of his nature, and his vindictive justice, in avenging sin in his own son, as the surety of his people: the execution of this was threatened from the beginning; the types and sacrifices of the old law prefigured it; the prophecies of the Old Testament express it; and the sufferings and death of Christ openly declare it, since God spared not his own son, but sheathed the sword of justice in him.

Ver. 26. *To declare, I say, at this time, his righteousness*, &c.] This end is further explained, it being to declare the righteousness of God *at this time*, under the Gospel dispensation; in which there was such a display of the grace, mercy, and goodness of God: *that he might be just*; that is, appear to be so: God is naturally and essentially just in himself; and he is evidentially so in all his works, particularly in redemption by Christ; and when and while he is *the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus*: Jesus, the Saviour, is the object of faith, as he is the Lord our righteousness; the believer in Jesus is a real, and not a nominal one; God is the justifier of such in a declarative way, and God only, though not to the exclusion of the Son and Spirit; and which sentence of justification is pronounced by him on the foot of a perfect righteousness, which neither law nor justice can find fault with, but entirely approve of; and so he appears just and righteous, even though he justifies the sinner and the ungodly.

Ver. 27. *Where is boasting then?* &c.] There's no room nor reason for it, either in Jews or Gentiles: not in the Jews, who were very apt to boast of their being Abraham's seed; of their circumcision; of their being Israelites; of their having and keeping the law; of God being their God; and of their knowledge of him: nor in the Gentiles, who were ready to boast of their philosophy, wisdom, and learning; of their self-sufficiency, free-will, and of the things they had in their own power. *It is excluded*: it is shut out of doors; the key is turned upon it; it is not allowed of; it is entirely exploded: *by what law? of works? nay*: for that establishes boasting when men seek life, righteousness, and salvation by the works of it, and fancy they shall be able to attain them this way: *but by the law of faith*: not by a law requiring faith; nor as if the Gospel was a law, a new law, a remedial law, a law of milder terms; but the word *law* here answers to the Hebrew word תורה, which signifies any *doctrine* or *instruction*, and oftentimes the doctrine of the Gospel, as in Isa. ii. 3. xlii. 4. and here particularly the doctrine of a sinner's justification by faith in the righteousness of Christ; according to which doctrine the most unlikely persons are justified, even ungodly perons, the worst and vilest of sinners; and that without any consideration of works, by faith only, which is freely given them; and by faith in Christ's righteousness only: so that there is not the least room for boasting in the creature, but all their boasting is in Christ, who is made unto them righteousness, and by whom they are justified.

Ver. 28. *Therefore we conclude*, &c.] This is the conclusion from the premises, the sum-total of the whole account: *that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law*. The subject of justification is *man*, not in opposition to angels; nor does it design the Jew against the Gentile, though some have so thought; but the apostle names neither Jew nor Gentile, but *man*, to shew, that Christ's righteousness is unto all, and every man, that believes, be he who he will; and is to be understood indefinitely, that every man that is justified is justified by faith. The means is *by faith*, not habitually or actually considered; that is, either as an habit and principle infused into us, or as an act performed by us; but either organically, as it is a

means of receiving Christ's righteousness; or objectively, as it denotes Christ the object of it: and all this is done *without works*, of any sort; not by a faith which is without works, for such a faith is dead, and of no avail; but by faith without works joined to it, in the affair of justification; or by the righteousness of Christ imputed by God the father, without any consideration of them, and received by faith, and relied upon by the believer, without any regard unto them.

Ver. 29. *Is he the God of the Jews only?* &c.] The Jews made their boast of him as such, and would not allow the Gentiles any interest in him: but *is he not also of the Gentiles? yes, of the Gentiles also:* God is the God both of Jews and Gentiles; not only as the Creator, Preserver, and Governor of them, or as he has a right to demand worship and service of them, but as he is their covenant God; not by virtue of the covenant of circumcision, or by the Sinai covenant, but by the covenant of grace; as appears by his loving them in Christ, choosing them in him, putting them into his hands, providing blessings of grace for them in him, and sending his son to redeem them; by calling them by his grace; by their sanctification, adoption, pardon, and justification; by taking out of them a people for his name with whom he dwells, and of whom he takes care, and will never leave nor forsake: all which may lead us to observe the distinguishing grace of God, the happiness of our state and condition, and what encouragement we have for faith and hope in God.

Ver. 30. *Seeing it is one God*, &c.] God is one in nature and essence, though there are three persons in the Godhead, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; whence it appears, that he that is the God of the Jews, is also the God of the Gentiles, or there would be more gods than one; and that these are justified in one and the same manner, or God must be divided; for God, as he is one in nature, so he is one in will, in his promises, and in the methods of his grace: *which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith.* The objects of justification are *the circumcision*, the circumcised Jews, and the *uncircumcision*, the uncircumcised Gentiles; the circumcision of the one does not forward, and the uncircumcision of the other does not hinder, nor neither of them effect the grace of justification: the justifier of them is one and the same, who is God; and the matter of their justification is the same, which is the righteousness of Christ; and the manner of it, or the means of their comfortable apprehension of it, is the same; for those phrases, *by faith*, and *through faith*, mean one and the same thing; see Phil. iii. 9.

Ver. 31. *Do we then make void the law through faith?* &c.] Which question is answered by way of detestation, *God forbid!* and by asserting the contrary, *yea, we establish the law.* The law is not made void, neither by the grace nor doctrine of faith: not by the grace of faith; for that faith is not right which is not attended with works of righteousness; and those works are not right which don't flow from faith. Such a connexion there is between faith and works; and so much do the one depend upon the other. Moreover, none but believers are capable of performing good works aright, and they do them, and they ought to do them: besides, faith, as a grace, looks to Christ, as the end of the law for righteousness, and therefore don't make it void. Nor is it made void by the doctrine of faith, and by the particular doctrine of a sinner's justification by faith in Christ's righteousness, which is here more especially intended; for though it is made void by it, as to any use of it for justification by the deeds thereof; yet its use in other respects is not set aside, such as to inform us of the mind and will of God, to discover and convince of sin, to shew believers their deformity and imperfection, to render Christ and his righteousness more valuable, and to be a rule of walk and conversation to them; and it still remains a cursing and condemning law to Christless sinners, though justified ones are delivered from it as such: yea, the law is so far from being made void, that it is established by this doctrine; for by it the perpetuity of it is asserted, the spirituality of it is acknowledged, the perfect righteousness of it is secured: according to this doctrine all its demands are answered; whatever it requires it has, such as holiness of nature, perfect obedience to its precepts, and its full penalty borne: it is placed in the best hands, where it will ever remain; and a regard to it is enforced under the best influence, by the best of motives, and from the best of principles. It is indeed abolished as a covenant of works, and in this sense is made void to believers; and it is done away as to the form of administration of it by Moses; and it is destroyed as a yoke of bondage; and the people of God are free from the malediction of it, and condemnation by it, and so from its terror; yet it remains unalterable and unchangeable in the hands of Christ; the matter of it is always the same, and ever obligatory on believers, who, though they are freed from the curse of it, are not exempted from obedience to it: wherefore the law is not made void, so as to be destroyed and abolished in every sense, or to be rendered idle, inactive, useless, and insignificant: but, on the contrary, is made to stand, is placed on a sure basis and firm foundation, as the words used signify.

CHAP. IV.

THE apostle having, in the preceding chapters, proved that there is no justification before God by the works of the law, partly from the depraved state and condition that all men are in by nature, both Jews and Gentiles; and partly from the nature of the law itself, which discovers sin, arraigns men for it, and convicts of it, and pronounces guilty before God for it; as also by shewing, that it is by another righteousness, which he describes, that men are justified in the sight of God; proceeds in this to confirm the same by an example; and that which he pitches upon is the most apposite and pertinent he could have thought of, namely, that of Abraham, the father of the Jews, ver. 1. for in whatsoever way he was justified, his sons

surely could not imagine but it must be the right way, nor should they seek another: now that Abraham was not justified by works, he proves ver. 2. from an absurdity following upon it, that he would have just reason to glory; whereas no man ought to glory before God, but only in the Lord: and by a passage of Scripture, ver. 3. to which he appeals, he makes it clearly appear that he was justified by faith, for that says, his faith was counted for righteousness. This case of accounting any thing to another for righteousness, is illustrated by two sorts of persons, who have different things accounted to them, and in a different manner; to the worker, the reward is reckoned of debt, and not of grace, ver. 4. but to the believer that works not, his faith, as Abraham's was, is counted for righteousness; whence it follows, that not the worker is justified by his works, but the believer by the righteousness of faith; and this is confirmed by a testimony of David in Psal. xxxii. 1, 2. by which the apostle proves the imputation of righteousness without works, in which the happiness of men consists, ver. 6, 7, 8. and shews, that this happiness does not belong to circumcised persons only, but to the uncircumcised also; and therefore is not by circumcision, but by faith, ver. 9. and which he proves by observing the time when faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness; not when he was circumcised, but before, ver. 10. the use of which circumcision to him was to assure him, that he should be the father of uncircumcised Gentiles that believed, to whom righteousness should be imputed, as to him when he was uncircumcised, ver. 11. who are described by their imitation of his faith, which he had, and exercised before his circumcision, ver. 12. And this leads on to a fresh argument, proving justification to be by faith, and not by the works of the law, since the promise made to Abraham, and his seed, was not through the law, but the righteousness of faith; and consequently both his and their justification were not by the one, but by the other, ver. 13. or, if otherwise, both the faithfulness of God, and the faith of his people, would be void, and the promise of grace of no effect, ver. 14. And this is still further argued from the effect of the law working wrath, which, if justification was by it, it would never do, ver. 15. The wisdom and goodness of God in giving faith, and not works, a concern in justification, are observed, ver. 16. whereby it appears to be of free grace, faith only being a recipient, and what gives all the glory to God; and also the promise of eternal life through justification by free grace becomes sure to all the spiritual seed; who are distributed into two sorts, the believing Jews under the legal dispensation, and the believing Gentiles under the Gospel dispensation; of both which Abraham was father; which is confirmed by a testimony out of Gen. xvii. 4. 5. whose faith is described by the object of it, the omnipotent God that quickens the dead, and calls things that are not, as though they were, ver. 17. and by the nature of it, ver. 18. believing in hope against hope, resting on the promise of God; and by the strength of it, being not at all weakened by considering either his own case, or that of his wife's, ver. 19. and was so far from being staggered through unbelief at these things, that it was strong in exercise, thereby glorifying God, the object of it, ver. 20. nay, it rose up to a plerophory, a full assurance, ver. 21. being built upon the power of a promising God; hence, as before observed, his faith was reckoned to him for righteousness, ver. 22. And now in the same way that he was justified, all his children, his spiritual seed, are justified, whether they be Jews or Gentiles; for what is said concerning the imputation of the righteousness of faith to him, does not concern him only, ver. 23. but all true believers also; whose faith is described by the object of it, him that raised up Christ from the dead, that is, God the father, ver. 24. who is supposed hereby to have been dead, and is represented as the Lord and Saviour of his people; and of whom a further account is given, ver. 25. as being delivered into the hands of men, of justice, and of death, for the sins of his people, which he took upon him, and bore, and made satisfaction for, and as being raised again for their justification; so that this is a benefit owing not to the works of men, but to what Christ has done and suffered in the room and stead of his people; which is what the apostle meant to bring this point unto; the blessed effects and consequences of which he relates in the next chapter.

Ver. 1. *What shall we say then,* &c.] The apostle having proved that there is no justification by the works of the law; to make this appear more clear and evident to the Jews, he instances in the greatest person of their nation, and for whom they had the greatest value and esteem, Abraham; who was not a righteous and good man, but the head of the Jewish nation; and, as the Syriac version here styles him, רישא דאבהתא, *the head,* or *chief of the fathers;* and so the Alexandrian copy, *our fore-father;* and was the first of the circumcision, and is described here by his relation to the Jews, *our father;* that is, *as pertaining to the flesh;* or according to carnal descent, or natural generation and relation; for in a spiritual sense, or with respect to faith and grace, he was the father of others, even of all that believe, whether Jews or Gentiles: now the question put concerning him is, *what he, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found?* for the phrase, *as pertaining to the flesh,* may be connected with the word *found;* and to find any thing is by seeking to obtain, and enjoy it: and the sense of the whole is, did he find out the way of life, righteousness, and salvation by the mere dint of carnal reason? and did he obtain these things by his own strength? or were these acquired by his circumcision in the flesh, or by any other fleshly privilege he enjoyed? or was he justified before God by any services and performances of his, of whatsoever kind? There is indeed no express answer returned; but it is evident from what follows, that the meaning of the apostle is, that it should be understood in the negative.

Ver. 2. *For if Abraham were justified by works,* &c.] That Abraham was not, and could not be justified by works, is clear from hence, that if this was his case, *he hath whereof to glory;* which will be allowed him before men, on account of his pious life and conversation; *but not before God;* who saw all the iniquity of his heart, and was privy to all his failings and infirmities: besides, glorying before God in a man's own works, is contrary to the scheme and method of God's grace; is excluded by the doctrine of faith; nor is there any place for

glorying before God but in Christ, and his righteousness: if therefore Abraham had not that of which he could glory before God, he could not be justified by works in his sight: but does not the Apostle James say that he was justified by works? to this it may be replied, that the two apostles, Paul and James, are not speaking of the same thing: Paul speaks of justification before God, James of justification before men; Paul speaks of the justification of the person, James of the justification of a man's cause, as the truth of his faith, or the uprightness of his conduct; Paul speaks of works, as the causes of justification, James of them as the effects and evidences of faith; Paul had to do with self-justitiaries, who trusted in their own works for justification, James with Gnostics, who slighted and neglected the performance of them. These things considered, they will be found to agree.

Ver. 3. *For what saith the Scripture?* &c.] This answers to מאי דכתיב, *what is that which is written*[c]? or what does the Scripture say? which is a way of speaking used by the Jews, when any thing is proposed, which seems contrary to Scripture, as here justification by works does. A testimony from Scripture is here produced, proving that Abraham was justified by faith, and not by works: the place referred to is Gen. xv. 6. *Abraham believed God*; the object of his faith and trust were not his riches, nor his righteousness, but Jehovah, the son of God, the second person in the Trinity, styled in ver. 1. *the Word of the Lord*, the essential Word of God, and called his *shield*, and *exceeding great reward*; characters which are very applicable to Christ: and this faith of his in the Lord was not a mere assent to the promise of God, but a fiducial act of faith in him; and was not merely concerned with temporal, but with spiritual things, and particularly about Christ the promised seed: *and it was counted to him for righteousness*. the meaning of which is not, that Abraham imputed righteousness to God, or celebrated his righteousness and faithfulness, as some; or that the world reckoned Abraham a righteous person, as others; but that God reckoned him righteous, or imputed it to him for righteousness: and the question is, what the *it* is which was counted to him for righteousness? and that this is to be understood, על האמנה, *concerning faith*, as R. Solomon Jarchi says, is out of question; for this is expressly said by the apostle, ver. 9. The only one is, whether it means the grace of faith by which he believed; or the object of faith on which he believed, and with which his faith was conversant: not the former, for that is not righteousness, nor accounted so; but is distinguished from it, and is that by which a person receives and lays hold on righteousness; besides, whatever may be alleged in favour of the imputation of Abraham's faith to himself for righteousness, it can never be thought to be imputed to others on that account; whereas the very self-same *it* is imputed to others also; see ver. 24. it remains then that it was the promised seed, the Messiah, and his righteousness, which Abraham, by faith, looked unto, and believed in, that was made unto him righteousness by imputation. Now since so great and good a man as Abraham was not justified by works, but by faith in the righteousness of the Messiah, it follows, that none of his sons, nor any other person whatever, ought to seek for, or expect to be justified in any other way.

Ver. 4. *Now to him that worketh*, &c.] The apostle illustrates the former case by two sorts of persons in this and the next verse, who have different things accounted to them, and in a different manner. The one is represented as working, the other not. By the worker is meant, not one that works from, and upon principles of grace. The regenerate man is disposed to work for God; the man that has the spirit of God is capable of working; he that has the grace of Christ, and strength from him, can work well; he that believes in Christ, works in a right way; he that loves Christ, works freely, and from a right principle; and he that has Christ's glory in view, works to a right end; but the worker here, is one that works upon nature's principles, and with selfish views; one that works in the strength of nature, trusting to, and glorying in what he does; seeking righteousness by his work, and working for eternal life and salvation. Now let it be supposed, that such a worker not only thinks he does, but if it could be, really does all the works of the law, yields a perfect obedience to it; what *is the reward* that is, and will be *reckoned* to him? There's no reward due to the creature's work, though ever so perfect, arising from any desert or dignity in itself: there may be a reward by promise and compact; God may promise a reward to encourage to obedience, as he does in the law, which is not eternal life; for that is the free gift of God, and is only brought to light in the Gospel; and though heaven is called a reward, yet not of man's obedience, but Christ's; but admitting heaven itself to be the reward promised to the worker, in what manner must that be reckoned to him? *not of grace*; for grace and works can never agree together; for if the reward is reckoned for the man's works, then it is not of grace, *otherwise work is no more work*; and if it is of grace, then not for his works, *otherwise grace is no more grace*; it remains therefore, that if it is reckoned for his works, it must be *of debt*; it must be his due, as wages are to an hireling. Now this was not Abraham's case, which must have been, had he been justified by works; he had a reward reckoned to him, and accounted his, which was God himself, *I am thy shield, and exceeding great reward*; which must be reckoned to him, not of debt, but of grace; wherefore it follows, that he was justified, not by works, but by the grace of God imputed to him; that which his faith believed in for righteousness. The distinction of a reward of grace, and of debt, was known to the Jews; the one they called פרס, the other שכר: the former[d] they say is תגמול, *a benefit*, which is freely of grace bestowed on an undeserving person, or one he is not obliged to; the other is what is given, בדין, *of debt*, in strict justice.

Ver. 5. *But to him that worketh not*, &c.] Not that the believer does not work at all, but not from such principles, and with such views as the other; he does not work in order to obtain life and salvation; he does not seek for justification by his doings: *but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly*: or *that ungodly one*: particular reference is had to Abraham, who in his state

[c] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 5. 1. & 15. 2. & passim.

[d] Maimon. Bartenora & Yom Tob in Pirke Abot, c. 1. sect. 3.

of unregeneracy was an ungodly person; as all God's elect are in a state of nature, and are such when God justifies them, being without a righteousness of their own: wherefore he imputes the righteousness of another, even that of his own son, unto them: and though he justifies the ungodly, he does not justify their ungodliness, but them from it; nor will he, nor does he leave them to live and die in it; now to him that worketh not, that is perfect righteousness; or has no opportunity of working at all; or what he does, he does not do, that he might be justified by it; but exercises faith on God as justifying persons, who, like himself, are sinners, ungodly and destitute of a righteousness: *his faith is counted for righteousness*; not the act, but the object of it; which was Abraham's case, and therefore was not justified by works. The Vulgate Latin version here adds, *according to the purpose of the grace of God.*

Ver. 6. *Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man*, &c.] The apostle having instanced in Abraham, the father of the Jewish nation, cites some passages from David, king of Israel, a person of great note and esteem among the Jews, in favour of the doctrine he is establishing; who in a very proper and lively manner describes the happiness of such persons: *unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works.* This righteousness cannot be the righteousness of the law, or man's obedience to it; for that is a righteousness with works, is a man's own, and not imputed; and indeed is not a righteousness in the sight of God: nor does man's blessedness lie in, or come by it; no man is, or can be justified by it, nor saved by it, or attain to heaven and eternal happiness by the means of it; but the righteousness here spoken of is the righteousness of Christ, called the righteousness of God; and is better than that of angels or men; is complete and perfect; by which the law is honoured, and justice is satisfied. This is freely bestowed, and graciously *imputed* by God. Just in the same way his righteousness becomes ours, as Adam's sin did, which is by imputation; or in the same way that our sins became Christ's, his righteousness becomes ours; and as we have no righteousness of our own when God justifies us, this must be done by the righteousness of another; and that can be done no other way by the righteousness of another, than by imputing it to us: and which is done *without works*; not without the works of Christ, of which this righteousness consists; but without the works of the creature, or any consideration of them, which are utterly excluded from justification; for if these came into account, it would not be of grace, and boasting would not be removed. Now such who have this righteousness thus imputed to them, are happy persons: they are justified from all sin, and freed from all condemnation; their persons and services are acceptable to God; it will be always well with them; they are heirs of glory, and shall enjoy it.

Ver. 7. *Saying, blessed are they*, &c.] These words are cited from Psal. xxxii. 1. and contain the proof of the happiness of justified persons. In this citation the singular number is changed into the plural, to take in all sorts of men, Jews and Gentiles, and very agreeably to the sense of the original; for the word אשרי may be rendered *blessed are they*, or, *O the blessednesses*; that is, of every one of them, *whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered*: such whom God justifies by imputing the righteousness of his son to them, he removes their iniquities from them, which is meant by their being *forgiven*, and that as far as the east is from the west; he casts them behind his back, and into the depths of the sea, so that they shall never be found more: such whom he clothes with the robe of righteousness, and garments of salvation, their *sins are covered*; from the eye of divine justice, and shall never be seen more, or be brought against them to their condemnation, and therefore must be happy persons. The [e] Jews tell us, that "on the day of atonement Satan comes to "accuse Israel, and he particularizes their sins, and "the holy blessed God he particularizes their good "works, and takes a pair of balances, and puts their "sins against their good works, and weighs the one "against the other; and when the two scales of the "balances are alike, Satan goes to bring in other sins "to overweigh; what does the holy blessed God do? "he takes the sins out of the scale, and hides them "תחת פורפירי שלו, *under his purple garment*; and "when Satan comes and finds no iniquity there, as it "is said *the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and "there shall be none*; and when Satan sees this, he says "before him, Lord of the world, *thou hast taken away "the iniquity of thy people, thou hast covered all their "sin*, Selah." The purple garment they explain by מלבוש של רחמים שלו, *his garment of mercy*; which is true of the mercy of God covering the sins of his people, through the purple blood of his son; which is the purple covering of Christ, Cant. iii. 10. under which the saints go safe to glory, and by which blood their crimson and scarlet sins are blotted out, so as never to be seen more.

Ver. 8. *Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.*] As he does not to those whom he justifies in Christ, and by his righteousness; for the sins of such he has imputed to his son, as their surety; and he has bore them, took them away, having made full satisfaction for them; so that these persons will never be charged with them: they now appear before the throne without fault, and are blameless and irreproveable in the sight of God, and therefore must be eternally happy; for he will never think of their sins any more to their hurt; he'll remember them no more; he *will never reckon them to them*, but acquit them from them, justify and accept them; wherefore they must be secure from wrath and condemnation, enjoy much peace and comfort now, and be happy hereafter.

Ver. 9. Cometh *this blessedness then upon the circumcision* only? &c.] That is, upon the circumcised Jews; are they the only persons that partake of this happiness? the word *only* is rightly supplied, and is in the Claromontane exemplar used by Beza, and in the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions: *or upon the uncircumcision also?* upon the uncircumcised Gentiles; do not they likewise share in this blessedness? *for we say, that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness.* The design of these words with the following,

[e] Caphtor, fol. 59. 1, 2.

is to prove that the blessing of justification belongs to Gentiles as well as Jews, and that it is by faith, and not by circumcision; which is done by observing the state and condition Abraham was in when justified.

Ver. 10. *How was it then reckoned?* &c.] The Arabic version adds, *and when*; and the Ethiopic version reads it, *when was Abraham justified?* expressing the sense, not the words of the original text, with which agree the following questions: *when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision?* that is, was he justified, or his faith reckoned to him for righteousness, when he was a circumcised, or an uncircumcised person? *not in circumcision*; or when he was circumcised: for when it was said of him, that *he believed in the Lord*, and *he counted it to him for righteousness*, he was then uncircumcised, and remained so many years after: for this was before the birth of Ishmael, and Ishmael was *thirteen* years of age when he and his father Abraham were circumcised; so that it must be *fourteen* years, or thereabout, before his circumcision, that this declaration of his being a justified person was made; wherefore the apostle rightly adds, *but in uncircumcision*; or whilst an uncircumcised person: hence it clearly appears that circumcision could not be the cause of his justification, since it followed it; and if Abraham when uncircumcised was a justified person, as it is certain he was, why may not uncircumcised Gentiles be justified also? and especially when 'tis observed, that the covenant made with Abraham when uncircumcised, included the Gentiles; see Gen. xii. 3. and xvii. 4, 5, 6.

Ver. 11. *And he received the sign of circumcision*, &c.] Or *the sign circumcision*, as the Syriac version reads it, and so the Alexandrian copy, and two of Stephens's; that is, Abraham received at the hands of God, the commandment of circumcision, which was a *sign* or token of the covenant; not of grace, but of that peculiar covenant God made with Abraham and his natural seed, concerning their enjoyment of the land of Canaan; and which was a distinctive sign or badge, which distinguished the posterity of Abraham from other people, and was also a typical one; not of baptism, for circumcision was peculiar to Abraham's natural seed, whereas baptism is not, but was administered to Gentiles as well as Jews; circumcision was confined to males only, not so baptism; circumcision bears no likeness to, nor any resemblance with baptism, whereas there is always some likeness and agreement between the type and the antitype; besides, if this had been the case, circumcision would have ceased when baptism took place, whereas it is certain it did not, but continued in full force with the rest of the ceremonies until the death of Christ; and it is as certain, that baptism was administered and continued to be administered three or four years before that time; which fully demonstrates the falsehood of that assertion, that *baptism* succeeds or comes in the room of circumcision; whereas baptism was in full force before circumcision was out of date: but circumcision was a typical sign of Christ, as all the ceremonies of the law were, and of the shedding of his blood, to cleanse from all sin, original and actual, and also of the circumcision of the heart. And was, moreover, *a seal of the righteousness of faith*: or which *sign was a seal*; and so it signifies the same as before; σημεῖα λέγουσι τὰς σφραγῖδας, *signs, so they call seals*, says Harpocratian [f], and *to be signed*, he says, is used, *instead of being sealed*: or it may be expressive of something else, as that circumcision was a seal, not for secrecy, but for certainty; it being a confirmation, not merely of the sincerity of Abraham's faith, but of his justifying righteousness, which was not his faith, but that which his faith looked to; and *which he had*, both faith and righteousness, *yet being uncircumcised*; whence it follows, that he was not justified by his circumcision, but by a righteousness which he had before he was circumcised, or otherwise his circumcision could not have been a seal of it: though this clause, *which he had, yet being uncircumcised*, may be rendered, *which should be in the uncircumcision*, that is, in the uncircumcised Gentiles; and the sense be, that circumcision was a seal to Abraham, and gave assurance to him that he should be the father of many nations in a spiritual sense; and that the righteousness of faith which he had, should also come upon, and be imputed to the uncircumcised Gentiles; and accordingly it may be observed, that this seal was continued in full force on his natural seed, until this promise began to take place, and then it was abolished: this seal was broken off when the middle wall of partition was broken down, and the word of righteousness and faith, or the Gospel preaching justification by the righteousness of Christ, was ordered to be published to the Gentile world. It may be inquired whether circumcision being called a seal, will prove that baptism is a seal of the covenant? I answer, that circumcision was only a seal to Abraham of a peculiar covenant made with him, and of a particular promise made to him, and was it to be admitted a seal of the covenant of grace, it will not prove baptism to be such; since, as has been observed, baptism does not succeed it in place, in time, and use; and could this be allowed that it succeeds it, and is a seal of the righteousness of faith, as that was, it can only be a seal to them that have both faith and righteousness, and not to them that have neither; it would only at most be a seal to believers. But, alas! not ordinances, but other things more valuable than they, are the seals of the covenant, and of believers; the blood of Christ is the seal, and the only seal of the covenant of grace, by which its promises and blessings are ratified and confirmed; and the Holy Spirit is the only earnest, pledge, seal, and sealer of the saints, until the day of redemption. The apostle uses the word *seal* concerning circumcision, it being a word his countrymen made use of when they spoke of it, thus paraphrasing on Cant. iii. 8. they say [g], "every "one of them was sealed, חתימת מילה, *with the seal* "*of circumcision* upon their flesh, as Abraham was "sealed in his flesh:" *that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised*: that is, his circumcision was a seal unto him that he should be so, which explains and confirms the sense of the former clause; not a father of the uncircumcised Gentiles by natural generation, for so he was only the father

[f] Lexicon in Decem Rhetores, p. 290. Ed. Maussac.

[g] Targum in Cant. 3. 8.

of the Jews, but of them as they were believers; and not so called because he was the author of their faith, but because they have the same sort of faith he had: *that righteousness might be imputed to them also*; not Abraham's faith and righteousness, nor their own, but the righteousness of Christ received by faith, which is unto all, and upon all them that believe, without any difference of Jew or Gentile. Now when the apostle styles Abraham the father of *all* believers, even of uncircumcised ones, he says no other than what the Jews frequently own. Says one [h] of them, speaking of the Ishmaelites; "they are the seed of Abraham, who was ראש המאמינים, *the head of them that believe*;" and says [i] another, "Hagar might bring "the first-fruits, and read, as it is said to Abraham, "*a father of many nations have I made thee*; for he is "אב לכל העולם כולו, *the father of the whole world*, "who enter under the wings of the Shekinah;" and says the same writer elsewhere [k], having mentioned the above passage, "they said in times past, thou wast "the father of the Syrians, but now thou art *the* "*father of the whole world*: wherefore every stranger "may say this, *as thou hast sworn to our fathers*: for "Abraham was *the father of the whole world*: seeing, "למד אמונה, *he has taught the true faith*." The apostle reasons on what they themselves allow, to prove that the blessedness of justification comes not only upon the Jews, but upon the Gentiles also.

Ver. 12. *And the father of circumcision*, &c.] So the Jews call Abraham ראש הנימולים [l], *the head of those that are circumcised*: and ראש למולים [m], *the head to them that are circumcised*: but the apostle here says, he is a father *to them who are not of the circumcision only*; not to the Jews only, in a spiritual sense, and not to all of them, since some were *of Israel*, who were *not Israel*, not Israelites indeed, or true believers; *but* to such *also* who *walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which* he had, *being* yet *uncircumcised*; that is, who have the same faith he had; imitate and follow him in the exercise of faith; walk by faith, as he did when he was uncircumcised, as they are; and so the Jews say [n], "Abraham is the "father of all, באים אחריו באמונתו, *that go after* "*him in his faith*."

Ver. 13. *For the promise that he should be heir of the world*, &c.] This promise is thought by some to refer to that of his being *the father of many nations*; by whom the Gentiles are particularly meant, who are sometimes called *the world*, and *the whole world*; or the elect of God, the believing part of the world; whether among Jews or Gentiles, who sometimes go by the name of *the world* in Scripture: but to this it may be objected, that the promise here spoken of is made to Abraham's seed, as well as to himself; by which is meant not the Messiah, who is indeed heir of the world, and all things in it, but all believers, whether Jews or Gentiles; as appears from ver. 16. and therefore cannot be both heirs and inheritance too. Others think the land of Canaan is designed, and by a synecdoche, a part of the world is put for the whole world; but that land is never so called, and, besides, the promise of it belonged to those of the law, and to them only, contrary to what the apostle argues, ver. 14, 16. Others therefore consider Canaan as a type of heaven, which Abraham and his spiritual seed are heirs of by promise. But rather, by *the world* here, is meant, both this world and that which is to come; Abraham and all believers are the *heirs* of this world, and of all things in it; *all things* are theirs, and, among the rest, *the world*, Christ being theirs, and they being Christ's; he is heir of all things, and they are joint heirs with him; and how little soever they may enjoy of it now, the time is coming, when they, by virtue of their right, *shall inherit the earth* see Psal. xxxvii. 9, 11. and now they have as much of it as is necessary, and with a blessing, and which the Jews call their *world*. It is a saying in their Talmud [o], עולמך תראה בחייך, *thou shalt see thy world* in thy life-time; which the gloss explains, *thou shalt find*, or enjoy all thy necessities, or what is needful for thee; and of Abraham they say [p], that "he was the foundation of the world, "and that for his sake the world was created;" and introduce God saying of him thus [q], "as I am the "only one in my world, so he is the only one, בעולמו, "*in his world*." And as he and all the saints are heirs of this world, so of the world to come, the future salvation, the inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, never-fading, and reserved in the heavens; for they are heirs of God himself, and shall inherit all things; now this large and comprehensive promise, which takes in the things of time and eternity, was *not to Abraham, or to his seed through the law* not through the law of circumcision, or on the score of their obedience to that, for this promise was made before that was enjoined; see Gen. xii. 2, 3. nor through the law of Moses, which was not as yet given; nor through the law of nature, nor by any righteousness of the law; *but through the righteousness of faith*: by virtue of which they have *all things that pertain to life and godliness*; and have *the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come*; enjoy with a blessing what they now have, and have a right and title to the heavenly glory.

Ver. 14. *For if they which are of the law be heirs*, &c.] That is, if the Jews who are under the law, and are seeking for righteousness and life by the works of it, should, on the account of their obedience to it, be heirs of the grace of life and of glory, *faith is made void*; for if the right to the inheritance is by the works of the law, there is no room for faith; that can be of no use or service; *and the promise made of none effect*: if salvation is by works, it is to no purpose for God to promise, or men to believe; for the thing promised depends not upon God's promise, but upon man's obedience to the law; and if that is not perfectly observed, as it cannot possibly be, then the promise

[h] In Caphtor, fol. 121. 1.
[i] Maimon. Hilchot Biccurim, c. 4. sect. 3.
[k] Comment. in Misn. Biccurim, c. 1. sect. 4. Vid. T. Hieros. Biccurim, fol. 64. 1. & T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 13. 1. & Zohar in Gen. fol. 69. 3.
[l] Tzeror Hammor, fol. 19. 3.
[m] Juchasin, fol. 5. 2. Midrash Esther, fol. 88. 3.
[n] R. Sol. Hammelech Michlol. Jophi in Mal. ii. 15.
[o] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 17. 1.
[p] Caphtor, fol. 99. 2.
[q] T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 118. 1.

of God stands for nothing, and is in course made void. The apostle here argues from the absurdities which follow upon the doctrine of justification by works, as he does from the different effects of the law, in the following verse.

Ver. 15. *Because the law worketh wrath,* &c.] Not the wrath of man, though that is sometimes stirred up through the prohibitions of the law, to which the carnal mind of man is enmity, but the wrath of God: the law is so far from justifying sinners, that it curses and condemns them; and when it comes into the heart and is let into the conscience of a sinner, it fills with terrible apprehensions of the wrath of God, and a fearful looking-for of his judgment and fiery indignation: *for where no law is,* there is *no transgression;* שאינו לא מצוה ולא עבירה[r]; a sort of a proverbial expression: had the law of Moses not been given, there was the law of nature which sin is a transgression of; but the law of Moses was added for the better discovery and detection of sin, which would not have been so manifest without it, and which may be the apostle's sense; that where there is no law, there is no knowledge of any transgression; and so the Ethiopic version reads the words, *if the law had not come, there would have been none who would have known sin:* but the law is come, and there is a law by which is the knowledge of sin, and therefore no man can be justified by it; since that convinces him of sin, and fills him with a sense of divine wrath on account of it.

Ver. 16. *Therefore it is of faith that it might be by grace,* &c.] Meaning either the promise of being heir of the world, or the inheritance itself, or adoption which gives heirship, or remission of sin, or the blessing of justification, either and all of these are of faith; not as the cause or condition of them, but as the means of God's fixing and appointing to be the recipient of all and each of them: which is done, *that it might be by grace;* appear to be of the free grace and favour of God, as each of these blessings are: forasmuch as every blessing is received by faith, 'tis manifest it must be by grace; since faith itself is a gift of God's grace, and lies purely in receiving favours at the hand of God, to whom it gives all the glory of them: and this is done with a further view, *to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed.* The promise of the above blessings, particularly of the inheritance which is made in the covenant of grace, ordered in all things and sure, and which could not be disannulled by the law that came after it; this being by faith and of grace, and not of works, nor at all depending upon them, becomes sure to all believers, to all Abraham's spiritual seed: *not to that only which is of the law:* to the Jews, who are said to be of the law, in distinction to the Gentiles who were without it: and designs such of them as were believers in Christ, and to whom the Gospel was the power of God unto salvation; to these the promise was, and was sure, and not to them only: *but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham:* to the Gentiles, who though they are not by natural descent from Abraham, yet are of the same faith with him, and so are his seed in a spiritual sense: *who is the father of us all;* whether Jews or Gentiles, who are Christ's, and so Abraham's spiritual seed, and heirs of eternal life, according to the free promise of grace.

Ver. 17. *As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,* &c.] The passage referred to, is in Gen. xvii. 4, 5. which proves him to be a father not of the Jews only, since they cannot be called *many nations,* but of the Gentiles also; and which must be understood in a spiritual sense, for Abraham was the father of them, *before him whom he believed,* even *God;* that is, he was so, either in the sight of God, who sees not as man sees; in his account, he was the father of many nations, long before he really in fact was; or else, *against* or *like unto him,* as the word may signify: as God was the father of many nations, so was Abraham, though not in such a sense as he is; and as God is the father of us all that believe, so was Abraham; there is some little likeness and resemblance in this between them, though not sameness. The object of his faith is described as he, *who quickeneth the dead;* meaning either the dead body of Abraham and Sarah's womb; or Isaac, who was given up for dead; or the Gentiles, who were dead in trespasses and sins; or rather the dead bodies of men at the last day, a work which none but the almighty God can effect; the consideration of which is sufficient to engage faith in the promises of God, and a dependence on him for the fulfilment of them: and who stands further described as he, *who calleth those things which be not, as though they were;* so he called Abraham the father of many nations, when he was not in fact, as if he really was; and the Gentiles his seed and offspring, before they were; and when he comes effectually to call them by his grace, they are represented as *things which are not,* whom he called, *to bring to nought things that are;* they were not his people, nor his children, and he called them so, and by his grace made them so, and made them appear to be so; for as in creation so in regeneration, God calls and brings that into being which before was not: and the phrase seems to be an allusion to the creation of all things out of nothing; and it is a Rabbinical one, for so the Jews speaking of the creation say[s], "קורא אל אין, "*he calls to that which is not,* and it is excluded; (*i. e.* "all things are excluded out of it, as a chicken out of "an egg;) and to that which is, and it is established, "and to the world, and it is stretched out."

Ver. 18. *Who against hope believed in hope,* &c.] Abraham believed the promise of God, *that he might become the father of many nations,* being assisted by a supernatural aid: *in hope;* of the fulfilment of it by the grace and power of God: *against hope;* against all visible, rational grounds of hope; Sarah's womb and his own body being dead, but inasmuch as God had said it, he believed: *according to that which is spoken, so shall thy seed be;* his faith rested upon the word of God, which shewed the nature of it, and that it was of the right kind.

Ver. 19. *And being not weak in faith,* &c.] Abraham was not weak in the exercise of his faith, on the promise of God; nor was his faith weakened about the accomplishment of it, neither by the length of time after the promise was made, nor by the seeming insuperable difficulties of nature which attended it: for he

[r] Caphtor, fol. 10. 1.

[s] R. Solomon ben Gabirol in Cether Malcuth apud L. Capell. in loc.

considered not his own body now dead. The Alexandrian copy reads without the negative, *he considered his own body now dead*, and so the Syriac version: which makes his faith the greater, that though he did consider his case, yet his faith was not weakened: the phrase, *his body now dead*, is an *euphemism* of the *membrum virile*, which by the Jews, when unfit for generation, is called אבר מת, *membrum emortuum* [t]: *when he was about an hundred years old* not being quite an hundred years of age, wanting a year or thereabout: *neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb* how unfit she was to conceive and bear children: now though he might consider these things in his mind, yet they did not dwell upon his mind, nor he upon them; at least he did not consider them, so as to distrust the divine promise.

Ver. 20. *He staggered not at the promise of God*, &c.] There is no reason to stagger at, or hesitate about any of the promises of God, since they are made by him that cannot lie; his faithfulness is engaged to perform them; with him all things are possible; every promise is in Christ, yea and amen, and never did any fail; and yet so it is, that some of God's children, *through unbelief*, do stagger at the promises of God; thinking either that they are too great for them, or demur upon them through difficulties which attend them: *but* so did not Abraham, he *was strong in faith*; nothing moved him, no difficulties discouraged him, he made no demur upon the promise, nor had the least hesitation in his mind about the accomplishment of it; but was fully assured that so it would be, as God had said; and thus he was *giving glory to God* ascribing to him the glory of his veracity, faithfulness, power, grace, and goodness, as all such who are strong in faith do; such persons bring the most glory to God, and are the most comfortable in their own souls. This phrase, לאתתקפא במהימנותא, *to be strong* or strengthened, or strengthen themselves *in faith*, is to be met with in Jewish writings [u], and is particularly used of the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; all the tribes of Israel are not said to be חזקים באמונתם, *strong in their faith*; only the tribe of Levi, when Moses stood in the gate and said, *who is on the Lord's side, let him come unto me*: whoever is חזק באמונתו, *strong in his faith* [w]; and there were none in all Israel but the tribe of Levi, who were *strong in their faith*.

Ver. 21. *And being fully persuaded*, &c.] He had not only faith, a strong faith, but full assurance of faith: *that what he* (God) *had promised*; though it was so long ago, and there were so many difficulties in the way; *he was able*, being the Lord God Almighty, *to perform*; so his faith rested upon the power of God, with whom nothing is impossible.

Ver. 22. *And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.*] Not because his faith was strong, and he had a full assurance of it, but because it was right, resting on the promise of God, and relying upon his power and faithfulness to perform it; for though the righteousness of faith is not imputed to any sort of believers, not to mere nominal ones, yet to all such as have true faith, though it may be but weak; for faith, as to nature, kind, and object, though not as to degree, is the same in all true believers, and the same righteousness is imputed to one as to another.

Ver. 23. *Now it was not written for his sake alone*, &c.] This was not left on the sacred records, Gen. xv. 6. *that it was imputed to him*; purely on his account, merely for his sake, as an encomium of his faith, and an honourable testimony to it, and for the encouragement of it; though this was doing him a very great honour, and was one design of it.

Ver. 24. *But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed*, &c.] What was written in the books of the Old Testament, was not written merely on account of them who are the subjects thereof, but for the use, learning, instruction and profit of saints under the New-Testament dispensation; and particularly this concerning the imputation of Abraham's faith for righteousness, or of the imputation of the righteousness of faith unto him for justification; which was not Abraham's faith, but that *righteousness* which his faith looked to, and laid hold on: see ver. 12. for Abraham's faith itself could never be reckoned for righteousness to another, nor indeed was it to himself; but such as believe as Abraham did, they have the same righteousness imputed to them as he had; and truly of the same kind is the faith of Abraham, who believed in God that quickeneth the dead, and that of ours: *if, or seeing we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead*; which is descriptive of the faith of New-Testament believers, and of the object of it; see ch. x. 9, 10. and which object of faith is further described in the following *verse*.

Ver. 25. *Who was delivered for our offences*, &c.] Christ was delivered into the hands of men, and into the hands of justice, and unto death; and he was delivered by men, by Judas, to the chief priests, and by them to Pilate, and by Pilate to the Jews and Roman soldiers to be put to death; and he was also delivered up by his father into the hands of justice and death, according to his determinate counsel and fore-knowledge; but not without his own free consent, who voluntarily laid down his life, and gave himself a ransom for his people: he was delivered to death, not for any offences of his own, for he committed none; nor for the offences of angels, for these were not spared; nor for the offences of all men, since all will not be saved; but for the offences of all God's elect: he was delivered for these, as the causes of his death, and as the end for which he died; namely, to make reconciliation, atonement, and satisfaction for them; which shews the love of the father in delivering him up, and the grace and condescension of the son in being willing to be delivered up on such an account: the nature and end of Christ's death may be learnt from hence, that he died not merely as a martyr, or as an example; nor only for the good, but in the room and stead of his people: we may also learn from hence the nature of sin, the strictness of justice, the obligations we lie under to Christ, and how many favours and blessings we may expect from God through him: who also *was raised again for our justification*; he was raised again from the dead by his father, to whom this is often ascribed; and by himself, by his own power, which

[t] T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 55. 2. & Gloss. in ib. Sanhedrin, fol. 55. 1. & Gloss. in ib. Shebuot, fol. 18. 1.

[u] Zohar in Gen. fol. 83. 4.

[w] Tzeror Hammor, fol. 87. 4.

proves him to be the mighty God; and this was done not only that he might live an immortal and glorious life in our nature, having finished the work he undertook and came about, but *for our justification*. He died in the room and stead of his people, and by dying made satisfaction for their sins; he rose again as their head and representative, and was legally discharged, acquitted, and justified, and they in him. Christ's resurrection did not procure the justification of his people, that was done by his obedience and death; but was for the testification of it, that it might fully appear that sin was atoned for, and an everlasting righteousness was brought in; and for the application of it, or that Christ might live and see his righteousness imputed, and applied to all those for whom he had wrought it out.

CHAP. V.

THE Apostle having clearly stated, and fully proved the doctrine of justification by the righteousness of faith, proceeds to observe the comfortable fruits and effects of this great blessing, known and enjoyed by the believer; as also the source and spring of it, the love of God, which appears in the death of Christ, in the room and stead of his people, which is the foundation on which it stands; and likewise gives an illustration of this benefit, by comparing the two heads, Adam and Christ, together. The first fruit and effect of justification, as a benefit perceived and enjoyed by faith, is peace with God through Christ, ver. 1. The next is access through the Mediator to the throne of grace, where justified ones stand with a holy boldness and confidence, and the third is a cheerful hope of eternal glory, ver. 2. yea, such not only have joy in the hope of what is to come, but glory even in present afflictions; which prevents an objection that might be made to the abovementioned fruits and effects of justification, taken from the tribulations which saints are exercised with: and what occasions glorying even in these, is the sanctified use, or happy produce of afflictions, these being the means of exercising and increasing patience; by means of which a larger experience of divine things is gained; and through that, hope is confirmed, and all influenced by a plenteous discovery of the love of God to the soul, by the spirit, ver. 4, 5. an instance of which love is given, ver. 6. in Christ's dying for men; which love is enhanced by the character and condition of the persons for whom Christ died, being ungodly, and without strength; and by the time of it, being due time: then follows a further illustration of this love, by comparing it with what instances of love are to be found among men, ver. 7. by which it appears to be unparalleled; since scarcely for a righteous man, peradventure for a good man, one would die, yet no man dies for the ungodly, as Christ did: hence as his, so his father's love is highly commended, by giving him up to death for persons while in such a state and condition, and under such a character, ver. 8. and justification now springing from this love, and being founded on the death of Christ, hence follow a security from wrath to come, ver. 9. a certainty of salvation, ver. 10. which is strongly argued from the different characters those Christ died for bear, before and after reconciliation, and from the death to the life of Christ, ver. 10. and also a rejoicing and glorying in God through Christ, full expiation being made by his blood for sin, and this received by faith, ver. 11. and then the apostle proceeds to compare the two heads, Adam and Christ, together; the design of which is to shew the largeness and freeness of the love and grace of God; how righteousness for justification comes by Christ; and how the persons, before described as sinners and ungodly, came to be in such a condition; and that is through the sin of the first man, in whom they all were, and in whom they all sinned and died, ver. 12. wherefore there must be a law before the law of Moses, or there could have been no sin, ver. 13. but that sin was in being, and was reckoned and imputed to the posterity of Adam, is clear from this single instance, death's power even over infants, from the times of Adam to Moses, ver. 14. who therefore must be a public head, representing all his posterity; so that they were involved in the guilt of his sin, which brought death upon them; and in this he was a type of Christ, as is asserted in the same verse; that so as Adam was but one, and by one sin of his conveyed death to all his seed; so Christ, the Mediator, is but one, and by his one obedience conveys righteousness and life to all his seed: and yet in some things there is a dissimilitude; sin and death, through the first man, are conveyed in a natural way to his offspring, but righteousness and life from Christ in a way of grace, ver. 15. It was one offence of Adam's, which brought condemnation and death upon all his posterity; but the righteousness of Christ is not only a justification of his seed from that one offence, but from all others, ver. 16. the one is unto death, the other unto life; and greater is the efficacy in the one to quicken, than in the other to kill, ver. 17. where a repetition is made of what is said in ver. 15. with an explanation, and the similitude between the two heads is clearly expressed, ver. 18. where condemnation on account of the sin of Adam, and justification through the righteousness of Christ, are opposed to each other; and both as extending to the whole of their several respective offspring, condemnation through Adam's offence to all his natural seed, and justification of life through Christ's righteousness to all his spiritual seed; which is still more fully and clearly expressed in ver. 19. where the way and manner in which the one become sinners, and the other righteous, is plainly directed to; that it is, by the imputation of Adam's disobedience to the one, and by the imputation of Christ's righteousness to the other: in ver. 20. an objection is obviated, which might be formed thus; if justification is by the grace of God, and through the obedience and righteousness of Christ, then the law is of no use; what purpose does that serve? what occasion was there for its entrance? The apostle replies, that

though justification is not by it, yet a good end is answered by its entrance; for hereby sin is more known to be what it is, both original and actual; and the grace of God appears more abundant in justification from it, and in the pardon of it; and this grace is further illustrated in ver. 21. by comparing sin and grace together, and the different effects of their empire over the sons of men; the one reigning unto death, the other reigning through righteousness to eternal life by Christ.

Ver. 1. *Therefore being justified by faith*, &c.] Not that faith is at the first of our justification; for that is a sentence which passed in the mind of God from all eternity, and which passed on Christ, and on all the elect considered in him, when he rose from the dead; see ch. iv. 25. nor is it the chief, or has it the chief place in justification; it is not the efficient cause of it, it is God that justifies, and not faith; it is not the moving cause of it, that is the free grace of God; it is not the matter of it, that is the righteousness of Christ: we are not justified by faith, either as God's work in us, for, as such, it is a part of sanctification; nor as our work or act, as exercised by us, for then we should be justified by works, by something of our own, and have whereof to glory; but we are justified by faith objectively and relatively, as that relates to the object Christ, and his righteousness; or as it is a means of our knowledge, and perception of our justification by Christ's righteousness, and of our enjoying the comfort of it; and so *we* come to *have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ*. The apostle having set the doctrine of justification in a clear light, and fully proved that it is not by the works of men, but by the righteousness of God; and having mentioned the several causes of it, proceeds to consider its effects, among which, *peace with God* stands in the first place; and is so called, to distinguish it from peace with men, which persons, though justified by faith in Christ's righteousness, may not have; but are sure, having a sense of this, to find peace with God, even with him against whom they have sinned, whose law they have transgressed, and whose justice they have affronted; reconciliation for sin being made, and a justifying righteousness brought in, and this imputed and applied to them, they have that *peace of God*, that tranquillity and serenity of mind, the same with *peace with God* here, *which passes all understanding*; and is better experienced than expressed: and this is all *through our Lord Jesus Christ*; it springs from his atoning sacrifice, and precious blood, by which he has made peace; and is communicated through the imputation of his righteousness, and the application of his blood; and is only felt and enjoyed in a way of believing, by looking to him as the Lord our righteousness.

Ver. 2. *By whom also we have access by faith*, &c.] The access here spoken of is not to the blessing of justification; for though that is a grace which we have access to by Christ, and come at the knowledge of by faith, and enjoy the comfort of through it; and is a grace in which persons stand, and from which they shall never fall, and lays a solid foundation for rejoicing in hope of eternal glory; yet this sense would make the apostle guilty of a great tautology; and besides, he's not speaking of that blessing itself, but of its effects; and here of one distinct from *peace with God*, before mentioned, as the word *also* manifestly shews: nor does it design any other blessing of grace, as pardon, adoption, sanctification, *&c.* and an access thereunto; not unto the free grace, favour, and good will of God, the source of all blessings; but to the throne of grace, which may be called *that grace*, because of its name, for God, as the God of all grace, sits upon it; it is an high favour to be admitted to it; 'tis grace persons come thither for, and which they may expect to find there: and *in*, or *at which we stand*; which denotes boldness, courage, and intrepidity, and a freedom from a servile fear and bashful spirit, and a continued constant attendance at it; all which is consistent with reverence, humility, and submission to the will of God. Now access to the throne of grace, and standing at that, are *by* Christ. There's no access to God in our own name and righteousness, and upon the foot of our own works. Christ is the only way of access to God, and acceptance with him; he is the Mediator between God and us; he introduces into his father's presence, gives audience at his throne, and renders both persons and services acceptable unto him: and this access is also *by faith*; and that both in God the father, as our covenant-God and father; in faith of interest in his love and favour; believing his power and faithfulness, his fulness and sufficiency, and that he is a God hearing and answering prayer: and also in the Lord Jesus Christ; in his person for acceptance; in his righteousness for justification; in his blood for pardon; and in his fulness for every supply: and such as have access to the throne of grace by faith in Christ, being comfortably persuaded of their justification before God, through his righteousness imputed to them, can and do *rejoice in hope of the glory of God*; which is another effect of justification by faith: by the *glory of God*: which is another effect of justification by faith: by the *glory of God*, is not meant the essential glory of God; nor that which we ought to seek in all that we are concerned, and which we are to ascribe unto him on the account of his perfections and works; but that everlasting glory and happiness which he has prepared for his people, has promised to them, and has called them to by Christ, and will bestow upon them; of which he has given them a good hope through grace; and in the hope and believing views of which they can, and do rejoice, even amidst a variety of afflictions and tribulations in this world. The Vulgate Latin version reads, *in hope of the glory of the children of God*; eternal glory being proper to them.

Ver. 3. *And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also*, &c.] The tribulations of the saints are many and various, through the hatred of the world, the temptations of Satan, their own corruptions; and are the will of their heavenly father; what Christ has foretold, and they expect; and here particularly design such as are for Christ's sake, which being supported under, and carried through, they glory in: not that these are desirable in themselves, and to the flesh; but they glory in them as they are for Christ's sake, and in a good cause; as they are trials of grace, and of use for the exercise of it: and as they are in the exercise of grace, amidst these tribulations, and are comforted under them, and are helped to have regard to the heavenly

glory. The ground of which glorying is, that these afflictions are the means of promoting patience, experience, and hope: *knowing this, that tribulation worketh patience;* patience is a grace, of which God is the author; it is one of the fruits of the spirit; the word of God is the means of its being first implanted; and afflictions are the means of promoting it, when they are sanctified; otherwise they produce impatience, murmurings, and repinings; there's great need of patience under them; and, by divine grace, they are the matter and occasion of exercising, and so of increasing it.

Ver. 4. *And patience experience,* &c.] As tribulations tend to exercise and increase patience, so patience being exercised and increased, enlarges the saints' stock and fund of experience; of the love and grace of God communicated to them at such seasons; of his faithfulness in fulfilling his promises; of his power in supporting them; and of their own frailty and weakness; and so are taught humility, thankfulness, and resignation to the will of God: *and experience hope;* hope is a gift of God's grace, and is implanted in regeneration, but abounds, increases, and becomes more strong and lively by experience of the love, grace, mercy, power, and faithfulness of God.

Ver. 5. *And hope maketh not ashamed,* &c.] As a vain hope does, things not answering to expectation, it deceives, and is lost; but the grace of hope is of such a nature, as that it never fails, deceives, or disappoints: it neither makes ashamed, nor have persons that have it any reason to be ashamed of it; neither of the grace itself, which is a good one; nor of the ground and foundation of it, the person and righteousness of Christ; nor of the object of it, eternal glory: *because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us.* By *the love of God* is meant, not that love by which we love God, for hope does not depend upon, nor is it supported by our love and obedience to God; but the love of God to us, of which some instances are given in the following verses: this is said to *be shed abroad in our hearts;* which denotes the plenty and abundance of it, and the full and comfortable sensation which believers have of it: *by the Holy Spirit;* who leads into, and makes application of it: *and is given to us;* for that purpose, as the applier of all grace, the Comforter, and the earnest of heaven. Now the love which the spirit sheds abroad in the heart, is the source and spring, both of justification itself, which is owing to the free grace of God, and of all the effects of it, as peace with God, access to the throne of grace, rejoicing in hope of the glory of God, the usefulness of afflictions, and the stability of hope, and is here alleged as the reason of all.

Ver. 6. *For when we were yet without strength,* &c.] The apostle having mentioned the love of God proceeds to give an instance, and which is a full proof and demonstration of it, which is, that *in due time Christ died for the ungodly.* That Christ died is certain; the death of Christ was foretold in prophecy, typified by the sacrifices of slain beasts, was spoken of by himself, both before and since his death; his enemies have never denied it; and this was the sum of the ministry of the apostles, and is the great article of faith: and that the death of Christ is a singular instance of the love of God, is evident by considering the person that died, the son of God in human nature, his own, his only-begotten son, his beloved son; the concern which God had in it, by willing, ordering, and appointing it, awaking the sword of justice against him, not sparing him, but delivering him up for us all; also the nature, kind, and manner of his death, and particularly the persons for whom he died, here described: he *died for the ungodly;* not for himself, he had no sins of his own to die for, nor did he want any happiness to procure; nor for angels, but for men; and these not holy, just, and good men, but ungodly; and not as a mere martyr, or only by way of example to them, and so for their good; but as the Syriac version reads it, חלף רשיעא, *in the room, or stead of the ungodly,* as their surety to make satisfaction for their sins. The Jews have a notion of the Messiah's being a substitute, and standing in the place and stead of sinners; and they say[x], "that Aaron filled up the "place of the first Adam, and was brought near in the "room of him;" which is true of Christ, the antitype of Aaron. On those words, *I will give a man for thee,* Isa. xliii. 4. the doctors[y] say, "don't read Adam, but "Edom; for when God removes the decree (or punishment) from a particular man, he provides for the "attribute of justice in the room of the man that "sinned, איש אחר בא מאדום, *another man that comes* "*from Edom;*" referring, as I think, to Isa. lxiii. 1. And this their character of ungodly shews, that not goodness in man, but love in God, was the moving cause of Christ's dying for them; and that the end of his dying was to atone for their ungodliness; and to illustrate the love of God the more towards them in this instance, they are said to be *without strength* at that time; being so enfeebled by sin, that they were not capable of fulfilling the law, of atoning for the transgressions of it, of redeeming themselves from slavery, of beginning and carrying on a work of holiness in their hearts, nor indeed of doing one good thing. Add to all this, that Christ died for these persons *in due time;* in the most fit, proper, and convenient season to illustrate the love and grace of God; when man appeared both weak and wicked; when the weakness of the legal dispensation had been sufficiently evinced, and the wickedness of man, both among Jews and Gentiles, was at a very great height: or rather by *due time* is meant the fulness of time; the time appointed in council by God, agreed to by Christ, and fixed in prophecy; before the departure of the sceptre from Judah, the destruction of the second temple, and at the close of Daniel's weeks.

Ver. 7. *For scarcely for a righteous man will one die,* &c.] The design of this, and the following verse, is to shew that Christ's dying for ungodly persons is an instance of kindness that is matchless and unparalleled. By *a righteous man,* is not meant a truly gracious, holy man; nor one that is made righteous by the obedience of Christ; but one that is so in his own eyes, and in the esteem of others, being outwardly moral and righteous before men; who keeps to the letter of the law, and does, as he imagines, what that externally requires:

[x] Tzeror Hammor, fol. 96. 1. & 97. 4. & 99. 3.

[y] Tzeror Hammor, fol. 92. 4.

such were the Pharisees among the Jews, who, though they were had in much outward esteem and veneration among the people, yet were rather feared than loved: and it would have been a difficult thing to have found a person that would cheerfully venture, and lay down his life for any of that complexion and cast: *yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die.* By *a good man*, is not meant a man made so by the grace of God, and who is indeed truly and properly the only good man; but a liberal and beneficent man, who was very bountiful in his charitable distributions to the poor, and very liberal in contributing towards the charge of sacrifices, repairs of the temple, &c. and did more this way than what the law obliged to. Now for such a man perhaps there might be some found so daring and hardy, as to venture and lay down their lives, when there was any danger of his, or any necessity for so doing; so great an interest such men had in the affections of the people. And so the Jews [z] distinguish between צדיק, *a righteous man*, and חסיד, *a good man.* They say [a], "there is a righteous man that is "good, and there is a righteous man that is not good; "but he that is good for heaven, and the creatures, *i. e.* "for God and men, this is צדיק טוב, *a righteous* "*good man;* but he that is good to God, and evil to "men, this is צדיק שאינו טוב, *a righteous man that is* "*not good.*" The whole body of the people of the Jews were divided into three sorts: take a short sentence out of their Talmud [b], not to support the justness of the characters, but for the sake of this threefold division of the people: "three things are said concerning "the paring of the nails, צדיק, *a righteous man* buries "them, חסיד, *a good man* burns them, רשע, *a wicked man* "casts them away." Now to this division of the people the apostle alludes; and there is in the words a beautiful gradation, scarcely for one of the צדיקים, *righteous* men, who does just what he is obliged to do by the law, and no more, will any die; perhaps it may be, that for one of חסידים, *the good men*, who are very liberal to the poor, and towards defraying all the expenses of the temple service, in which they exceed the strict demands of the law, some may be found willing to die; but who'll die for the רשעים, *the wicked* and ungodly, the profligate and abandoned part of the people? not one, but Christ died for the ungodly: wherefore if instances could be produced of men's dying either for righteous men, or good men, these would not come up to the instance of Christ's dying for men, who were neither righteous nor good.

Ver. 8. *But God commendeth his love towards us,* &c.] That is, he hath manifested it, which was before hid in his heart; he has given clear evidence of it, a full proof and demonstration of it; he has so confirmed it by this instance, that there's no room nor reason to doubt of it; he has illustrated and set it off with the greater lustre by this circumstance of it, *in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.* God's elect were sinners in Adam, in whom they were naturally and federally, as all mankind were; hence polluted and guilty; and so they are in their own persons whilst unregenerate: they are dead in sin, and live in it, commit it, are slaves unto it, and are under the power and dominion of it; and many of them are the chief and vilest of sinners; and such they were considered when Christ died for them: but are not God's people sinners after conversion? yes; but sin has not the dominion over them; their life is not a course of sinning, as before; and besides, they are openly justified and pardoned, as well as renewed, and sanctified, and live in newness of life; so that their characters now are taken, not from their worse, but better part. And that before conversion is particularly mentioned here, to illustrate the love of God to them, notwithstanding this their character and condition; and to shew that the love of God to them was very early; it anteceded their conversion; it was before the death of Christ for them; yea, it was from everlasting: and also to express the freeness of it, and to make it appear, that it did not arise from any loveliness in them; or from any love in them to him; nor from any works of righteousness done by them, but from his own sovereign will and pleasure.

Ver. 9. *Much more then being now justified by his blood,* &c.] The apostle here argues from justification by Christ to salvation by him, there being a certain and inseparable connexion between these two; whoever is justified shall be saved; and speaks of justification as *being now by his blood.* Justification in God's mind from eternity proceeded upon the suretyship-engagements of Christ to be performed in time; the Old-Testament saints were justified of God with a view to the blood of the Lamb which was to be shed; this blood was *now* shed, and an application of justification by it was *now* made to the persons spoken of; which is the reason of this way of speaking. The blood of Christ intends his death, as appears from the context, and shews it to be a violent death; death by the effusion of blood. There is an emphasis upon it, *his blood;* not the blood of bulls and goats, nor of a mere innocent creature, but of Christ the son of God; which is therefore efficacious to all the purposes for which it was shed, and particularly justification. This being ascribed to it, shews the concern Christ had in it, his blood is here put for the whole matter of justification, the shedding of that being the finishing part of it; and that our justification before God proceeds upon the foot of a satisfaction made to the law and justice of God: hence such as are interested in it, *shall be saved from wrath through him:* not from wrath, as a corruption in their own hearts, which oftentimes breaks forth; nor as appearing among the people of God one towards another, which is sometimes very bitter; or as in their avowed enemies, the effects of which they often feel; nor from the wrath of devils, which is as the roaring of a lion; but from the wrath of God, from a sense and apprehension of it in their own consciences, which the law works; from which justification by the blood of Christ frees them; though under first awakenings they feel it, and sometimes, under afflictive dispensations of Providence, are ready to fear it: and also from the infliction of vindictive wrath or punishment for sin; for though they are as deserving of it as others,

[z] Maimon. in Misn. Pirke Abot, c. 5. sect. 10, 13. Bartenora in Misn. Bava Metzia, c. 4. sect. 6. Juchasin, fol. 19. 2. Kimchi in Psal. iv. 3.

[a] T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 40. 1.

[b] T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 18. 1. & Niddah, fol. 17. 1.

yet as they are not appointed to it, so they are entirely delivered from it, through Christ's sustaining it in their room and stead: wherefore they are secure from it both in this life, and in the world to come.

Ver. 10. *For if when we were enemies*, &c.] For the further illustration of the love of God expressed to sinners, by the death of his son, the state and condition God's elect were in when Christ died for them is taken notice of; they *were enemies;* to God, to his being, perfections, purposes, and providences; to Christ, to his person, offices, grace, and righteousness; to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit, and his divine operations and influences; to the people of God, and to the Gospel and ordinances of Christ; which enmity is deeply rooted in their minds, is causeless, and undeserved, and is implacable, and irreconcileable without the power and grace of God; which grace of God is wonderfully displayed in the reconciliation of such persons, *by the death of his son.* Reconciliation implies a former state of friendship, a breach of that friendship, and a making of it up again; which no ways contradicts the everlasting and unchangeable love of God to his people; for this is not a reconciliation of God to them, but of them to God: *we were reconciled to God;* not God to us; and this reconciliation is for their sins, an atonement for them, rather than of their persons; which being done, their persons are reconciled, not to the love, grace, and mercy of God, or to his affections, in which they always had a share, but to the justice of God, injured and offended by their sins; and so both justice and holiness on one side, and love, grace, and mercy on the other, are reconciled together, in the business of their salvation; which is brought about by the sufferings and death of Christ: this expresses the wonderful love of God, since this reconciliation arises purely from himself; the scheme of it is of his own contriving; he, whose justice was affronted, and whose law was broken, took the first step towards it, and conducted the whole affair; and which was effected at the expense of the blood and life of his own son, and that for persons who were enemies to them both. In consequence of this, another reconciliation of them is made by the spirit of God in regeneration, of which notice is taken in this passage: *much more being reconciled:* to God, as a sovereign God, in his decrees, in his providences, and in the method of salvation by his son; to Christ, to the way of salvation by him, so as to submit both to his righteousness for justification, and to the sceptre of his kingdom, to be ruled and governed by it; to the Spirit, so as to be led by him, to walk after him, and to depend upon him for the carrying on, and finishing the good work of grace begun in them; to the people of God, so as to love them, and delight in their company; and to the Gospel and ordinances, so as highly to value them, long after them, and take pleasure in them. Now from both these reconciliations is inferred the sure and certain salvation of persons so reconciled: *we shall be saved by his life;* by the life of Christ, and which designs not so much his life as God; or his living in the hearts of his people by faith; though neither of them are to be excluded; but his life, as man, and that not either his private or public life, as man here on earth, though this has an influence upon, and a concern in the business of salvation; but more especially here is meant the interceding life of Christ in heaven, where he lives, and ever lives to make intercession for his people, and to see the salvation he has obtained by his death applied unto them, and they put into the possession of it.

Ver. 11. *And not only so, but we also joy in God*, &c.] Something seems here to be understood, and which is to be supplied thus; not only we are saved by his life, and from wrath through him; not only are we reconciled to God by his Son, and Spirit; not only Christ has died for us while sinners and ungodly; not only do we glory in tribulations, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God: *but we also joy in God;* himself, as our covenant God and Father in Christ, as the God of all grace, peace, and salvation; in his perfections, as engaged on our side, and as glorified in our salvation; in the purposes of God, and his covenant-transactions with his son, as they are made known in the everlasting Gospel; in all his providential dispensations, which are mercy and truth; and in our being of him in Christ, and Christ's being made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption; in all the blessings of grace we receive from him, the glory of which is his due; and in his sight and presence, and in the enjoyment of him. The means by which saints come at this joying and glorying in God, is *through our Lord Jesus Christ;* not the light of nature, nor the law of Moses, nor any works of righteousness done by men, nor through angels or saints, but Christ, and him only; for 'tis only in and through him that God is their covenant God and Father; by him only have they the agreeable view of his glorious perfections; in him only all his purposes and promises have their fulfilment; 'tis by his hands, and through his blood, that all the blessings of grace are conveyed to them; their access to God is only by him; and by him they give the praise and glory of every mercy to him. And the ground of this joy is the expiation of sin by Christ, *by whom we have now received the atonement:* atonement is not made, but received by us; which denotes the application of the atoning blood and sacrifice of Christ to the conscience, the Spirit's witness of interest in it, and the office of faith, as a recipient of it: 'tis not faith, nor any thing else of the creature's, that makes the atonement, only Christ; but faith receives it from him, and by him; which, as it is the ground of present joying in God, so it is the foundation of hope of future glory: the word *now* refers to the Gospel dispensation. The poor Jews are at the utmost loss about atonement: sometimes they tell [c] us it is by confession, repentance, and good works; sometimes by beneficence and hospitality [d]; sometimes they say their captivity is their atonement [e]; and, at other times, that death expiates all their sins [f]. Blessed be God for the atoning sacrifice of Christ!

[c] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 85. 2. & 86. 1. Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 6. sect. 2. Zohar in Gen. fol. 107. 1.

[d] T. Bab. Chagiga, fol. 27. 1. & Roshhashana, fol. 18. 1. & Yebamot, fol. 105. 1.

[e] T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 16. 1. & Sanhedrin, fol. 37. 2. Maimon. Hilch. Teshuba, c. 2. sect. 4.

[f] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 60. 1. Hieros. Yoma, fol. 38. 2. T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 28. 1. & Yoma, fol. 42. 1. Gloss in ib.

Ver. 12. *Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world*, &c.] The design of these words, and of the following, is to shew how men came to be in the condition before described, as *ungodly*, *sinners* and *enemies*; and to express the love of Christ in the redemption of them; and the largeness of God's grace to all sorts of men: the connexion of them is with the foregoing *verse*, by which it appears that the saints have not only an expiation of sin by the blood of Christ, but a perfect righteousness, by which they are justified in the sight of God; and the manner how they came at it, or this becomes theirs, together with the necessity of their having such an one, are here declared: by *the one man* is meant Adam the first man, and parent of mankind, who is mentioned by name in ver. 14. *sin* which came by him designs a single sin, and not many, even the first sin of Adam, which goes by different names, as *sin* here, *transgression*, ver. 14. the *offence* or *fall*, ver. 15, 17, 18. *disobedience*, ver. 19. and whatever was the first step or motive to it, which led to it, whether pride, unbelief, or concupiscence, it was finished by eating the forbidden fruit; and is called *sin* emphatically, because it contained all sin in it, was attended with aggravating circumstances, and followed with dismal consequences. Hence may be learnt the origin of moral evil among men, which comes not from God, but man; of this it is said, that it *entered into the world*: not the world above, there sin entered by the devil; but the world below, and it first entered into paradise, and then passed through the whole world; it entered into men by the snares of Satan, and by him it enters into all the inhabitants of the world; into all men that descend from him by ordinary generation, and that so powerfully that there is no stopping of it. It has entered by him, not by imitation, for it has entered into such as never sinned after the similitude of his transgression, infants, or otherwise death could not have entered into them, and into such who never heard of it, as the Heathens; besides, sin entered as death did, which was not by imitation but imputation, for all men are reckoned dead in Adam, being accounted sinners in him; add to this, that in the same way Christ's righteousness comes upon us, which is by imputation, Adam's sin enters into us, or becomes ours; upon which death follows, *and death by sin*; that is, death has entered into the world of men by sin, by the first sin of the first man; not only corporeal death, but a spiritual or moral one, man, in consequence of this, becoming *dead in sin*, deprived of righteousness, and averse, and impotent to all that is good; and also an eternal death, to which he is liable; for *the wages of sin is death*; even eternal death: all mankind are in a law-sense dead, the sentence of condemnation and death immediately passed on Adam as soon as he had sinned, and upon all his posterity; *and so death passed upon all men*: the reason of which was, *for that*, or because *in him all have sinned*: all men were naturally and seminally in him; as he was the common parent of mankind, he had all human nature in him, and was also the covenant-head, and representative of all his posterity; so that they were in him both naturally and federally, and so *sinned in him*; and fell with him by his first transgression into condemnation and death. The ancient Jews, and some of the modern ones, have said many things agreeably to the apostle's doctrine of original sin; they own the imputation of the guilt of Adam's sin to his posterity to condemnation and death; "through the sin of the first man (say they [g]) אתה מת, "*thou art dead*; for he brought death into the world:" nothing is more frequently said by them than that Adam and Eve, through the evil counsel of the serpent, גרימו מותא לון ולכל עלמא, *were the cause of death to themselves and to all the world* [h]; and that through the eating of the fruit of the tree, אתחייבו מותא כל דיירי ארעא, *all the inhabitants of the earth became guilty of death* [i]: and that this was not merely a corporeal death, they gather from the doubling of the word in the threatening, *in dying thou shalt die*; "this doubled death, "say they [k], without doubt is the punishment of their "body by itself, ולנפש בפני עצמה, *and also of the* "*soul by itself*." They speak of some righteous persons who died, not for any sin of their own, but purely on the account of Adam's sin; as Benjamin the son of Jacob, Amram the father of Moses, and Jesse the father of David, and Chileab the son of David [l], to these may be added Joshua the son of Nun, and Zelophehad and Levi: the corruption and pollution of human nature through the sin of Adam is clearly expressed by them; "when Adam sinned, (say they [m],) he "drew upon him a defiled power, וסאיב ליה ולכל בני "עלמא, *and defiled himself and all the people of the* "*world*." Again [n], "this vitiosity which comes from "the sin and infection of our first parents, has invaded "both faculties of the rational soul, the understanding "by which we apprehend, and the will by which we "desire." This corruption of nature they call יצר הרע, *the evil imagination*, which, they say [o], is planted in a man's heart at the time of his birth; and others say [p] that it is in him before he is born: hence Philo the Jew says [q], that συμφυὲς τὸ ἁμαρτάνειν ἐστὶ, *to sin is connatural*, to every man that is born, even though a good man; and talks [r] of συγγεγεννημένα κακὰ, *evil that is born with* us, and of [s] συγγενεῖς κῆρες, *spots that are of necessity born with* every mortal man. And so his countrymen [t] often speak of it as natural and inseparable to men; yea, they represent Adam as the root and head of mankind, in whom the whole world and all human nature sinned: descanting on those words, *as one that lieth upon the top of a mast*; "this (say they [u])

[g] Deborim Rabba, sect. 9. fol. 244. 2.
[h] Zohar in Gen. fol. 27. 1, 2, 3, 4. & 36. 3. 4. & 37. 2. & 46. 4. & 54, 2. & 67. 3. & 96. 1. & 98. 1. in Exod. fol. 106. 1. & 127. 2. in Lev. fol. 46. 2. 3. Bemidbar Rabba, fol. 225. 3. Caphtor, fol. 37. 2.
[i] Targum in Ruth iv. 22. & in Eccles. vii. 29.
[k] R. Joseph Albo in Sepher Ikkarim, l. 4. c. 41.
[l] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 55. 2. Bava Bathra, fol. 17. 1. Zohar in Gen. fol. 36. 4. & Imre Binah in ib. & 44. 4. & Imre Binah in ib. & Numb. fol. 93. 2.
[m] Zohar in Gen. fol. 37. 1.

[n] Menasseh ben Israel Præfat. ad lib. de Fragilitate Humana.
[o] Aben Ezra in Psal. li. 5. Abraham Seba in Tzeror Hammor, fol. 14, 3. 4.
[p] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 91. 2. Bereshit Rabba, fol. 20. 1.
[q] De Vita Mosis, p. 675.
[r] De Præmiis, p. 920.
[s] De Nomin. Mutat. p. 1051.
[t] Kimchi in Psal. li. 5. Menah ben Israel de Fragilitate, par. 1. p. 2.
[u] Bemidbar Rabba, fol. 198. 2.

"is the first man who was ראש לכל בני אדם, *an head* "*to all the children of men*; for by means of wine death "was inflicted on him, and he was the cause of bringing "the sorrows of death into the world." And in another place, speaking of Adam, they say [w], that "he was "עיקר בריאה של עולם, *the root of the creation*, or *of* "*the men of the world*; and death was inflicted upon "him and on his seed, because he sinned one sin in "eating of the tree." And it is observed, "that "הא הידיעה, the *He* demonstrative is not prefixed in "Scripture to proper names, which yet is to the "word *Adam*; the reason is, (say they [x],) because in "Adam all his posterity are pointed at, and the whole "human species designed." Again, they observe [y], that "the end of man is to die, of which this is the "reason, because מין האדם, *mankind* has sinned; that "is, the nature of which he is composed, or in other "words, Adam and Eve have sinned." Once more [z], "when he (Adam) sinned, כל העלם כלו חטא, *all the* "*whole world sinned*, and his sin we bear;" and [a] that "the whole congregation of Israel have need of atone-"ment for the sin of the first Adam, for he was חשוב "ככל העדה, *reckoned as the whole congregation*;" which exactly tallies with the apostle's assertion in this text.

Ver. 13. *For until the law, sin was in the world*, &c.] This is a proof of sin's having entered into *the world*, by one man's transgression of the positive law of God, which forbid him the eating of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil; since it was in the world before the law of Moses was given: the sin of Adam and the guilt of that were in the world before, and came upon all men to condemnation; the general corruption of nature appeared before; and actual sins, and transgressions of all sorts were committed before; as by the immediate posterity of Adam, by the men of the old world, by the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah, by the patriarchs and their posterity, by the Egyptians, Canaanites, and others. They were all guilty of sin, corrupted by it, and under the dominion of it, except such as were released from it by the grace of God: now when sin is said to be until this time, the meaning is not that it existed and continued until the law of Moses took place, and then ceased; for that law did not, and could not take away sin, it rather increased it, at least it became more known by it; but that it was in being before it, and had influence and power over the sons of men, so as to subject them to death: *but sin is not imputed when there is no law*. This looks like an objection, that if there was no law before Moses's time, then there was no sin, nor could any action of man be known or accounted by them as sinful, or be imputed to them to condemnation; or rather it is a concession, allowing that where there is no law, sin is not imputed; but there was a law before that law of Moses, which law was transgressed, and the sin or transgression of it was imputed to men to condemnation and death, as appears from what follows.

Ver. 14. *Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses*, &c.] Though the law of Moses was not yet given, death exerted itself, and extended its dominion over all the sons and daughters of Adam, during the interval between Adam and Moses; which clearly shews that sin was in the world, and that there must be a law in being, which that was a transgression of; death is represented as a king, as sin and Satan sometimes are; and indeed, death reigns by sin, and Satan both by sin and death; their empires rise, stand and fall together. So Bildad calls death *the king of terrors*, Job xviii. 14. and a very formidable and powerful king he is; his dominion is very large, his power uncontrollable, and the dread of him very great, especially to Christless sinners. The Jews say [b], that at the resurrection the world will be renewed, and will not be as at the first, when רשליט מותא בעלמא, *death reigned in the world*; referring to the same period of time the apostle here does. The subjects of his government were not only adult persons, who had been guilty of many actual transgressions, but he reigned even *over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression*. This does not exclude the dominion of death over such who had sinned after the likeness of Adam, but rather confirms its power over them; nor does it intend adult Gentiles, who did not sin in the same manner, nor against the same law, as Adam did; but it designs infants, not yet guilty of actual sin; and therefore since death reigns over them, who only holds and exercises his dominion by virtue of sin, it follows, that they must have original sin in them; the guilt of Adam's transgression must be imputed to them, and the corruption of nature, from him, derived unto them, or it could not reign over them. A child of a year old, the Jewish doctors [c] say, has not tasted the taste of sin, that is, has not committed actual sin; and observe [d], that young children die on account of the sins of their parents: but the true reason of their dying is here suggested by the apostle; which is, the transgression of Adam: *who is the figure of him that was to come*; meaning, either his posterity that were to come out of his loins, whose figure, type, and representative he was; or rather Christ, who is sometimes called ὁ ἐρχόμενος, *he that was to come*; and the Arabic version reads the words thus, *who was a type of Adam that was expected*; that is, of Christ the second Adam, that was expected to come, according to the promise and prophecy: of him the first Adam was a type, in his human nature, in the formation and quality of it; as the first Adam was made by God of the virgin earth, the second Adam was born of a virgin; as the first, so the second Adam was pure, holy, upright, and wise; in his office, as Lord of the world, head of the woman, priest in his house, and prophet to his posterity; in his marriage with Eve, a figure of the church; but in nothing more clearly than in his being a covenant-head to all his offspring: and this is what the apostle chiefly designs, since he runs the parallel between them on this account in the following verses.

[w] Caphtor, fol. 102. 1.
[x] Menasseh ben Israel de termino Vitæ, c. 2. sect. 8. p. 198.
[y] En Jacob, par. 1. fol. 19. 4.
[z] Zohar in Lev. fol. 46. 2. R. Menachem Rakanati apud Voisin. Obs. in Pugionem Fidei, p. 590.

[a] Zohar in Gen. fol. 76. 3. & 36. 3.
[b] Tzeror Hammor, fol. 96. 1.
[c] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 22. 2.
[d] Massecheth Calah, fol. 17. 2.

shewing, that as the one conveyed sin and death to all his seed, so the other communicates righteousness and life to all that belong to him. So the Jews say [e], that by Adam is intimated the righteous branch, the Messiah; and that סוד אדם הוא סוד משיח, *the secret of Adam is the secret of the Messiah.*

Ver. 15. *But not as the offence, so also is the free gift,* &c.] By *the offence*, or *fall*, as the word signifies, is meant the first sin of Adam; by which he offended God, and fell from that estate in which he was created, and all his posterity with him; and by the *free gift* is meant, the righteousness of Christ, which justifies from that, and all other offences: now, though there is a great likeness between Adam and Christ; both are men, the first Adam is called *the one man*, and so is the second Adam Jesus Christ; partly for the sake of the comparison between him and the first, and also to express the truth of his human nature; and because the Redeemer ought to be a man, though not a mere man; both are sole authors of what they convey to their respective offspring, Adam of sin, Christ of righteousness; both convey single things, Adam only one sin, not more, for when he had committed one sin, he broke the covenant made with him and his posterity, and so ceased in after-acts to be a representative of them; Christ conveys his righteousness, or obedience to the law, without any additional works of righteousness of ours to complete it; and both convey what they do, to *all* their respective offspring: yet there is a dissimilitude between them, as to the manner of conveyance and the effects thereof; the offence or sin of Adam is conveyed in a natural way, or by natural generation, to all who descend from him in that manner; the righteousness of Christ is conveyed in a way of grace, to his spiritual seed: hence it is called, not only the *free gift*, but *the grace of God, and the gift by grace,* which is *by one man, Jesus Christ;* because of the grace of the father, in fixing and settling the method of justification, by the righteousness of his son; in sending him to work out one, that would be satisfying to law and justice; and in his gracious acceptation of it, on the behalf of his people, and the imputation of it to them; and because of the grace of the son in becoming man, in being made under the law, yea, made sin and a curse, in order to bring in an everlasting righteousness; and because of the grace of the spirit, in revealing and applying it, and working faith to receive it; for as the righteousness itself is a free-grace gift, bestowed upon unworthy persons, so is faith likewise, by which it is laid hold on and embraced: and as there is a disagreement in the manner of conveying these things, so likewise in the effects they have upon the persons to whom they are conveyed; and the apostle argues from the influence and effect the one has, to the far greater and better influence and effect the other has: *for if through the offence of one many be dead:* as all Adam's posterity are, not only subject to a corporeal death, but involved in a moral or spiritual, and liable to an eternal one, through the imputation of guilt, and the derivation of a corrupt nature from him: then *much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace,* which is *by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many;* that is, the righteousness of Christ, in which the grace of God is so illustrious, is much more effectual to the giving of life to all his seed and offspring; not barely such a life as Adam had in innocence, and which he lost by the offence, but a spiritual and an eternal one; which shews the exuberance of this grace, which secures and adjudges to a better life than what was lost by the fall.

Ver. 16. *And not as* it was *by one that sinned,* so is *the gift,* &c.] The apostle goes on with the dissimilitude between the effects of Adam's sin, and Christ's righteousness: *for the judgment was by one to condemnation;* by *judgment* is meant, not the judgment of God, or the judiciary sentence pronounced by God on Adam and his posterity for sin; but the guilt of the one man's sin, which is imputed to all men to condemnation, on account of which the sentence of condemnation passed on all men; the law transgressed, became a ministration of condemnation to them: *but the free gift is of many offences unto justification;* the righteousness of Christ, which stands opposed to the guilt of Adam's sin, being imputed to all his offspring, is to the justification of them; and that not only from the guilt of that particular offence, but from many other offences, even all their actual sins and transgressions, of every sort; which is another instance of the exuberance, or abounding of the grace of God, in the righteousness of Christ, not only over the sin of the one man, but also over the sins of many, even all the elect of God; for the last clause may be also thus rendered, *the free gift is of the offences of many, unto justification.*

Ver. 17. *For if by one man's offence death reigned by one,* &c.] It may be rendered, *by one offence death reigned by one;* for it was the single sin of Adam, the first sin that was committed by him, which gave death its reigning power over the sons of men: "Adam, " say [f] the Jewish doctors, transgressed, על פקודא חד " דאורייתא, *one commandment of the law*, and was the " cause of death to himself, and to all the world." These words are a repetition, with a further explanation, of ver. 15. there 'tis said, *through the offence of one many be dead;* here *by one man's offence*, or *by one offence, death reigned by one;* in which death is represented as a mighty monarch, a powerful king; and designs not only corporeal death, which has mounted the throne by sin, and is supported in its dominion by an ordinance of heaven; but also a moral or spiritual death, which has seized on all mankind, and reigns in every power and faculty of the soul of man; and likewise an eternal one, which will have power over all those, who have no part in the first resurrection: in ver. 15. *the grace of God, and the gift by grace*, are said to *abound unto many;* here they are said *to receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness:* by *abundance of grace* is designed, either something distinct from the justifying righteousness of Christ; such as the abundant grace and mercy of God, in regeneration and conversion; the various graces of the spirit then implanted; the many things then wrought in the heart; the large discoveries of pardoning grace, and the abundance of the love of God shed abroad in the soul by the spirit: or rather the same with *the gift of*

[e] R. Abraham Seba, Tzeror Hammor, fol. 2. 3. & 3. 1.

[f] Zohar in Num. fol. 52. 1. Vid. Caphtor, fol. 102. 1. supra citat.

righteousness, because of the large display of the grace of God in it; by which *righteousness* is meant, not righteousness or holiness infused into us; but the righteousness of Christ, which is a free-grace gift, and is enjoyed in a way of receiving; which denotes the act of faith, and supposes giving; and hence there is no room for boasting, but great reason for thankfulness: now such persons who have received this abundant grace and free gift, *shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ:* in corporeal life, they are not now subject to death as a penal evil, as other persons are, and though they die this death, they'll triumph over it in the resurrection morn, they'll rise again to everlasting life; they reign now in spiritual life over sin, Satan, and the world; and they'll reign in eternal life, they'll sit on thrones, wear crowns, and possess a kingdom of glory for ever and ever; and all by and through one, Jesus Christ, and not on account of any works, or merits of theirs.

Ver. 18. *Therefore as by the offence of one*, &c.] Or *by one offence*, as before, the guilt of which is imputed to, and judgment came *upon all men to condemnation;* which word is used in a law-sense, and intends condemnation to eternal death, as appears from the antithesis in the text; for if *justification of life*, means an adjudging to eternal life, as it certainly does, the judgment or guilt, which is unto condemnation, must design a condemnation to eternal death, the just wages of sin: and this sentence of condemnation comes upon all men, all the sons of Adam without exception, even upon the elect of God themselves; though it is not executed upon them, but on their surety, whereby they are delivered from it: *even so by the righteousness of one*, the free gift came *upon all men to justification of life:* the righteousness of Christ being freely imputed without works, as it is to all the men that belong to the second Adam, to all his seed and offspring, is their justification of life, or what adjudges and entitles them to eternal life. The sentence of justification was conceived in the mind of God from eternity, when his elect were ordained unto eternal life, on the foot of his son's righteousness; this passed on Christ at his resurrection from the dead, and on all his people as considered in him, when they, in consequence of it, were quickened together with him; and this passes upon the conscience of a sinner at believing, when he may, as he should, reckon himself alive unto God, and is what gives him a right and title to everlasting life and glory.

Ver. 19. *For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners*, &c.] Agreeably to this the Jews say [e], that "for the sin of the first man, all that are born of "him, יהיו רשעים, *become wicked*." This is the sum of what is said in the foregoing verses, that as by Adam's sin all his posterity are made sinners, and so are brought under a sentence of condemnation; in like manner by the obedience of Christ, all his seed are made righteous, and come under a sentence of justification of life: the persons made sinners are said to be *many*, in opposition to the *one man*, by whose disobedience they became so, and because there is an exception of one, even Jesus Christ; and mean all the natural descendants of Adam, who are many, and are so called, to answer to the subjects of justification in the next clause: what they are made sinners by, is *the disobedience of one man, Adam;* and by the first and single disobedience of his, in eating the fruit of the forbidden tree, by which they *were made sinners:* the meaning of which is not, that they became sufferers for it, or subject to death on the account of it; the word used will not bear such a sense, but signifies men guilty of sin, and sometimes the worst and chief of sinners; besides, the apostle had expressed that before; add to this, that the sons of Adam could not be sufferers for his sin, or subject to death on account of it, if they were not made sinners by it, or involved in the guilt of it: and though the posterity of Adam are habitually sinners, that is, derive corrupt nature from Adam, yet this is not meant here; but that they are become guilty, through the imputation of his sin to them; for it is by the disobedience of another they are made sinners, which must be by the imputation of that disobedience to them; he sinned, and they sinned in him, when they had as yet no actual existence; which could be no other way, than by imputation, as he was reckoned and accounted their head and representative, and they reckoned and accounted in him, and so have sinned in him. This is also evident, from the sentence of condemnation and death passing upon all men for it; and even upon those, who had not actually sinned; to which may be added, that Adam's posterity are made sinners through his disobedience, in the same way as Christ's seed are made righteous by his obedience, which is by the imputation of it to them; *so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous;* not by their own obedience; nor by their own obedience and Christ's together; but by his sole and single obedience to the law of God: and the persons made righteous by it are not all the posterity of Adam, and yet not a few of them; but *many*, even all the elect of God, and seed of Christ; these are all made righteous in the sight of God, are justified from all their sins, and entitled to eternal life and happiness.

Ver. 20. *Moreover, the law entered, that the offence might abound*, &c.] By *the law* is meant, not the law of nature, much less the law of sin; rather the ceremonial law, which came in over and above the moral law; it entered but for a time; by which sin abounded, and appeared very sinful; and through it the grace of God much more abounded, in the sacrifice of Christ prefigured by it: but the moral law, as it came by Moses, is here intended; which entered with great pomp and solemnity on Mount Sinai; and intervened, or came between Adam's sin and Christ's sacrifice; and also came in besides, or over and above the promise of life by Christ; and may moreover be said to enter into the conscience of a sinner, with the power and energy of the spirit of God: and the end of its entrance is, *that the offence might abound;* meaning either the sin of Adam, he had been speaking of under that name, that that itself, and the imputation of it to his posterity, and also the pollution of human nature by it, together with all the aggravating circumstances of it, might appear more manifest; or sin in general, any and all actual transgressions, which

[e] Tzeror Hammor, fol. 97. 1.

abound through the law's discovering the evil nature of them, and so taking away all excuse, or pretext of ignorance: by prohibiting them, whereby the corrupt nature of man becomes more eager after them; and by accusing, threatening, terrifying, and condemning, on account of them: one view of the apostle in this, doubtless, is to shew, that there can be no justification by the law: *but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound;* sin has abounded in human nature, in all the individuals of it; and grace has superabounded in the same nature, being assumed by the son of God, and united to him, who has appeared in it *full of grace and truth:* sin has abounded in all the powers and faculties of the soul, in the understanding, will, and affections, of an unregenerate man; but in regeneration, the grace of God much more abounds in the same powers and faculties, enlightening the understanding, subduing the will, and influencing the affections with love to divine things: sin abounded in the Gentile world, before the preaching of the Gospel in it; but afterwards grace did superabound in the conversion of multitudes in it from idols, to serve the living God; and where sin has abounded in particular persons to a very great height, grace has exceeded it, as in Manasseh, Mary Magdalene, Saul, and others.

Ver. 21. *That as sin hath reigned unto death,* &c.] This is another end of the law's entrance, or rather an illustration of the grace of God, by comparing the reigns of sin and grace together: sin has such a power over man in a state of nature, as amounts to a dominion; it has not only an enticing, ensnaring power, to draw into a compliance with it, and an obstructive power to hinder that which is good, and an operative one of that which is evil, and a captivating, enslaving one to the same; but it has a kingly, governing, and commanding power: its dominion is universal as to men, and with respect both to the members of the body, and faculties of the soul; it is supported by laws, which are its lusts; and has its voluntary subjects, to whom it gives wages; its reign is very cruel and tyrannical; it is *unto death* corporeal, moral, or spiritual, and eternal. The ancient Jews often represent sin in the same light; they frequently speak [h] of יצר הרע שולט, *the corruption of nature reigning* over men; and say [i], that he is מלך, *a king* over the several members of the body, which answer to him at the word of command. *The old and foolish king* in Eccl. iv. 13. is commonly interpreted by them of sin; which they say [k] is called *a king*, because he rules in the world, over the children of men, and because all hearken to him: it is a petition much used by them [l], "let not the evil imagination or corruption of nature *rule* over me:" and on the other hand, they represent grace, or a principle of goodness, as a king, reigning over the corruption of nature; thus interpreting these words, *my son, fear thou the Lord and the king,* they ask [m], "who is the king? *the king* (say "they) המלך יצר טוב, is *the good imagination,* or principle of goodness, *who reigns* over the evil imagination, which is called a king." And in another place [n], they say of a good man, that he המליך יצר טוב, *caused the good imagination to reign* over the evil one; with which in some measure agrees what follows: *even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord;* by grace is meant, either grace as it is in the heart of God; which reigns or bears sway in man's salvation in all the parts of it, *through righteousness:* consistent with the justice of God, in a way in which that is glorified, through the redemption of Christ: it reigns *unto eternal life;* grace has promised, prepared it, and makes meet for it, and will introduce into it, and freely give it: it reigns *by Jesus Christ;* grace reigns by him, righteousness, or justice, is glorified by him, and eternal life is in him, through him, and by him: or grace as it is in the hearts of converted persons, is meant where it reigns, has the dominion, is the governing principle, and that in a way of righteousness and true holiness; and will reign until it is perfected in glory, or is crowned with eternal life; all which are by Jesus Christ, namely, grace, righteousness, and life.

CHAP. VI.

THE Apostle having finished his design concerning the doctrine of justification, refutes the charge brought against it as a licentious doctrine, and prevents any ill use that might be made of it by men of evil minds, and presses justified persons by the strongest arguments, and with the best of motives, to holiness of life and conversation: he saw, that whereas he had affirmed in the preceding chapter, that sin being made to abound by the law, in the condemnation of sinners, the grace of God the more abounded in their justification and pardon; that some would rise up and object, that this doctrine countenances men's continuance in sin, and opens a door to all manner of iniquity; and that others would abuse this doctrine, and encourage themselves in a vicious course of life, upon this mistaken notion, that the grace of God would be the more illustrious by it; all which is suggested in ver. 1. to which an answer is returned in ver. 2. with an abhorrence of every thing of this kind; and by an argument, shewing the absurdity and inconsistency of it, seeing persons dead to sin, as justified ones are, cannot live in it: and that they are dead to sin, and under obligation to live unto righteousness, he argues from their baptism into Christ's death, which represents their being dead with Christ, and buried with him, ver. 3, 4. and likewise the resurrection of Christ from the dead, and theirs by him, whereby they are both fitted and obliged to walk in newness of life: since they are, and should be like him,

[h] T. Bab. Succa, fol. 52. 1. & Sanhedrin, fol. 91. 2.
[i] Abot R. Nathan, c. 16. fol. 5. 2. Targum in Eccl. ix. 14. Midrash Koheleth, fol. 80. 1.
[k] Zohar in Gen. fol. 102. 1. Midrash Koheleth, fol. 70. 2. Caphtor, fol. 20. 1. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 14. 4. Jarchi in Eccl. iv. 13.
[l] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 60. 1. Shaare Zion, fol. 73. 1. Seder Tephillot, fol. 3. 1. Ed. Basil.
[m] Bemidbar Rabba, fol. 218. 1.
[n] Midrash Koheleth, fol. 72. 3.

as in his death, so in his resurrection from the dead: and the rather, as they are implanted in him, as the branches in the vine, ver. 4, 5. and especially as it was the great end of his death, that by the crucifixion of sin with him, it might so be destroyed, that his people should be no more servants to it, ver. 6. this being proved, that justified ones are dead to sin, the apostle argues upon it, that such are freed from sin, ver. 7. and therefore ought not, and cannot live in it; for this must be given into as an article of faith, that such as are dead with Christ live, and shall live a life of communion with him, ver. 8. which is inconsistent with living in sin: he further argues from the resurrection of Christ, which was not to die more, ver. 9. and suggests, that in like manner, those who have been dead and buried, and risen with him, which their baptism signifies, should not live in sin, which is no other than dying again; and to strengthen this, directs to the ends of Christ's death and resurrection, ver. 10. the end of the one being unto sin, to finish, make an end of that, and be the death of it, and the end of the other, being living unto God; wherefore in like manner, such who profess to be Christ's, to be justified by his righteousness, to be baptized into his death, and to be risen with him, should account themselves dead unto sin, and so not live in it, and alive to God through the righteousness of Christ, and so live to his honour and glory, ver. 11. and having thus answered the objection, and removed the calumny, and set this matter in a clear light, the apostle proceeds to dehort from sinning, and to exhort to holiness of life, ver. 12, 13. in which he compares sin to a tyrant, the lusts of it to the laws of such an one, and which therefore should not be obeyed; and the rather, as the wages of them are death, and have made the body already mortal; wherefore the members of it should not be employed in such service, but in the service of God: and whereas it might be objected, that sin is too strong and prevalent, and has got the mastery, and will keep its power, the apostle declares it as a promise of grace, that sin shall not have the dominion, ver. 14. giving this as a reason, because such as are justified and sanctified, are not under the law, as a covenant of works, but under the covenant of grace, of which this promise is a part; and in order to prevent an ill use of this doctrine, and remove an objection that might be made, that if not under the law, men are under no restraints, but may go on in sin without control, he answers it with his usual detestation, ver. 15. and argues the folly and absurdity of living in sin upon such an account, because it would make them servants of sin unto death, ver. 16. and so they were before conversion, but now were otherwise, for which they had reason to be thankful, ver. 17. since through the grace of God, they had yielded an hearty obedience to the Gospel; wherefore to obey sin would be to return to their former state of bondage; whereas being freed from the power and dominion of sin, they were now the servants of righteousness, and ought to act becoming such a character, ver. 18. wherefore it was but acting the part of reasonable men, it was but their reasonable service, to yield themselves servants, not to sin and uncleanness, but to righteousness and holiness, ver. 19. in order to engage to which, the apostle puts them in mind of their former state; how that when they were in subjection to sin, they had nothing to do with the exercise of righteousness, ver. 20. and therefore as there was an alteration made in them, they ought to be just the reverse in their conduct and conversation; for he appeals to them, that they had no pleasure nor profit in their former course of life; which had brought upon them shame and confusion, and must have ended in death, had it not been for the grace of God, ver. 21. but now as they were delivered from the slavery and dominion of sin, they were under a better master, were servants to God; and the fruit of their service was holiness, and the issue of all would be everlasting life, ver. 22. which is illustrated by the contrary, ver. 23. the wages due from the service of sin, and which only could be expected from it, being death; whereas grace and holiness, the gift of God, issue in eternal life by Christ Jesus; in whose hands it is, and through whom it comes, and is enjoyed.

Ver. 1. *What shall we say then?* &c.] The apostle here obviates an objection he saw would be made against the doctrine he had advanced, concerning the aboundings of the grace of God in such persons and places, where sin had abounded; which if true, might some persons say, then it will be most fit and proper to continue in a sinful course of life, to give up ourselves to all manner of iniquity, since this is the way to make the grace of God abound yet more and more: now says the apostle, what shall we say to this? how shall we answer such an objection? shall we join with the objectors, and say as they do? and *shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?* that is, shall we persist in a vicious way of living with this view, that the grace of God may be magnified hereby? is it right to commit sin on such an account? or is this a fair inference, a just consequence, drawn from the doctrine of grace? To be sure it was not, the objection is without any ground and foundation; sin is not *per se*, the cause of the glorifying God's grace, but *per accidens*: sin of itself is the cause of wrath, and not of grace; but God has been pleased to take an occasion of magnifying his grace, in the forgiveness of sin: for it is not by the commission of sin, but by the pardon of it, that the grace of God is glorified, or made to abound. Moreover, grace in conversion is glorified by putting a stop to the reign of sin, and not by increasing its power, which would be done by continuing in it; grace teaches men not to live in sin, but to abstain from it; add to this, that it is owing to the want of grace, and not to the aboundings of it, that men at any time abuse, or make an ill use of the doctrines of grace; wherefore the apostle's answer is,

Ver. 2. *God forbid*, &c.] By which he expresses his abhorrence of such a practice, and that this was a consequence which did not follow from the premises, and was far enough from his thoughts, and which he had in the greatest detestation: and he further argues against it by asking, *how shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?* There is a death for sin, a death in sin, and a death to sin; the latter is here mentioned, and persons may be said to be *dead to sin*, both as justified and sanctified: justified persons are dead to sin, inasmuch as that is not imputed to them to condemnation and death; they are discharged from it; it can't hurt them, or exert its damning power over them; it is crucified, abolished, and made an

end of by Christ: sanctified persons are dead to sin; sin is not made their business, it is not their course of life: it is no longer a pleasure to them, but is loathsome and abominable; it is looked upon, not as a friend, but an enemy; it does not reign, it has not the dominion over them: it is subdued in them, and its power weakened; and as to the members of the flesh, and deeds of the body, 'tis mortified: to *live in sin*, is to live after the dictates of corrupt nature; and persons may be said to live in it, when they give up themselves to it, are bent upon it; when sin is their life, they delight in it, make it their work and business, and the whole course of their life is sinful: now those who are dead to sin, can't thus live in it, though sin may live in them; they may fall into sin, and lie in it some time, yet they can't live in it: living in sin, is not only unbecoming the grace of God revealed in the Gospel, but is contrary to it; it is detestable to gracious minds, yea, it seems impossible they should live in it; which is suggested by this question, *how shall we?* &c. The thing is impracticable; for, for a gracious soul to live in sin, would be to die again, to become dead in sin, which can't be; he that lives and believes in Christ shall never die, spiritually or eternally.

Ver. 3. *Know ye not that so many of us as*, &c.] You must know this, you can't be ignorant of it, that whoever *were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death*: and therefore must be dead to sin, and consequently ought not to live, nor can they live in sin. This does not suppose, that some of this church were baptized persons, and others not; but that some might be baptized in water who were not baptized into Christ: there's a difference between being baptized in water in the name of Christ, and being baptized into Christ, which believers in their baptism are; by which is meant, not a being brought by it into union with Christ, which is either secretly from eternity, or openly at conversion, and both before the baptism of true believers; nor a being brought by it into the mystical body of Christ the church, for this also is before it; but rather it designs a being baptized, or a being brought by baptism into more communion with Christ, into a participation of his grace and benefits; or into the doctrine of Christ, and a more distinct knowledge of it: the power of which they feel upon their hearts, and so have really believed in Christ, heartily love him, and make a sincere profession of him; though rather the true meaning of the phrase *baptized into Christ*, I take to be, is to be baptized purely for the sake of Christ, in imitation of him, who has set us an example, and because baptism is an ordinance of his; it is to submit to it with a view to his glory, to testify our affection for him, and subjection to him, without laying any stress or dependence on it for salvation; such who are thus baptized, are *baptized into his death*; they not only resemble Christ in his sufferings and death, by being immersed in water, but they declare their faith in the death of Christ, and also share in the benefits of his death; such as peace, pardon, righteousness, and atonement: now this proves, that such persons are dead to sin, who are so baptized; for by the death of Christ, into which they are baptized, they are justified from sin; by the death of Christ, their old man is crucified, and the body of sin destroyed; besides, believers in baptism profess themselves to be dead to sin and the world, and their baptism is an obligation upon them to live unto righteousness.

Ver. 4. *Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death*, &c.] The nature and end of baptism are here expressed: the nature of it, 'tis a *burial*: and when the apostle so calls it, he manifestly refers to the ancient and only way of administering this ordinance, by immersion; when a person is covered, and as it were buried in water, as a corpse is when laid in the earth, and covered with it: and it is a burial *with Christ*; 'tis a representation of the burial of Christ, and of our burial with him as our head and representative, and that *into death*; meaning either the death of Christ as before, that is, so as to partake of the benefits of his death; or the death of sin, of which baptism is also a token; for believers, whilst under water, are as persons buried, and so dead; which signifies not only their being dead with Christ, and their communion with him in his death, but also their being dead to sin by the grace of Christ, and therefore ought not to live in it: for the apostle is still pursuing his argument, and is shewing, from the nature, use, and end of baptism, that believers are dead to sin, and therefore cannot, and ought not, to live in it; as more fully appears from the end of baptism next mentioned; *that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the father, even so we also should walk in newness of life*; for the end of baptism is not only to represent the death and burial, but also the resurrection of Christ from the dead, which is here said to be *by the glory of the father*, some read the words, *unto the glory of the father*; meaning either, that the father might be glorified hereby; or that Christ, being raised from the dead, might enjoy glory with the father, as he does in human nature; but rather the phrase expresses the means by which, and not the end to which, Christ was raised from the dead: and by the *glory of the father* is meant, the glorious power of the father, which was eminently displayed in raising Christ from the dead; and as baptism is designed to represent the resurrection of Christ, which is done by raising the person out of the water, so likewise to represent our resurrection from the death of sin, to a life of grace: whence it must be greatly incumbent on baptized believers, who are raised from the graves of sin by the power of Christ, to *walk in newness of life*; for since they are become new creatures, and have new hearts and new spirits given them, new principles of light, life, grace, and holiness implanted in them, and have entered into a new profession of religion, of which baptism is the badge and symbol, they ought to live a new life and conversation.

Ver. 5. *For if we have been planted together*, &c.] This is not to be understood of an implantation of Jews and Gentiles together in one body; nor of an implantation of believers together in a church-state; but of an implantation of Christ and his people together; which is openly done at conversion, in consequence of a secret union with him before; when they are transplanted from a state of nature, and are ingrafted into Christ; have the graces of the spirit of God implanted in them, and grow up under the dews of grace, and shinings of

the sun of righteousness upon them, and bring forth much fruit; now as these persons, by virtue of their secret union with Christ from eternity, as their head and representative, with whom they were crucified, in whom they died representatively, share in his death, enjoy the benefits of it, and feel its efficacy, and through it become dead to the law, sin, and the world, which is meant by *the likeness of his death*; so these same persons shall be also planted *in the likeness of his resurrection*: that is, they shall share in the benefits, and feel and enjoy the effects of it; not only their bodies will be raised at the last day, as their souls are now regenerated by virtue of it, and in resemblance to it; but they are, and shall be so influenced by his spirit and grace, which has raised them from death to life, that they shall walk in newness of life; of which baptism is a lively representation, and to which it is a constant obligation.

Ver. 6. *Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him,* &c.] By *the old man* is meant the corruption of nature; called a *man*, because natural to men; it lives and dwells in them; it has spread itself over the whole man; it rules and governs in men; and consists of various parts and members, as a man does: it is called *old*, because it is the poison of the old serpent, with which man was infected by him from the beginning; it is derived from the first man that ever was; it is as old as the man is, in whom it is, and is likewise called so, with respect to its duration and continuance; and in opposition to, and contradistinction from, the new man, or principle of grace: it is called *ours*, because continual to us; it is in our nature, it cleaves to us, and abides in us. This name the apostle took from his countrymen the Jews, who were wont to call the vitiosity of nature hereby; so R. Aba on that passage, *the first-born said to the younger, our father is old*, Gen. xix. 31. asks, what is the meaning of this, *our father is old?* this, answers he, is the evil imagination, or corruption of nature, which is called זקן, *old*, according to Eccl. iv. 13. and is said to be old, שנולד עם האדם, *because it is born with the man*[o]; or as the reason is elsewhere given [p], because it is joined to him from his birth, to his old age: this, they say [q], is with a man as soon as he is born, from the hour of his birth, as soon as ever he comes into the world. Now this is said to be *crucified with him*; that is, with Christ, when he was crucified: the Jews [r] have a notion that the evil imagination, or corruption of nature, לא יתבטל, will not be made to cease, or be abolished out of the world, till the King Messiah comes, and by him it is abolished: this is so crucified by the death, and at the cross of Christ, as that it cannot exert its damning power over believers; and is so crucified by the spirit and grace of Christ in them, as that it can't reign over them, or exercise its domineering power over them; wherefore they are dead unto it, and that to them, and therefore can't live in it; which is done, *that the body of sin might be destroyed*: by *the body of sin* is meant sin itself, which consists, as a body does, of various members; and also the power and strength of it, which the Jews [s] call חילא דיצר הרע, *the power of the evil imagination*; this is crucified with Christ, and nailed to his cross by his sacrifice and satisfaction, that its damning power might be destroyed, abolished, and done away: and it is crucified by the spirit and grace of Christ, that its governing power might be took away, and that itself be subdued, weakened, and laid under restraints, and its members and deeds mortified: *that henceforth we should not serve sin*: not that it should not be in us, for as yet, neither by virtue of the sacrifice of Christ, nor by the power of his grace, is sin as to its being removed from the people of God; but that we should not serve it, make provision for it, indulge it and obey it, in the lusts thereof.

Ver. 7. *For he that is dead, is freed from sin.*] This is not to be understood of a natural or a corporeal death; for this is the effect of sin, and is inflicted by way of punishment for it, on Christless persons; so far is it from being an atonement for sin, as the Jews [t] fancy; besides, there are many persons, who as they die in their sins, they'll rise in them; though a natural death is alluded to, when persons are free from those laws and obligations to service and duty they are under whilst living: but here it is to be understood of a spiritual or mystical death, and of persons who are dead to the law, by the body of Christ; dead to sin by the sacrifice and grace of Christ; who are baptized into the death of Christ, and in imitation of him: such are *freed from sin*: not from the being of it; nor from the burden of it; nor from a continual war with it; nor from slips and falls into it; no, not even freed from it, in the most solemn services and acts of religion; but they are freed from the dominion of it, from servitude to it, and also from the guilt of it, and from obligation to punishment on account of it: they are, as it is in the Greek text, and as the Vulgate Latin and Arabic versions read, *justified from sin.*

Ver. 8. *Now if we be dead with Christ,* &c.] This does not imply any doubt about it, but is rather a taking it for granted: seeing we are dead with Christ by union with him, as our head and representative, and by communion with him in the benefits of his death, and being planted together in the likeness of it; or being dead to the law, sin, and the world, through the virtue and efficacy of Christ's death: *we believe that we shall also live with him*: not only a life of justification by faith in his righteousness; and a life of sanctification from him, and to his glory; the continuance of which, and a perseverance in it, are firmly believed; but a life of glory and happiness with him hereafter, both in the new Jerusalem, in the new heavens, and new earth, in the glorious state of the church on earth, and in heaven to all eternity; where they shall be personally and visibly with him, in soul and body, and shall live in the most intimate and uninterrupted communion with him, enjoying the highest pleasure, and the most consummate happiness; and are therefore under the greatest obligation, whilst here on earth, to live, not in sin, but to righteousness, and to his praise and glory; with whom they are now dead

[o] Midrash Haneelam in Zohar in Gen. fol. 68. 1. Vid. Caphtor, fol. 90. 1.
[p] Midrash Kohelet, fol. 70. 2.
[q] Zohar in Gen. fol. 102. 1. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 14. 4.
[r] Zohar in Exod. fol. 94. 4.
[s] Ib.
[t] See the Note on ch. v. 11.

to sin, and with whom they not only hope, but believe they shall live throughout the endless ages of eternity.

Ver. 9. *Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead*, &c.] That Christ is risen from the dead, is a certain fact, well attested, thoroughly known, and firmly believed; the prophets prophesied of it, Christ himself foretold it, angels affirmed it, and the apostles were witnesses of it, as is also the Holy Ghost: and it is as certain, that he *dieth no more*; he is raised to an immortal life, and will live for evermore; there's no need of his dying again, his death having been a full atonement and expiation of all the sins and transgressions of his people: *death hath no more dominion over him*: it once had dominion over him; it held him under its power for a time, according to the divine determination, and by his own consent: but *it was not possible he should be holden of it* longer; both on account of the dignity of his person, as the son of God, and the virtue and efficacy of his sacrifice, as the surety of his people, having put away sin for ever by it. He is the holy man the Jews [u] speak of, "who is the "mystery of the name Jehovah, and in him there's "no sin, neither *shall death have the dominion* "*over him*."

Ver. 10. *For in that he died*, &c.] The death of Christ was settled and agreed to in the covenant and council of peace; it was spoken of by the prophets, and typified by sacrifices; Christ came into the world in order to die, and actually did die the death of the cross; in which the great love of God and Christ is expressed to us; and which is a fundamental article of the Christian faith: and when he died, *he died unto sin once*; he died to that, which we by nature are dead in, and could never make atonement for; which he himself never lived in, and which men naturally love to in; and which had he not died for, we must have died for to all eternity; and he died not for any sin of his own, or of angels, nor for the sins of every man, but for the sins of his people; it may be rendered, *he died in sin*; in the likeness of sinful flesh, in which he was sent; having as a surety sin laid on him, and bore by him, and for which he was wounded, bruised, and died: or rather *to sin*; that is, to make atonement for it, procure the pardon of it, take it away, and utterly abolish it: and this he did *once*; this is observed, in reference to the repeated sacrifices of the old law, which could never expiate or remove sin; and to shew, that Christ's dying once was enough, his sacrifice was fully satisfactory to the law and justice of God: *but in that he liveth*; which must be understood, not of his life as God, but as man; and that not on earth, but in heaven; where he lives with God, at the right hand of God, and by him, by the power of God: and *he liveth unto God*; to his glory, and to make intercession for us.

Ver. 11. *Likewise reckon ye also yourselves*, &c.] Two things the apostle would have believers consider of themselves, and reckon themselves, to be, in consequence of their relation to Christ, who was dead, but is alive, and as agreeable thereunto: the *one* is, that they would look upon themselves *to be dead indeed unto sin*; believe their discharge from it, and not fear condemnation and death on account of it; and that it shall not be imputed to them, or have any damning power over them, since Christ has died unto it, or for it; and therefore should have no fellowship with it, nothing to do with it, as being dead unto it, and that to them: the *other* is, that they would consider themselves *alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord*; and that either in a law-sense, as justified persons; men in a state of nature, or of *Pharisaism*, think themselves alive, when they are not; but when they come under a work of the spirit of God, they see themselves otherwise, and are convinced both of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and the insufficiency of their own righteousness to justify from it; and when they have the righteousness of Christ revealed unto them, and faith is wrought in them to look unto it, and lay hold upon it, they are in themselves, and in their own apprehensions, alive, and that *unto God*, in the sight of God; and their life of faith on the righteousness of Christ, is unto the glory of God, and will be followed with an eternal life with God, to which the justifying righteousness of Christ gives them a title; and this is all through Christ, and his righteousness: or this is to be considered by them of themselves as sanctified persons, who are quickened by the spirit of Christ, and can feel the burden of sin, see the corruption of their nature, hear the voice both of law and Gospel, breathe after spiritual things, speak the language of Canaan, walk by faith on Christ, and work and act for him; which life of faith and holiness is *unto God*, to his glory and honour, and is *through Christ*, and is maintained and supported by him: or they should consider themselves not only as being justified before God, and made alive by his spirit, but as such who shall live to and with God, through Christ, for evermore; for as Christ died and rose again, and lives unto and with God for ever, so they being dead to sin through him, and being quickened together with him and by his spirit, shall never die the second death, but shall have everlasting life.

Ver. 12. *Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body*, &c.] Since grace reigns in you, sin should not: seeing ye are dead to sin, are baptized into the death of Christ, and are dead with him, and alive through him, sin therefore should not reign in you, and over you. This exhortation does not suppose a free-will power in man naturally, for this is spoken to persons, who had the spirit and grace of Christ, and in whom God had wrought both to will and to do of his good pleasure; nor is this exhortation unnecessary to believers, though they are dead to sin, and though God has promised it shall not have the dominion over them, and though reigning sin, as divines say, cannot be in regenerate persons; for though they are entirely dead to sin as justified persons, yet not perfectly so as sanctified: they are indeed dead to sin, but sin is not dead in them; it struggles, it makes war, leads captive, and threatens absolute and universal dominion, wherefore such an exhortation is necessary; besides, though God has promised that sin shall not have the dominion, yet making use of means, such as prayer to God that

[u] Tikkune Zohar, fol. 112. p. 1. apud Rittangel. de verit. Relig. Christ. p. 66.

it may not, striving against it, opposing it, in order to hinder its dominion, are no ways inconsistent with the promise of God, whose promises often have their accomplishment in the use of means: moreover, whereas some divines say, that reigning sin may be, and others that it cannot be in regenerate persons, it should be observed, that if by reigning sin is meant, sinning against God out of malice and contempt, with the whole heart, without any struggle against it, or repentance for it, or so as to lose the grace of God, and never rise more, then it must be said that it cannot be in a regenerate man; but if by it is meant, falling into sin against their consciences, knowingly and willingly, so as to distress their minds, lose their peace, and grieve the spirit of God, so as to be held under it, and be led captive by it, such power sin may have in them, and over them; and therefore the exhortation is not needless; and when the apostle says, let it not reign *in your mortal body*, by it is either meant the whole man, or rather the body only, which is the instrument of sinning, and is become mortal through sin; and being so, is a reason why it should not reign in it, since it has done so much mischief to it already: and this also denotes the time of sin's being in us, and of the danger of its reigning in us; 'tis only whilst we are in this mortal body; and the consideration of our mortality should quicken us to war against sin, and be careful not to *obey it in the lusts thereof*: the lusts of the body, or flesh, which are therefore sometimes called fleshly lusts, are many, and have great power and influence; and may be said to be obeyed, when provision is made to fulfil them, when these are the business of a man's life, and the whole of his conversation is taken up in them, without struggle against them, or opposition to them; and herein lies the reign of sin.

Ver. 13. *Neither yield ye your members*, &c.] The apostle more fully explains what he means by obeying sin in the lusts thereof; a presenting, or making use of the *members, as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin*: by their *members* he means the several powers and faculties of the soul, and so the Ethiopic version renders it, *your souls*; or the several parts of the body, or both; by *yielding*, or presenting of them, is designed the employment of them in the service of sin, *as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin*; that is, as means of performing unrighteous actions, in obedience to sin, or the corruption of nature with its lusts: the word translated *instruments*, signifies *arms* or *weapons*; so the ancients* formerly reckoned weapons the members of soldiers; and here the apostle calls the members weapons, which he would not have the saints use in favour of sin, an enemy and a tyrant; for that would be unrighteous in itself, and injurious to God and themselves: but, says he, *yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead*: that is, present themselves soul and body to God, give up and devote themselves to him, and to his service, and yield a cheerful obedience to him; considering themselves as under great obligation so to do, inasmuch as they are freed from condemnation and death, by the righteousness of Christ; and quickened, when dead in trespasses and sins, by his spirit and grace; and therefore should yield *your members*, their whole selves, *as instruments*, or *weapons of righteousness unto God*; by fighting against sin, revenging all disobedience, and fulfilling obedience to the commands of God: the same is here meant, as is by putting on *the armour of light*, and wearing and making use of *the armour of righteousness, on the right hand and the left*, Rom. xiii. 12. 2 Cor. vi. 7.

Ver. 14. *For sin shall not have dominion over you*, &c.] It has dominion over God's people in a state of unregeneracy: and after conversion it is still in them, and has great power oftentimes to hinder that which is good, and to effect that which is evil; it entices and ensnares, and brings into captivity, and seems as though it would regain its dominion, and reign again, but it shall not. This is not a precept, exhortation, or admonition, as before, though some read it as such, *let not sin have dominion over you*; nor does it express merely what ought not to be, but what cannot, and shall not be; it is an absolute promise, that sin shall not have the dominion over believers; and respects not acts of sin, but the principle of sin; and means not its damning power, though that is took away, but its tyrannical, governing power: it *shall not lord it over you*, as the words may be rendered; for in regeneration, sin is dethroned; Christ enters as Lord, and continues to be so; saints are in another kingdom, the kingdom of Christ and grace; could sin reign again over them, they might be lost and perish, which they never can: now this is a noble argument why saints should use their members as weapons of righteousness for God and against sin; since they are sure of being conquerors, and are secure from the tyrannical government of sin over them. The Jewish doctors say[a], there are three persons, לא שלט בהן יצר הרע, *over whom the evil imagination*, or *sin*, *had not the dominion*; and these are they, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; but these are not the only persons, for all Abraham's spiritual seed, all that are of the faith of Abraham, enjoy the same favour: the reason of this is, *for ye are not under the law*; by which is meant, not the law of nature; nor the civil law of the Jews; nor their ceremonial law; but either the law of sin, as a governing principle; or rather the moral law: this they were under, so as to obey it, but not in order to obtain righteousness by it; or as forced to obey it by its threats and terrors; they were not under its rigorous exaction; nor under its curse and condemnation; nor as irritating sin, and causing it to abound; or as a covenant of works: but *under grace*: under the covenant of grace, and in the enjoyment of the blessings of it; under the Gospel, and the dispensation of it, which leads and teaches men to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts; under and in the possession of the grace of justification and pardon, which strongly influence to righteousness and holiness; and under regenerating and sanctifying grace, as a reigning governing principle in the soul. The apostle's view in this is, to affect the saints with their present privilege, and to engage them in a cheerful conflict with sin, and to stir up in them an abhorrence of living in it.

* Alexander ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 1. c. 12. p. 12.

[a] T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 17. 1.

Ver. 15. *What then? shall we sin*, &c.] Does it follow from hence, that therefore we may sin, and go on and continue in it, *because we are not under the law, but under grace?* here the apostle meets with an objection of the adversary, saying, that if men are not under the law, and are free from all obligation to it, then they may live as they list; nor can they be chargeable with sin, or that be objected to them; since where there is no law, there's no transgression, and sin is not imputed where there is no law; and if they are under grace, or in the love and favour of God, from which there's no separation, then they cannot be damned, do what they will: but this objection proceeds upon a mistaken sense of the phrase, *under the law*; for believers, though they are not under the law as the ministry of Moses, yet they are under it, as it is in the hands of Christ; and though not under its curse, yet under obligation to obedience to it, from principles of love and grace; and a transgression of it is sin in them, as in others; and which is taken notice of by God, and visited with stripes in a fatherly way, though his loving kindness is not removed: and to argue from the unchangeableness of God's grace, or the doctrines of it, as encouraging licentiousness, is greatly to abuse the grace of God, and manifestly betrays such persons to be ignorant of it and its influence; since nothing more powerfully engages to a love of holiness, and hatred of sin; wherefore the apostle, answers to this objection in his usual way, *God forbid* signifying his abhorrence of every thing of this kind.

Ver. 16. *Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves*, &c.] The apostle goes on with his answer to the above objection, by making use of an argument from the nature of servants and their obedience, a thing well known to every one, and which none could be ignorant of; which he delivers by way of distribution, that such who yield themselves *servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey, whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness*: such who obey sin, are the servants of sin; they are at the beck and command of sin; they give up themselves to the service of it with delight and diligence, and are perfect drudges to it: this is a very unhappy situation; their service is very unreasonable; and they are rendered incapable of serving God, for no man can serve two masters; they are hereby brought into the drudgery of the devil; into a state of bondage, out of which nothing but grace can extricate them; into a very mean and contemptible condition, and even a deplorable one; for if grace prevent not, they will have the wages of sin paid them, which is death, for their obedience is *of sin unto death*: which will lie in an eternal separation from Father, Son, and Spirit, in a sense of divine wrath, and in the company of devils and damned spirits: now this is added, to shew the malignant nature and just demerit of sin, and to deter and dissuade persons from the service of it: on the other hand, such as obey the Lord, are the servants *of obedience unto righteousness*: but why is not this obedience, which is the obedience of faith to the Gospel of Christ, and of the new man to God or Christ, said to be *unto life*, as the antithesis seems to require? because though death is the fruit of sin, yet life is not the fruit of obedience, but the fruit of obedience is *righteousness*; by which is meant, not a justifying one before God, but righteousness before men; or a course of living soberly and righteously, which is the effect of being under grace; and hence it appears, that true believers can make no such ill use of their privilege, as is suggested in the objection.

Ver. 17. *But God be thanked that ye were the servants of sin*, &c.] Not that the apostle must be thought to give thanks to God for that these persons had been the servants of sin, than which nothing is more disagreeable to God, or caused more shame to themselves; but that inasmuch as they had been in the drudgery and service of sin, they were now freed from it. Just as if a person, that has been a slave for some time in Algiers, should bless God, or be thankful to the instrument of his deliverance, that whereas he had been in such slavery, he is now redeemed from it: wherefore 'tis added, *but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.* By *the form of doctrine*, is meant the Gospel, which is the *doctrine* of the Scriptures, of Christ and his apostles, and is sound and according to godliness; and is a *form*, or contains a summary and compendium of truths, and is a pattern or exemplar, according to which ministers are to preach, and people to hear and receive. So the word טופס, which is the same with τύπος here, is used by the Jewish[y] writers for a form, copy, pattern, or exemplar of any sort of writings. This form of doctrine is קבלה, *a Cabala*, but not like that of the Jews' oral law, or form of traditions[z], handed down, as they say, from one man, and set of men, to another; but this is *delivered* from the father to Christ, from Christ to his apostles, and by them to the saints; and *into which they were delivered*, as it may be rendered, as into a mould; and so received the impression of it, and were evangelized by it: so such are who have a spirit of Gospel liberty, in opposition to a spirit of bondage; who live by faith on Christ, and not by the works of the law; who derive their comfort from him, and not from any thing done by them; whose repentance and obedience are influenced by the grace of God, and who are zealous of good works, without any dependence on them. This form of doctrine was *obeyed* by them; by which is meant, not a mere obedience to the ordinances of the Gospel; nor a bare hearing of the doctrines of it, and giving an assent unto them; but an embracing of them by faith for themselves, so as to lay hold on Christ in them, submit to his righteousness therein revealed, and be willing to be saved by him, and him alone, in his own way; and this is the obedience of faith: the reason why faith is expressed by obedience is, because faith receives truth upon the veracity of God, and not upon the dictates of carnal reason; and is always more or less attended with external obedience to the will of God; and that is rightly performed only by faith. And this obedience did not lie in words, or proceed on mercenary views, and in an hypocritical way; but was *from the heart*; and was real and sincere; and good

[y] T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 26. 1. Bava Bathra, fol. 44. 2. R. Moses Kotsensis Mitzvot Tora, precept. Affirm. 50.

[z] Vid. Pirke Abot, c. 1. sect. 1.

reason there is why a hearty, cheerful, and voluntary obedience should be yielded to the Gospel; since it is from God; Christ is the substance of it; it is truth, and the word of our salvation. The Alexandrian copy reads, *from a pure heart:* and the Arabic version, *from the sincerity of your heart;* and the Ethiopic version, *with your whole heart.*

Ver. 18. *Being then made free from sin,* &c.] Not from a sinful nature; nor from a corrupt heart; nor from vain thoughts; nor from sinful words; nor from sinful actions altogether; but from the damning power of sin: sin brought all men under a sentence of condemnation; Christ has bore the execution of this sentence in himself for his people; hence, as considered in him, they are free from it; and such as are born again have passed from death to life, and shall never enter into condemnation: likewise, such persons are free from the guilt of sin; men are in a law-sense arraigned for sin, accused of it, and being convicted, are pronounced guilty before God; and awakened souls have a sense of it in themselves; but the blood of Christ sprinkled on their consciences frees them from it; though fresh sins committed bring fresh guilt, which requires the continual application of the blood of Jesus for pardon and cleansing: but what is chiefly designed here is freedom from the servitude of sin, as appears from the context. Now God's elect are not released voluntarily by their former masters; nor is their freedom obtained by their own power and will; but it is of God, Father, Son, and Spirit; and the Gospel is generally the means of it, and happy are those persons who are blessed with it! They are rid of a bad master; are freed from the worst of bondage; will be no more servants, as before; are delivered from the power, and out of the kingdom of darkness; are heirs of heaven, and shall enjoy the glorious liberty of the children of God: and for the time present are *become the servants of righteousness:* servants to God, whose Gospel they obey; servants to Christ, whose righteousness they submit to; and servants to the law of righteousness, as held forth by Christ; they give up themselves to a course and life of righteousness, in which there are true honour, peace, and pleasure.

Ver. 19. *I speak after the manner of men,* &c.] This refers either to what the apostle had said already concerning service and liberty, things which were known among men, and easy to be understood; or to the following exhortation: what he was about to say, he delivered in a manner suited to their understandings, and was ἀνθρώπινον, *that which was human:* not angelic, or what required the power, purity, and perfection of angels; or what was unreasonable or impossible, but what was their reasonable service, as men; and might be done through the grace of God, in the strength of Christ, and by the assistance of the spirit: and though he might have insisted upon it with good reason, that they ought to be more diligent and industrious in the service of God than they had been in the service of sin; yet *because of the infirmity of* their *flesh,* considering that they had flesh, or corrupt nature, and were attended with weakness in knowledge, faith, and obedience; he only pressed this upon them, that in like manner as they had been servants to sin, they would be servants to righteousness: *for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness, and to iniquity unto iniquity;* what they yielded to the service of sin were their *members;* by which, as before, may be meant, either the powers and faculties of their souls, or the parts and members of their bodies, or both; and particularly the latter, as the eyes and ears, the tongue, the mouth, the hands, and feet, which are all employed by a natural man in the drudgery of sin: these are yielded to sin under the form and character of *servants;* and as such are governed, directed, and ordered to fulfil this and the other lust, which is done willingly and readily: these members are *yielded,* presented, and given up cheerfully to this slavery; which is both scandalous and unrighteous: 'tis *to uncleanness;* which designs all sorts of pollution and filthiness, both of flesh and spirit: *and to iniquity;* every thing that is contrary to the law, all unrighteousness and ungodliness; and 'tis added, *unto iniquity;* which may design all sorts of sin, a progress in it, adding continually to it; which shews them to have been thorough hearty servants of sin. Now what the apostle exhorts to, and requires of them, is, that *even so now they would yield their members servants to righteousness unto holiness;* that is, let the same members that have been employed in the service of sin, be made use of in the service of righteousness: let your eyes be employed in looking and diligently searching into the Scriptures of truth; your ears in hearing the Gospel preached; your lips, mouth, and tongue, in expressing the praises of God, for what he has done for you; your hands in distributing to the interest of religion, and the necessities of the saints; and your feet in hastening to attend on public worship, and observe the testimonies of the Lord: let them be employed under the same form and character as *servants,* waiting upon the Lord, ready to fulfil his will; and in the same manner, freely, willingly, and cheerfully, and that constantly and universally, in all acts of righteousness and holiness.

Ver. 20. *For when ye were the servants of sin,* &c.] This is an argument used, or a reason given, why regenerate persons should be diligent in the service of righteousness; because when they were employed in the drudgery of sin, they *were free from righteousness;* they had no righteousness, nor were they desirous of any; yea, averse to it, threw off the yoke of the law of righteousness, and lived in a very unrighteous manner: hence may be observed what is the free will of man in an unregenerate state; not free *to,* but *from* righteousness; free enough to evil, but from all that is good; and also what obligation lies upon believers, who are delivered from the bondage of corruption, and the servitude of sin, to a life and service of righteousness; inasmuch as they were before free from it, and unconcerned about it, but are now made by the grace of God free to it, they ought therefore cheerfully to pursue it, and neglect no opportunity of performing it.

Ver. 21. *What fruit had ye then in those things?* &c.] That is, what profit, pleasure, satisfaction, or comfort, had ye in the commission of sin? Sin yields no real profit to the servants of it. If a man, by sinful practices, could amass together the riches of the Indies, or gain the whole world, yet if his soul is lost thereby, what advantage would it be to him? he would be infinitely the loser by it; nor would all his wealth and

riches profit him in the day of God's wrath and righteous judgment: nor is there any true pleasure in sin; persons may imagine within themselves they enjoy a real pleasure whilst they are serving divers lusts; but this is but imaginary, 'tis not real; and this imaginary pleasure is but for a season; it issues in bitterness and death: nor is there any satisfaction in it; when men have endeavoured to gratify their carnal lusts and sensual appetites in every way that can be devised, they still remain as they were; nor can they reflect with real satisfaction, and without some stinging remorse, upon the methods they have pursued to gain it: nor is there any true honour in sin, nothing but what is scandalous and disgraceful to human nature; shame, sooner or later, is the fruit of sin: *whereof ye are now ashamed;* some men may be indeed for the present so hardened as not to blush and be ashamed at the commission of the vilest sins; such are they who have no sense of sin, have no fear of God, or regard to men; and so sin openly, and without any guise, glory in it, and make their boast of it: but when persons are wrought upon by the spirit of God, they are ashamed of sin; which might be exemplified in the case of Adam and Eve, of Ephraim, of the prodigal son, and of the poor publican: the reason is, because light is struck into their hearts; and this makes manifest the odious and detestable nature of sin; sin is hereby seen in its own proper colours, as exceeding sinful, loathsome, and abominable: besides, the grace and goodness of God are discovered in the forgiveness of it; and the glory of God's purity and holiness, and the beauty and loveliness of Christ, are discerned by such persons; all which have a tendency to make them ashamed of sin, out of love with it, and to abhor it: and a good thing it is to be brought to be ashamed of sin here; for such who are not ashamed of it here, shall be brought to everlasting shame and confusion hereafter. Nay, this is not all; not only shame will be the fruit of sin, but it will also issue in death: *for the end of those things is death:* the profit, the reward, and wages of them is death: sin not only brings a spiritual or moral death on persons, on all the powers and faculties of their souls, and is followed with a corporeal death; but if grace prevent not, it will end in an eternal one; for however right and good the ways of sin may seem to the carnal mind, *the end thereof are the ways of death.*

Ver. 22. *But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God,* &c.] In what sense regenerate persons are free from sin, and are become the servants of God, has been observed already; the consequence of which is, that such *have* their *fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life:* holiness is a fruit of freedom from the bondage of sin, and of serving God; holiness begun in regeneration, vocation, and conversion, is a fruit of the spirit; a course of living righteously is a fruit of holiness, as a principle implanted; a gradual increase in holiness is carried on by the spirit of God in a course of righteousness; and a course of righteousness, from a principle of grace, issues in perfect holiness; *without which no man shall see the Lord:* here it seems to design, that holiness is fruit, or that which is gain and profit to persons, in opposition to sin, in which there is no profit: it is not indeed profitable to God in point of merit; yet holiness, as a principle of grace, is profitable to the saints in point of meetness for glory; and holiness, as it denotes an external course of life, is useful and profitable on many accounts; hereby God is glorified, the doctrine of Christ is adorned, religion is honoured and recommended, our own credit, reputation, and peace, are preserved, and our neighbour's good promoted. *And the end is everlasting life:* as sin issues, if grace prevent not, in everlasting death; holiness issues in eternal life, not by way of merit, but of free gift.

Ver. 23. *For the wages of sin is death,* &c.] By *sin,* is meant every sin, original sin, actual sin, every kind of sin, lesser and greater: the *death* which sin deserves, is a corporeal death; which is not owing to the original nature and constitution of men; nor merely to the divine appointment; but to sin, and the decree of God, on account of it; which is inflicted on Christless sinners, as a punishment for sin, though not on believers as such, because Christ has took away the sting and curse of it: a death of diseases and afflictions also follows upon sin, as its proper demerit; which are properly punishments to wicked men, and are occasioned by sin in believers: there's a death of the soul, which comes by sin, which lies in an alienation from God, in a loss of the image of God, and in a servitude to sin; and there is an eternal death, the just wages of sin, which lies in a separation of soul and body from God, and in a sense of divine wrath to all eternity; and which is here meant, as is clear from its antithesis, *eternal life,* in the next clause. Now this is *the wages* of sin; sin does in its own nature produce it, and excludes from life; it is the natural issue of it; sin is committed against an infinite God, and righteously deserves such a death; it is its just wages by law. The Greek word ὀψώνια, signifies soldiers' wages; see Luke iii. 14. 1 Cor. ix. 7. 1 Maccab. xiv. 32. Sin is represented as a king, a mighty monarch, a tyrannical prince; sinners are his subjects and vassals, his servants and soldiers, who fight under him, and for him, and all the wages they must expect from him is death. So the word is interpreted in the Glossary, μισθὸς στρατιωτικὸς, *soldiers' wages;* and so it is used by the Jewish writers, being adopted into their language; of a king, they say [a], that he should not multiply to himself gold and silver more than to pay אספניא, which they [b] interpret by שכר חיילות, *the hire of armies,* or the wages of soldiers for a whole year, who go in and out with him all the year; so that it denotes wages due, and paid after a campaign is ended, and service is over; and, as here used, suggests, that when men have been all their days in the service of sin, and have fought under the banners of it, the wages they will earn, and the reward that will be given them, will be death: and it is frequently observed by the Jewish doctors [c], that אין מיתה בלא חטא, *there's no death without sin;* sin is the cause of death, and death the fruit and effect of sin: *but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.* These

[a] Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 2. sect. 4.
[b] Jarchi & Bartenora in ib. Vid. Cohen de Lara, Ir. David, p. 17.
[c] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 55. 1. Vajikra Rabba, parash. 27. fol. 176. 3. Midrash Kohelet, fol. 70. 4. Zohar in Gen. fol. 44. 4. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 115. 1.

words, at first sight, look as if the sense of them was, that eternal life is the gift of God through Christ, which is a great and glorious truth of the Gospel; but their standing in opposition to the preceding words require another sense, namely, that God's gift of grace issues in eternal life, through Christ: wherefore by *the gift of God* is not meant eternal life, but either the gift of a justifying righteousness, or the grace of God in regeneration and sanctification, or both, which issue in eternal life; the one is the saints' right and title, the other their meetness for it: so that as death is the wages of sin, and is what that issues in, and brings unto, eternal life is the effect of grace, or what the grace of God in justifying and sanctifying his people issues in; even a life free from all sorrow and imperfection; a life of the utmost perfection and pleasure, and which will last for ever: and as the grace of God, which justifies and sanctifies them, is *through Christ*, so is the eternal life itself which it brings unto: this is in Christ, comes through his righteousness, sufferings, and death; is bestowed by him, and will greatly consist in the enjoyment of him. All grace is the gift of God, and is freely given, or otherwise it would not be grace; particularly the justifying righteousness of Christ is the gift of God; and the rather this may be meant here, since the apostle had been treating of it so largely before, and had so often, in the preceding chapter, called it the gift of righteousness, the free gift, and gift by grace, and justification by it, the justification of life, because it entitles to eternal life, as here: it may be said to issue in it; for between justification and glorification there is a sure and close connexion; they that are justified by the righteousness of Christ, are certainly glorified, or enjoy eternal life; and though this may be principally intended here, yet is not to be understood to the exclusion of other gifts of grace, which have the same connexion and issue: thus, for instance, faith is the gift of God, and not of a man's self, and he that has it, has eternal life, and shall for ever possess it; repentance is a free-grace gift, it is a grant from the Lord, and it is unto life and salvation; and on whomsoever the grace of God is bestowed, so as to believe in Christ for righteousness, and truly repent of sin, these shall partake of eternal glory. It may be observed, that there is a just proportion between sin, and the wages of it, yet there is none between eternal life, and the obedience of men; and therefore though the apostle had been pressing so much obedience to God, and to righteousness, he don't make eternal life to be the fruit and effect of obedience, but of the gift of the grace of God.

CHAP. VII.

THE Apostle, in this chapter, discourses concerning the freedom of justified and regenerated persons from the law, and concerning the nature, use, and excellency of it; in which he removes several objections to it, and gives an account from his own experience of the struggle and combat there is between flesh and spirit in a regenerate person; and which shews, that though believers are justified from sin, yet still sin remains in them, and is the complaint of their souls. Whereas he had in ver. 14. of the preceding chapter, asserted that believers are not under the law, but under grace: he knew that this would be matter of offence to the believing Jews, who still retained an high opinion of the law; wherefore he takes it up in the beginning of this chapter, and explains his meaning, and shews in what sense justified ones are delivered from it; and first observes a known maxim, which every one, especially such as know any thing of the nature of laws, must allow of; that the law has power over a man as long as he lives, and no longer, ver. 1. and then particularly instances in the law of marriage, ver. 2. which is in force as long as both parties live and no longer: during the husband's life the wife is bound, but when dead she is loosed, and which is further explained, ver. 3. that should she marry another while her husband is alive, she would be an adulteress; but he being dead, should she marry, she is liable to no such imputation: this the apostle accommodates, ver 4. to the case of the law, and the saints' deliverance from it, in which he asserts that they are dead to the law, and that to them, as in ver. 6. by the body of Christ; and therefore the law could have no dominion over them, as is the case of all laws when men are dead; and so they might be lawfully married to another, to bring forth fruit to God, according to the particular law of marriage. This is illustrated by the different state and condition of God's elect, before and after conversion; whilst in an unconverted state the law irritates in-dwelling sin, and the lusts of it, and by the members of the body operates to the bringing forth the deadly fruit of sin, ver. 5. but when delivered from the irritating power of the law, that being dead in consequence of the sufferings and death of Christ, they are both in a capacity, and under an obligation to serve the Lord, in a new and spiritual manner, ver. 6. and whereas he had said that the motions of sin are stirred up by the law, ver. 5. he saw that an objection might be raised against the law, as if that was sinful; this he removes by expressing his abhorrence of such a thought, by pointing out the law as that which makes known sin, and by the experience he himself had of it, making known in-dwelling sin to him, ver. 7. when he goes on to give an account of the workings of corrupt nature in him, under the prohibition of the law; how it was with him before it entered into his conscience, and how it was with him afterwards; that before he thought himself alive, and in a fair way to eternal life; but afterwards, as sin appeared to him more vigorous than ever, he found himself a dead man, and dead to all hope of life by the law, being killed by it, or rather by sin which worked by it, ver. 8, 9, 10, 11. and therefore he vindicates the law as holy, just, and good, ver. 12. and answers an objection that might be formed from what he had said concerning the effect the law had upon him, as if it was made death unto him; whereas the office it did was to shew him the exceeding sinfulness of sin, which, and not the

law, was the cause of death, ver. 13. for to it with other saints he bears this testimony, that it is spiritual, though in comparison of it he was carnal and sold under sin, ver. 14. and from henceforward to the end of the chapter, he gives an account of the force and power of in-dwelling sin in him, and the conflict there was in him between grace and corruption: he had knowledge of that which is good, approved of it, and yet did it not, hated sin and yet committed it, ver. 15. but however, his desire after that which was good, and his approbation of it, shewed that *he* agreed to this, that the law was good, ver. 16. nor was his commission of sin to be imputed to his renewed self, but to in-dwelling corruption, ver. 17. the fleshly part in him, in which was no good thing, ver. 18. he found he had a will to that which is good, but not power to perform it; which was abundantly evident by his practice, seeing what he would he did not, and what he would not he did. ver. 19. from whence he concludes again, ver. 20. as in ver. 17. that the evil he did was to be reckoned not to his spiritual, or renewed self, but to his corrupt nature; which he found, as a law that had power to command and to cause to obey, always at hand, close by him when he was desirous of doing good, ver. 21. and yet amidst all these workings of sin in him, he found a real delight and pleasure in the holy law of God, as he was renewed in the spirit of his mind, ver. 22. upon the whole he perceived there were two contrary principles in him, which militated one against the other, and sometimes so it was, that through the strength of corrupt nature in him, he was made a captive to the law of sin and death, ver. 23. which fetched from him a doleful lamentation and complaint, as if his case was desperate, and there was no deliverance for him, ver. 24. and yet upon a view of his great Redeemer and Saviour, Jesus Christ, he takes heart, and thanks God that there was, and would be a deliverance for him through Christ, ver. 25. and then closes the account which stood thus in his experience, and does in the experience of every regenerate man; that with his renewed mind he served the holy law of God from a principle of grace, and with his fleshly and carnal part the law of sin.

Ver. 1. *Know ye not, brethren,* &c.] The apostle having asserted, chap. vi. 14. that the believing Romans were *not under the law:* which he knew would be displeasing to many, and excepted to by them, especially the Jews that were among them, who though they believed in Christ, yet were zealous of the law, takes it up again, and explains and defends it. That they were the Jewish converts at Rome he here particularly addresses, appears partly from his calling them *brethren*, for they were so according to the flesh, as well as in a spiritual relation, and this he rather mentions to soften their resentments, and conciliate their minds to him; and partly from the words included in a parenthesis, *for I speak to them that know the law;* not the law of nature, but the law of Moses, as the Jews did, being trained up in the knowledge of it; to these he appeals, saying, *know ye not*, for the truth of a principle or maxim he afterwards improves, which they could not be ignorant of, *how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he,* or *it, liveth;* for the word *liveth* may refer either to man or to the law. The law may be said to live, when it is in full force, and to be dead, when it is abrogated and disanulled; now whilst it lives, or is in force, it has dominion over a man; it can require and command obedience of him, and in case of disobedience can condemn him, and inflict punishment on him: and this power it has also as long as the man lives who is under it, but when he is dead it has no more dominion over him; then *the servant is free from his master*, Job iii. 19. that is, from the law of his master; and children are free from the law of their parents, the wife from the law of her husband, and subjects from the law of their prince. This is so clear a point that none can doubt of it. The Jews have a saying [d], that "when a man is dead, he becomes "חפשי מן תורה ומן המצות, free from the law, and "from the commands."

Ver. 2. *For the woman which hath an husband,* &c.] The former general rule is here illustrated by a particular instance and example in the law of marriage; a woman that is married to a man, *is bound by the law to her husband;* to live with him, in subjection and obedience to him, *so long as he liveth;* except in the cases of adultery, Matt. xix. 9. and desertion, 1 Cor. vii. 15. by which the bond of marriage is loosed, and for which a divorce or separation may be made, which are equal to death: *but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband;* the bond of marriage is dissolved, the law of it is abolished, and she is at entire liberty to marry whom she will, 1 Cor. vii. 39.

Ver. 3. *So then if while her husband liveth,* &c.] True indeed it is, that whilst her husband is alive, if *she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress;* she will be noted and accounted of as such by every body, except in the above-mentioned cases: *but if her husband be dead;* then there can be no exception to her marriage: *she is free from the law;* of marriage, by which she was before bound: *so that she is no adulteress;* nor will any reckon her such; she is clear from any such imputation: *though she be married to another man;* hence it appears that second marriages are lawful.

Ver. 4. *Wherefore, my brethren, ye also,* &c.] Here the apostle accommodates the foregoing instance and example to the case in hand, shewing, that the saints were not under the law, the power and dominion of it; since that, as when a man is dead, the woman is loosed from that law by which she was bound whilst he lived, that she may lawfully marry another man, and bear children to him without the imputation of adultery; so believers being dead to the law, and the law dead to them, which is all one, they are loosed from it, and may be, and are lawfully married to Christ, that they may bring forth the genuine fruits of good works, not in order to obtain righteousness and life by them, but for the honour and glory of God; in which account may be observed, an assertion that the saints and children of God *are become dead to the law*, and that to them, as in ver. 6. and can have no more power over them than a law can have over dead persons, or a dead abrogated law can have over

[d] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 30. 1. Niddah, fol. 61. 2. & T. Hieros. Kilaim, fol. 32. 1.

living ones. They are represented as *dead to sin*, and *dead with Christ*, ch. vi. 2, 8. and here, *dead to the law*, as in Gal. ii. 19. and consequently cannot be under it; are out of the reach of its power and government, since that only has dominion over a man as long as he lives. The law is dead to them; it has no power over them, to threaten and terrify them into obedience to it; nor even rigorously to exact it, or command it in a compulsory way; nor is there any need of all this, since believers delight in it after the inward man, and serve it with their minds freely and willingly; the love of Christ, and not the terrors of the law, constrains them to yield a cheerful obedience to it; it has no power to charge and accuse them, curse or condemn them, or minister death unto them, no, not a corporeal one, as a penal evil, and much less an eternal one. And the way and means by which they become dead to the law, and that to them is, *by the body of Christ*; not by Christ, as the body or substance of the ceremonial law; see Col. ii. 17. since that is not singly designed, but the whole law of Moses; but by *the body of Christ*, is either meant Christ himself, Heb. x. 10. and ix. 14. or rather the human nature of Christ, Heb. x. 5. in which the law meets with every thing it can require and demand, as holiness of nature, which is the saints' sanctification in Christ; obedience of life, which is their righteousness; and sufferings of death, which is the penalty the law enjoins, whereby full expiation of sin is made, complete pardon is procured, and eternal redemption obtained; so that the law has nothing more to demand; its mouth is stopped, it is not in its power to curse and damn believers, they are dead to that, and that to them: the reason why the law is become so to them, and they to that, is, *that ye should be married to another*; or *that ye should be to another*, or *be another's*; that is, that ye should appear to be so in a just and legal way; for they were another's, they were Christ's before by the father's gift, and were secretly married to him in the everlasting covenant, before he assumed their nature, and in the body of his flesh bore their sins, satisfied law and justice, paid their debts, and so freed them from the power of the law, its curse and condemnation, or any obligation to punishment; all which was done in consequence of his interest in them, and their marriage-relation to him; but here respect is had to their open marriage to him in time, the day of their espousals in conversion; to make way for which, the law, their former husband, must be dead, and they dead to that, that so their marriage to Christ might appear lawful and justifiable; who is very fitly described by him, *who is raised from the dead*; and is a living husband, and will ever continue so, will never die more; and therefore as the saints can never be loosed from the marriage-bond of union between Christ and them, so they can never be loosed from the law of this husband; wherefore though they are dead to the law as a covenant of works, and as ministered by Moses, and are free from any obligation to it, as so considered, yet they are *under the law to Christ*; under obligation, by the ties of love, to obedience to it, and shall never be loosed from it. The end of being dead to the law, and of being married to Christ, is, *that we should bring forth fruit unto God*. The allusion is to children being called *the fruit of the womb*, Psal. cxxvii. 3. Luke i. 42. and here designs good works, the fruits of righteousness, which are brought forth by persons espoused to Christ, under the influence of the spirit and grace of God; and they are *unto God*, that is, for the honour and glory of God; meaning either Christ the husband of believers, who is God over all blessed for ever; or God the father, to whose praise and glory they are by Christ; and which is a reason and argument which strongly excites and encourages the saints to the performance of them: and let it be observed, that as children begotten and born in lawful marriage are only true and legitimate, and all before marriage are spurious and illegitimate; so such works only are the true and genuine fruits of righteousness, which are in consequence of a marriage-relation to Christ; are done in faith, spring from love, and are directed to the glory of God; and all others, which are done before marriage to Christ, and without faith in him, are like spurious and illegitimate children.

Ver. 5. *For when we were in the flesh*, &c.] This respects not their being under the legal dispensation, the Mosaical economy; which lay greatly in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, such as regarded the flesh chiefly; so their meats and drinks concerned the body; their ablutions and washings sanctified to the purifying of the flesh; their circumcision was outward in the flesh; the several rituals of the law consisted in outward things, though typical of internal and spiritual ones; hence those that trusted in them trusted in the flesh: but to be *in the flesh* stands opposed, ch. viii. 9. to a being *in the spirit*; whereas there were many under that legal and carnal dispensation who were in the spirit, and had the spirit of God, as David and others; besides, the apostle must be thought to use the phrase in such a sense, as to include all the persons he is speaking of and writing to, who were both Jews and Gentiles, for of such the church at Rome consisted; and the sense is this, *for when we*, Jews and Gentiles, who are now believers in Christ, *were* formerly, before our conversion to, and faith in Christ, *in the flesh*, that is, in a corrupt, carnal, and unregenerate state and condition; in which sense the word *flesh* is frequently used in the next chapter: now not all such who have flesh, sin, or corrupt nature in them, must be reckoned to be in the flesh, for there's a difference between flesh being in persons, from which none are free in this life, and their being in the flesh; nor all such who commit sin, or do carnal things at times, for there is not a just man that doth good and sinneth not; but such who are as they were born, without any alteration made in them by the spirit and grace of God; who have nothing but flesh in them, no fear of God, nor love to and faith in Christ, nor any experience of the work of the spirit of God upon their souls; no true sight and sense of sin, nor any spiritual knowledge of salvation by Christ; in whom flesh is the governing principle, whose minds and principles are carnal, and their conversation wholly so; yea, persons may be in the flesh, in an unregenerate state, who may abstain from the grosser immoralities of life, and even make a profession of religion; now such these had been the apostle is speaking of and to, and tells how it was

with them when in this state; *the motions of sins which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death:* by *the motions of sins* are meant, the evil passions and affections of the mind, the lusts of the heart, sinful desires, evil thoughts, the imaginations of the thoughts of the heart, the first motions of the mind to sin: these *were by the law;* not as the efficient cause of them, that neither produces nor encourages them; it is holy, just, and good, requires truth in the inward parts, and not only forbids the outward acts of sin, but even covetous desires, and lustful thoughts: no, these inward motions of sin arise from a corrupt heart and nature; are encouraged and cherished by the old man that dwells there; and men are enticed by Satan to a compliance with them. Some think that the meaning of the phrase is, that these secret lusts of the heart are made known by the law, as in ver. 7. so they are, but not whilst a man is in the flesh, or in an unregenerate state, but when he comes to be wrought upon powerfully by the spirit of God, who makes use of the law to such a purpose: but the true sense of it is, that these motions of sin are irritated, provoked, and increased, through the law's prohibition of them; which is not to be charged as a fault on the law, but to be imputed to the depravity and corruption of man; who is like to one in a burning fever, very desirous of drink, who the more it is forbid, the more eager is he of it; or like a mighty torrent of water, which rises, rages, flows, and overflows, the more any methods are taken to stop its current; or like a filthy dunghill, which when the sun strikes powerfully on it, it exhales and draws out its filthy stench; which nauseous smell is not to be imputed to the pure rays of the sun, but to the filthiness of the dunghill: these motions of sin are said to *work in our members:* in the members of our bodies, which these sinful affections of the soul make use of to put them into action, and so they *bring forth fruit;* very evil fruit indeed, for nothing else can be expected from such an evil tree as the corrupt nature of man is: and this fruit is *unto death;* deadly fruit, worthy of death, and would issue in eternal death, if grace did not prevent: the rise, beginning, motion, progress, and issue of sin, are most exactly and beautifully described, agreeably to this account here, by the Apostle James, ch. i. 13, 14, 15.

Ver. 6. *But now we are delivered from the law,* &c.] From the ministration of it, by Moses; from it, as a covenant of works; from its rigorous exaction; from its curse and condemnation, all this by Christ; and from its being an irritating, provoking law to sin, through the corruption of nature, by the spirit and grace of Christ; but not from obedience to it, as in the hands of Christ. The Vulgate Latin version, and some copies read, *from the law of death;* and the Ethiopic version renders it, *we are loosed from the law, and are delivered from the former doctrine;* the doctrine of the legal dispensation. *That being dead:* not sin, but the law: in what sense believers are dead to the law, and that to them, has been shewn on ver. 4. *Wherein we were held;* as a woman is by the law to her husband, or as persons guilty, who are detained prisoners; so we were *kept under the law, shut up unto the faith,* as in a prison, Gal. iii. 23. Now the saints' deliverance from the law through the abrogation of it, that losing its former life, vigour, power, and dominion, is not that they may live a loose licentious life and conversation, but that they *should serve* the Lord their God without slavish fear, and with a godly one, acceptably, in righteousness and holiness, all the days of their lives; and their Lord and Master Jesus Christ, who is King of saints, lawgiver in his church, and whose commandments are to be observed from a principle of love, in faith, and to his glory; yea, even the law itself, as held forth by him, as the apostle says in the close of this chapter, *with the mind I myself serve the law of God:* the manner in which this service is to be, and is performed, is, *in newness of spirit;* under the influences of the spirit of God, the author of renovation, of the new creature, or new man created in us, in righteousness and true holiness; and from a new heart, and new spirit, and new principles of life, light, love, and grace, formed in the soul; and by walking in *newness of life,* or by a new life, walk, and conversation: *and not in the oldness of the letter;* not in the outward observance of the law of Moses, which is the *letter;* not indulging the old man, or walking after the dictates of corrupt nature; nor behaving according to the old former course of living: on the whole it may be observed, that a believer without the law, being delivered from it, that being dead to him, and he to that, lives a better life and conversation under the influence of the spirit of God, than one that is under the law, and the works of it, destitute of the grace of God; the one brings forth fruit unto death, the other serves the Lord, *in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.*

Ver. 7. *What shall we say then? is the law sin?* &c.] The apostle having said, that *the motions of sins were by the law,* meets with an objection, or rather an ill-natured cavil, *is the law sin?* if the motions of sins are by it, then it instigates and prompts men to sin; it cherishes it in them; it leads them and impels them to the commission of it, and therefore must be the cause of sin; and if the cause of sin, then it must be sin, or sinful itself: *what shall we say then?* how shall we remove this difficulty, answer this objection, and silence this cavil? To this it is replied by way of detestation and abhorrence, *God forbid!* a way of speaking often made use of by the apostle, when any dreadful consequence was drawn from, or any shocking objection was made to his doctrine, and which was so monstrous as scarcely to deserve any other manner of refutation; see ch. iii. 3, 4, 5. and vi. 1, 2, 15. and next by observing the use of the law to discover sin; which it does by forbidding it, and threatening it with death; by accusing for it, convincing of it, and representing it in its proper colours, it being as a glass in which it may be beheld just as it is, neither greater nor less; which must be understood as attended with a divine power and light, otherwise as a glass is of no use to a blind man, so neither is the law in this sense, to a man in a state of darkness, until the spirit of God opens his eyes to behold in this glass what manner of man he is: now since the law is so useful to discover, and so to discountenance sin, that itself cannot be sin, or sinful. The apostle exemplifies this in his own case, and says, *nay, I had not*

known sin, but by the law; which he says not in the person of another, there is no room nor reason for such a fancy; but in his own person, and of himself: not of himself at that present time, as is evident from his way of speaking; nor of himself in his childhood, before he came to years of discretion to discern between good and evil; but as, and when he was a grown person, and whilst a Pharisee; he did not know sin during his being in that state till the law came, and entered into his conscience, and then, and by it, he knew sin, the exceeding sinfulness of it, and that he himself was the chief of sinners. Nay he goes on to observe, that by the law he came to know, not only the sinfulness of outward actions, but also of inward lusts; *for I had not known lust*, says he, *except the law had said, thou shalt not covet*: as it does in Exod. xx. 17. This is a way of speaking used by the Jews, when they produce any passage out of the law, thus [e], התורה אמרה, *the law says*, if any one comes to kill thee; referring either to 1 Sam. xxiv. 11. or Exod. xxii. 1. and a little after, *the law says*, namely, in Exod. iii. 5. *put off thy shoes from off thy feet*, &c. By *lust* is meant the inward motions of sin in the heart, any and every desire of the mind after it; not only studied and concerted schemes, how to bring about and compass an evil action; but every loose vagrant thought of sin, and inclination to it; yea, every imagination of the thought of the heart, before the imagination is well formed into a thought; and not only a dallying with sin in the mind, dwelling upon it with pleasure in thought, but even such sudden motions and starts of the mind to sin, to which we give no assent; such as are involuntary, yea, contrary to the will, being *the evil* we *would not*, and are displeasing and hateful to us; these are meant by lust, and which by the law of God are known to be sinful, and only by that. These were not known to be so by the Gentiles, who only had the law and light of nature; nor are they condemned, nor any provision made against them, nor can there be any made, by the laws of men: and though these inward lusts are condemned by the law of God, yet inasmuch as they were not punishable by men, and could be covered with the guise of an external righteousness, multitudes who were born under, and brought up in that law, were secure and indolent about them, did not look upon them as sins, or as at all affecting their righteousness; but imagined that, *touching the righteousness of the law*, they were *blameless*; which was the case of all the Pharisees, and of the apostle whilst such: but when the law came and entered his conscience with power and light attending it, then he saw such innumerable swarms of lusts in his heart, and these to be sinful, which he never saw and knew before: just as in a sunbeam we behold those numerous little atoms, which otherwise are indiscernible by us. Now since the law is of such use, not only to discover the sinfulness of outward actions, but also of inward lusts and desires, that itself cannot be sinful.

Ver. 8. *But sin taking occasion by the commandment*, &c.] By *the commandment* is meant, either the whole moral law, or that particular commandment, *thou shalt not covet*; which, the Jews say, comprehends all; "God, (say they [f],) caused them (the Israelites) to hear "the ten words, which he concluded with this word, "*thou shalt not covet*; שכולם תלוים בו, *for all of* "*them depend on that*: and to intimate, that whoever "keeps this commandment, it is as if he kept the "whole law, and whoever transgresses this, it is all "one as if he transgressed the whole law;" and no doubt but it does refer to any unlawful thought of, desire after, and inclination to any thing forbidden in the other commandments. By *sin* is meant, not the devil, as some of the ancients thought; but the vitiosity and corruption of nature, in-dwelling sin, the law in the members that took *occasion* by the law of God; so that the law at most could only be an occasion, not the cause of sin, and besides, this was an occasion not given by the law, but taken by sin; so that it was sin, and not the law, which *wrought in* him *all manner of concupiscence*. The law forbidding every unclean thought, and covetous desire of unlawful objects, sin took an occasion through these prohibitions to work in him, stir up and excite concupiscence, evil desire, after all manner of things forbidden by the law; hence it is clear that not the law, but sin, is exceeding sinful: *for without the law sin was dead*; not that, before the law of Moses was given, sin lay dead and unexerted, for during that interval between Adam and Moses sin was, and lived and reigned, and death by it, as much as at any other time; but when the apostle was without the law, that is, without the knowledge of the spirituality of it, before it came with power and light into his heart and conscience, sin lay as though it was dead; it was so in his apprehension, he fancied himself free from it, and that he was perfectly righteous.

Ver. 9. *For I was alive without the law once*, &c.] The apostle says this, not in the person of Adam, as some have thought; who lived indeed, in a state of innocence, a perfectly holy and righteous life, but not without the law, which was the rule of his actions, and the measure of his obedience; he had the law of nature written upon his heart, and a positive law respecting the forbidden fruit given him, as a trial of his obedience; and though when he transgressed he became mortal, yet sin could not be said to revive in him, which never lived before; nor does the apostle speak in the person of a Jew, or the whole body of the people of Israel before the law was given on Mount Sinai; before that time the sons of Abraham did not live without a law; for besides the law of nature, which they had in common with others, they were acquainted with other laws of God, as the laws of circumcision, sacrifices, and the several duties of religion; see Gen. xviii. 19. and when the law did come from Mount Sinai, it had not such effects upon them as are here expressed: but the apostle is speaking of himself, and that not as in his state of infancy before he could discern between good and evil, but when grown up, and whilst a Pharisee; who, though he was born under the law, was brought up and more perfectly instructed in it than the common people were, and was a strict observer of it, yet was without the knowledge of the spirituality of it; he, as the rest

[e] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 62. 2.

[f] Abkath Rochel, l. 1. par. 1. p. 3. Ed. Huls.

of the Pharisees, thought it only regarded the outward actions, and did not reach to the spirits or souls of men, the inward thoughts and affections of the mind; the law was as it were at a distance from him, it had not as yet entered into his heart and conscience; and whilst this was his case he was *alive*, he did not know that he was *dead in trespasses and sins*, a truth he afterwards was acquainted with; nor that he was so much as disordered by sin; he thought himself healthful, sound, and whole, when he was diseased and full of wounds, bruises, and sores, from head to foot; he lived in the utmost peace and tranquillity, without the least ruffle and uneasiness, free from any terror or despondency, and in perfect security, being in sure and certain hope of eternal life; and concluded if ever any man went to heaven he certainly should, since, as he imagined, he lived a holy and righteous life, free of all blame, and even to perfection; *but when the commandment came;* not to Adam in the garden of Eden; nor to the Israelites on Mount Sinai; but into the heart and conscience of the apostle, with power and light from above: *sin revived;* it lift up its monstrous head, and appeared in its ugly shape, exceeding sinful indeed; it grew strong and exerted itself; its strugglings and opposition, its rebellion and corruption were seen and felt, which shew that it was not dead before, only seemed to be so; it was in being, and it lived and acted before as now; the difference was not in that, but in the apostle's sense and apprehension of it, who upon sight of it died away: *and I died:* he now saw himself a dead man, dead in sin, dead in law, under a sentence of death which he now had within himself; he saw he was deserving of eternal death, and all his hopes of eternal life by his obedience to the law of works died at once; he now experimentally learnt that doctrine he so much insisted on afterwards in his ministry, and to the last maintained, that there can be no justification of a sinner by the deeds of the law, since by it is *the knowledge of sin.*

Ver. 10. *And the commandment which was ordained to life,* &c.] The law which promised a continuance of an immortal life to Adam, in case of perfect obedience to it; and which was appointed to the Israelites, that by the observation of it they might live in the land of Canaan, and in the quiet and full possession of their privileges and enjoyments; but was never ordained to eternal life, or that men should obtain that by their obedience to it; since eternal life is the free gift of God, without respect to any works of men; see Gal. iii. 21. This same law, the apostle says, *I found to be unto death;* as it was an occasion, through the vitiosity of nature, of stirring up sin in him, which brought forth fruit unto death; as it convinced him that he was a dead man and worthy of death; as it threatened him with it, and struck all his hopes of eternal life dead, and left him in this condition without giving him the least direction or assistance whereby to obtain life.

Ver. 11. *For sin taking occasion by the commandment,* &c.] As in ver. 8. *deceived me;* either by promising pleasure or impunity: the same effect is ascribed by the Jews to the evil imagination or corruption of nature, which they say is called an enticer, שמפתה אדם, *that deceives man*[g]: *and by it slew me;* mortally wounded me: not the law, but sin by the law, deceived and slew him; so that as before, the law is cleared from being the cause of sin, so here, from being the cause of death; for though the law is a killing letter, the ministration of condemnation and death, yet it is not the cause of it; but sin, which is a transgression of the law, is that which deceives or leads out of the way, as the word signifies, and then kills. The metaphor is taken from a thief or a robber, who leads a man out of the way into some bye-path, and then murders him.

Ver. 12. *Therefore the law is holy,* &c.] This is a conclusion or inference drawn from the preceding discourse, in commendation of the law; that standing clear of any charge or imputation of sin, as being the cause of it. This epithet the apostle gives to the law is what the Jews frequently give it; worthy are the Israelites, say they[h], "to whom is given אורייתא "קדישא, *the holy law*; in which they study day and "night." By *the law* is meant the whole body of the precepts of it in general; and by *the commandment,* either the same, or every one of the commandments in particular, and especially that which is cited, *thou shalt not covet.* Some have thought that the *three* properties of it design the threefold division of the law; and suppose that by that which is *holy* is meant the ceremonial law, which sanctified to the purifying of the flesh; by that which is *just,* the judicial law, which pointed out to the Jewish commonwealth what was right and wrong; and by that which is *good,* the moral law in all its precepts: but nothing is more certain, than that the moral law is only spoken of in this context, which may be said to be *holy,* because of its author, the holy God, from whom nothing can come but what is holy; and because of the matter of it, it is a transcript of the holy nature of God, a declaration of his holy will; it requires holiness both of heart and life; it forbids whatever is unholy, and commands nothing but what is holy; it teaches men to live holy, sober, righteous, and godly lives. It may be truly called *just,* or righteous, as it demands perfect obedience to all its precepts, or it won't admit of it as a righteousness; as it pronounces guilty, curses and condemns for every disobedience of it; as it deals impartially with persons the transgressors of it; and as it acquits believers upon the foot of the righteousness of Christ, the fulfilling end of it. It is rightly called *good,* from the author of it, God, from whom every good thing comes, and nothing else; from the matter of it, and from the use of it both to saints and sinners.

Ver. 13. *Was then that which is good, made death unto me?* &c.] An objection is started upon the last epithet in commendation of the law; and it is as if the objector should say, if the law is good, as you say, how comes it to pass that it is made death, or is the cause of death to you? can that be good, which is deadly, or the cause of death? or can that be the cause of death which is good? This objection taken out of the mouth of another person proceeds upon a mistake of the apostle's meaning; for though he had said that he died when the commandment came, and found by

[g] Tzeror Hammor, fol. 141. 3. & 150. 1.

[h] Zohar in Gen. fol. 48. 4.

experience that it was unto death, yet does not give the least intimation that the law was the cause of his death; at most, that it was only an occasion, and that was not given by the law, but taken by sin, which, and not the law, deceived him and slew him. Nor is it any objection to the goodness of the law, that it is a ministration of condemnation and death to sinners; for *lex non damnans non est lex*, a law without a sanction or penalty, which has no power to condemn and punish, is no law, or at least a law of no use and service; nor is the judge, or the sentence which he according to law pronounces upon a malefactor, the cause of his death, but the crime which he is guilty of; and the case is the same here, wherefore the apostle answers to this objection with abhorrence and detestation of fixing any such charge upon the law, as being the cause of death to him, saying, *God forbid;* a way of speaking used by him, as has been observed, when any thing is greatly disliked by him, and is far from his thoughts. Moreover, he goes on to open the true end and reason of sin, by the law working death in his conscience; *but sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good;* that is, the vitiosity and corruption of nature, which is designed by *sin*, took an occasion, *by that which is good*, that is, the law, through its prohibition of lust, to work in me all manner of concupiscence, which brought forth fruit unto death; wherefore, upon the law's entrance into my heart and conscience, I received the sentence of death in myself, that so sin by it, *working death in me, might appear sin* to me, which I never knew before. This end was to be, and is answered by it, yea, *that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful*, that the corruption of nature might not only be seen and known to be sin, but exceeding sinful; as being not only contrary to the pure and holy nature of God, but as taking occasion by the pure and holy law of God to exert itself the more, and so appear to be as the words καθ' υπερβολην αμαρτωλος may be rendered, *exceedingly a sinner*, or *an exceeding great sinner;* that being the source and parent of all actual sins and transgressions; wherefore not the law, but sin, was the cause of death, which by the law is discovered to be so very sinful.

Ver. 14. *For we know that the law is spiritual*, &c.] We who have a spiritual understanding of the law, who have been led into the true nature of it by the spirit of God, know by experience that that itself is *spiritual;* and therefore can never be the cause of sin or death: the law may be said to be *spiritual*, because it comes from the spirit of God; and reaches to the spirit of man; it requires truth in the inward parts; spiritual service and obedience; a serving of it with our minds; a worshipping of God in spirit and truth; a loving of him with all our hearts and souls, as well as a performance of all the outward acts of religion and duty; and because it cannot be truly obeyed and conformed to without the assistance of the spirit of God. To this spirituality of the law the apostle opposes himself, *but I am carnal, sold under sin:* from hence to the end of the *chapter* many are of opinion, that the apostle speaks in the person of an unregenerate man, or of himself as unregenerate; but nothing is more clear, than that he speaks all along of himself in the first person, *I am carnal*, &c. αυτος εγω, *I myself*, as in ver. 25, and in the present tense of what he then was and found; whereas, when he speaks of his unregenerate state, and how it was with him under the first convictions of sin, he speaks of them as things past, ver. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11. besides, several things which are said by the apostle can neither agree with him, nor any other, but as regenerate; such as to *hate evil, delight in the law of God*, and *serve it with the mind*, ver. 15, 22, 25. Moreover, the distinctions between flesh and spirit, the inward and the outward man, and the struggle there is between them, are to be found in none but regenerate persons; and to say no more, the thanksgiving for deliverance from sin by Christ can only come from such; nor are any of the things said inapplicable to men that are born again, as will appear by the consideration of them as they follow: for when the apostle says, *I am carnal;* his meaning is, either that he was so by nature, and as he saw himself when sin through the law became exceeding sinful to him; or as he might be denominated from the flesh or corruption of nature which was still in him, and from the infirmities of the flesh he was attended with; just as the Corinthians, though sanctified in Christ Jesus, and called to be saints, are said to be *carnal* on account of their envying, strife, and divisions, 1 Cor. iii. 1, 2, 3, 4. or in comparison of the *spiritual* law of God, which was now before him, and in which he was beholding his face as in a glass, and with which when compared, the holiest man in the world must be reckoned carnal. He adds, *sold under sin;* he did not *sell himself* to work wickedness, as Ahab and others; he was passive and not active in it; and when at any time he with his flesh served the law of sin, he was not a voluntary, but an involuntary servant; besides, this may be understood of his other I, his carnal I, his unrenewed self, the old man which is always under sin, when the spiritual I, the new man, is never under the law of sin, but under the governing influence of the grace of God.

Ver. 15. *For that which I do, I allow not*, &c.] The apostle having cleared the law from the charge of being the cause either of sin or death, and taken the blame to himself, proceeds to give an account of the struggle and combat he found in himself between the flesh and spirit; *that which I do, I allow not.* That which he did was evil, since he allowed not of it; but this is to be understood not of any notorious crime committed by him, and repeated again and again; nor of a sinful course of life, for before his conversion he was not a profane man, but externally moral; and after his conversion, had his conversation in the world by the grace of God in righteousness and holiness; a vicious course of life being contrary to the grace of God implanted in him, and the doctrines of grace professed by him; but of internal lusts, the workings of corruptions in his heart, and which are real actions of the mind, together with the various frailties and infirmities of life: when that apostle says that what he did, γινωσκω, *I know not;* his meaning is, not that he was utterly ignorant of them, of their nature and operations; that he was insensible of their motions, and unconcerned about them; for his sense of them, and concern for them, are expressed by him in the strongest terms, *I know, I find, I see, O wretched man*, &c. ver. 18, 21, 23, 24. but either

that the efforts and effects of sin in him were so sudden, and at an unawares, that he was sometimes overtaken and held captive, before he knew well where he was, or what he was doing; or the sense is, that he had not a full knowledge of the evil of his heart, the corruptions of his nature, nor did he understand all his infirmities and the errors of his life; or else the meaning is, I own it not as right, but confess it to be wrong, I don't acknowledge these actions as the productions of the new man, they are alien to him, but as the deeds of the old man; or rather, *I don't approve* of them, I dislike, abhor, and detest them; I cannot excuse or palliate them, but must condemn them; so words of knowledge in the Hebrew language are expressive of love, liking, and approbation; see Psal. i. 6. Hos. viii. 4. Gen. xviii. 19. on which last text, *I know him*, says Jarchi, לשון חבה, *it is the language of love*, or a phrase expressive of strong affection; and so here, I know not, I don't like, love, and approve of these things, or I don't *allow* of them, and indulge myself in them, I loathe them and myself for them; and is this talking like an unregenerate man? can it be thought that the apostle speaks of himself as unregenerate, or personates such a man? *for what I would, that do I not*; what he desired and willed was good, though he did it not; and so the Vulgate Latin version reads, *for not the good which I would, I do*; and so the next clause, *but the evil which I hate, I do*: and what was that? he would have had his thoughts always employed about the best things; he would have had his affections continually and alone set on God, Christ, and the things of another world; he would he was desirous to keep the whole law of God, and do the whole will of God, and live without sin, and as the angels do in heaven: now such a will as this is never to be found in unregenerate persons; this is from God, and the power of his grace: when he says he did not what he willed, what he was desirous of, and bent upon, his sense is, not that he never did any good thing he willed; for he did many good things, as every good man does, but he did not always do the good he willed, and never perfectly, nor any thing without grace and strength from Christ: he adds, *but what I hate, that do I*; sin was what he hated; it being contrary to the pure and holy nature of God, to the good and righteous law of God, and was in itself, to his view, exceeding sinful: he hated vain thoughts, unclean desires, revengeful lusts, the secret motions of all sin in his heart, and the various evil actions of life; which can never be said of an unregenerate man; who loves sin, delights in iniquity, and takes pleasure in them that do it; and yet what the apostle hated he did; he wrought with his carnal I, his flesh, and through the power of it, and force of temptation, though not without reluctance, remorse, and repentance. The Karaite Jews, which were the better sort of them, say and hold some things, not much unlike to what is here delivered; "though a man (say they[†]) should trans-"gress some of the commandments, or the command-"ments in part, לתגבורת תאוה לא על צד החפץ, *through* "*the strength of lust, and not on account of, or with* "*pleasure and delight*, he shall be one of those that "shall enter into paradise."

Ver. 16. *If then I do that which I would not, &c.*] This is a corollary, or an inference from what he had related of his own experience; that since what he did, though it was contrary to the law of God, yet was what he did not will nor allow of, but hated, it must be a clear point, that he *consented to the law, that it was good*; lovely and amiable; that it forbad those things which were hateful, and commanded those things which were desirable to a good man; and so is acknowledged to be a very beautiful rule of obedience, walk, and conversation.

Ver. 17. *Now then, it is no more I that do it, &c.*] This is another inference, deduced from what is before said, that since he did not approve, but hated what he did, and willed the contrary, it was not he as spiritual, as born again, as a new man, a new creature, that did it; see 1 John iii. 9. *But sin*, says he, *that dwelleth in me*; the old man, the carnal I, the evil present with him, the law in his members; which not only existed in him, and wrought in him, and that at times very strongly, but dwelt in him, had its abode in him, as it has in all regenerate persons, and will have, as long as they are in the body.

Ver. 18. *For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, &c.*] The apostle goes on to give some further account of himself, what he knew, and was fully assured of by long experience; as that *no good thing dwelt* in him, that is, in his flesh, or carnal self; for otherwise there were many good things dwelt in him; there was the good work of grace, and the good word of God in him, and even Father, Son, and Spirit, dwelt in him; but his meaning is, that there was no good thing naturally in him; no good thing of his own putting there; nothing but what God had put there; no good thing, but what was owing to Christ, to the grace of God, and influence of the Spirit; or as he himself explains it, there was no good thing in his *flesh*; in the old man that was in him, which has nothing in his nature good; no good thing comes out of him, nor is any good thing done by him: and this explanative and limiting clause, *that is, in my flesh*, clearly proves, that the apostle speaks of himself, and as regenerate; for had he spoke in the person of an unregenerate man, there would have been no room nor reason for such a restriction, seeing an unregenerate man is nothing else but flesh, and has nothing but flesh, or corrupt nature in him; and who does not know, that no good thing dwells in such persons? whereas the apostle intimates by this explication, that he had something else in him beside flesh, and which is opposed to it; and that is spirit, or the new man, which is of a spiritual nature, and is seated in the spirit, or soul, and comes from the spirit of God; and in this spiritual man dwell good things, for *the fruit of the spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth*; so that though there was no good thing dwelling in his flesh, in the old man, yet there were good things dwelling in his spirit, in the new and spiritual man, the hidden man of the heart: and he adds, *to will is present with me*; which must be understood, not of the power and faculty of the will, with respect to things natural and civil, which is common to all men; nor of a will to that which is evil, which is in wicked men; but of

[†] R. Elisha in Addareth, c. 3. apud Trigland de Sect. Karaeorum, c. 10. p. 176.

a will to that which was good, which he had not of himself, but from God, and is only to be found in regenerate persons; and denotes the readiness of his mind and will to that which is spiritually good, like that which Christ observes of his disciples, when he says, *the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak*, Matt. xxvi. 41. which may serve much to illustrate the passage before us: since it follows, *but how to perform that which is good, I find not*: he found he had no strength of himself to do what he willed; and that he could do nothing without Christ; and that what he did by the strength and grace of Christ, he did not do perfectly. To will to live without sin, not to have a lustful or a revengeful thought in his breast, was present with him, but how to perform, how to live in this manner, which was so desirable to him, being born again, he found not. It may be asked, how does this agree with what the apostle says, *it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure?* To this it may be replied, that when God does work in his people both to will and to do, he does not work both equally alike, or to the same degree, so that the work answers to the will; God never works in them so to do, as to will, for when they are wrought in, acted upon, and influenced to do the most, and that in the best manner, they never do all that they would; and sometimes God works in them to will, when he does not work in them to do; as in the case of the disciples of Christ, in whom he worked to will to watch with Christ an hour, but did not work in them to do; and whenever he works in the saints, whether to will or to do, or both, 'tis always *of his own good pleasure*.

Ver. 19. *For the good that I would, I do not*, &c.] The apostle here repeats what he had delivered in ver. 15, 16. to strengthen and confirm this part of his experience; that though he had a will to that which was good, yet he wanted power, and had none of himself to perform; and therefore often did what he would not, and what he would he did not.

Ver. 20. *Now if I do that I would not*, &c.] The same conclusion is formed here, as in ver. 17. not with any view to excuse himself from blame in sinning, but to trace the lusts of his heart, and the sins of his life, to the source and fountain of them, the corruption of his nature; and to ascribe them to the proper cause of them, which was not the law of God, nor the new man, but sin that dwelt in him.

Ver. 21. *I find then a law*, &c.] This is to be understood either of the corruption of nature, which he found by experience to be in him; and which, because of its force, power, and prevalence it sometimes had in him, he calls *a law*; it forcibly demanding compliance with its lusts; and is the same with what he calls *evil*, and which the Jews so frequently style יצר הרע *the evil imagination*, by which they mean the corruption of nature; and one of the seven names, and the first of them, by which it is called, they tell us [k], is, רע, *evil*: the very name it goes by here, and which they say God calls it, Gen. vi. 5. and well may it be so called, since it is originally, naturally, and continually evil; it is evil in its nature and consequences; it is the source and spring of all evil: *that when I would do good*, says the apostle, as soon as any good thought arises in me, any good resolution is entered into by me, or I am about to do any thing that is good, *evil*, the vitiosity of nature, *is present with me*, and hinders me; it came into the world with me, and it has continued with me ever since; it cleaves close unto me, it lies very nigh me, and whenever there is any motion to that which is good, it starts up, which seemed to lie asleep before, and exerts itself, so that I cannot do the good I would. The Jews say [l], there are שתי לבבות, *two hearts* in man, the good imagination, and the evil imagination. The apostle here speaks as of two wills in regenerate men, one to good, and another to evil: or this may be understood of the law of God, which he found agreed with his mind, willing that which is good, though sin lay so near to him; or he found that willing that which was good was the law of God, very agreeable to it; and that the law was on his side, favouring him, encouraging him to that which is good, though sin kept so close to him; to which sense agree the following words.

Ver. 22. *For I delight in the law of God*, &c.] This an unregenerate man cannot do; he don't like its commands, they are disagreeable to his corrupt nature; and as it is a threatening, cursing, damning law, it can never be delighted in by him: the moralist, the Pharisee, who obeys it externally, don't love it, nor delight in it; he obeys it not from love to its precepts, but from fear of its threatenings; from a desire of popular esteem, and from low, mercenary, selfish views, in order to gain the applause of men, and favour of God: only a regenerate man delights in the law of God; which he does, as it is fulfilled by Christ, who has answered all the demands of it: and as it is in the hands of Christ, held forth by him as a rule of holy walk and conversation; and as it is written upon his heart by the spirit of God, to which he yields a voluntary and cheerful obedience: he serves it with his mind, of a ready mind freely, and without any constraint but that of love; he delights together with the law, as the word here used signifies; the delight is mutual and reciprocal, the law delights in him, and he delights in the law; and they both delight in the self-same things, and particularly in the perfect obedience which the son of God has yielded to it. The apostle adds, *after the inward man*: by which he means the renewed man, the new man, or new nature, formed in his soul; which had its seat in the inward part, is an internal principle, oil in the vessel of the heart, a seed under ground, the kingdom within us, the hidden man of the heart, which is not obvious to every one's view, it being not any thing that is external, though never so good: this in its nature is agreeable to the law of God, and according to this a regenerate man delights in it: but then this restrictive limiting clause supposes another man, the old man, the carnal I, according to which the apostle did not delight in the law of God; and proves, that he speaks of himself as regenerate, and not as unregenerate, or as personating an unregenerate man, because no such distinction is to be found in such a person; nor does such a person delight at all, in any sense, upon any consideration in the law of God, but is

[k] T. Bab. Succa, fol. 52. 1. & Kiddushin, fol. 30. 2.

[l] Tzeror Hammor, fol. 135. 4.

enmity against it, and unsubjected to it; nor can he be otherwise, without the grace of God.

Ver. 23. *But I see another law in my members, &c.*] That is, he saw, he perceived it by experience; he felt the force and power of inbred corruption working in him, and as a law demanding obedience to it; and which he might well call *another law*, it being not only distinct from, but opposite to the law of God he delighted in; the one is good, the other evil; this other law is a transgression of the law of God, and which he observed to be *in* his *members*, *i. e.* in the members of his body; not that it had its seat only, or chiefly in his body, and the parts of it, but because it exerted itself by them, it made use of them to fulfil its lusts: the same phrase is used in the Targum on Psal. xxxviii. 3. which renders the words there thus, there's no peace, באברי, *in my members*, because of my sin: now this law was *warring*, says he, *against the law of my mind*; by the *law of* his *mind* is meant, either the law of God written on his mind in conversion, and which he delighted in, and served with his mind, as renewed by the spirit of God; or the new nature in him, the principle of grace wrought in his mind, called *the law* of it, because it was the governing principle there; which reigns, and will reign in every regenerate person through righteousness, unto eternal life, though the law of sin opposes all its force and power against it; that is not only contrary to it, lusts against it, but wars, and commits acts of hostility against it: the state of regenerate persons is a warfare, they have many enemies to combat with, as Satan and the world; but those of their own household, within themselves, in their own hearts, are the worst of all; there's an intestine war in them, as it were a company of two armies, flesh and spirit, sin and grace, combating together; and so it will be as long as this life lasts; so true is that saying of the Jews[m], in which they agree with the apostle, "as long "as the righteous live, נלחמים עם יצרן, *they are at war* "*with the corruption of their nature*; when they die "they are at rest:" hence we read of מלחמת יצר הרע, *the war of the evil imagination*[n]: but what is worst of all, this is sometimes *bringing* them *into captivity to the law of sin, which is in* their *members*; that is, to itself; for the law in the members, and the law of sin in the members, must be the same: and it may be said to bring into captivity to itself, when it only endeavours to do it, though it does not effect it; for sometimes words which express an effect only design the endeavour to effect, but not that itself; see Ezek. xxiv. 13. Gen. xxxvii. 21, 22. Exod. viii. 18. But admitting that this phrase intends the real and actual effecting of it, it is to be understood of a captivity to sin, different from that an unregenerate man is in; who is a voluntary captive to sin and Satan, gives up himself to such slavery and bondage, and rather goes, than is brought or carried into it; whereas a regenerate man is, through the force of sin, and power of temptation, violently drawn and carried into captivity; in which he is held against his will, and to his great uneasiness: besides, this expression does not denote absolute dominion, which sin has not over a regenerate man; nor is it utterly inconsistent with his character as such; for as a subject of one nation may be taken a prisoner, and be carried captive into another nation, and yet remain a subject where he was, and does not become one of that country of which he is carried captive; so a regenerate man, being carried captive by sin, does not come under the absolute dominion of sin, or cease to be a subject of the kingdom of grace, or in other words, a regenerate person: moreover, the very phrase of *bringing into captivity* supposes that the person before was not a captive; whereas every unregenerate man is one, was always so, and never otherwise: add to all this, that this captivity was very distressing and uneasy to the person, and makes him cry out, *O wretched man*, &c. whereas the captivity of an unregenerate person is very agreeable to him; he likes his prison, he loves his chains, and don't choose to be in any other state and condition; though, as the Jews[o] say, there's no captivity כגלות הנשמה, *like the captivity of the soul*; and nothing so grieving and afflictive to a good man as that is. The apostle uses much such language as his countrymen do, who frequently represent man as having two principles in him, the one good, the other bad; the one they call יצר הרע, *the evil imagination*, or corruption of nature; the other they call יצר הטוב, *the good imagination*, or principle of grace and goodness; which they say[p], are at continual war with each other, and the one is sometimes נשבה, *carried captive* by the other. The good imagination, they say[q], is like to one that חבוש בבית האסורין, *is bound in a prison*; as it is said, *out of prison he cometh to reign*; to which agrees what they say[r], "how shall I serve my Creator whilst "I am אסיר יצרי, *a captive to my corruption*, and a ser- "vant to my lust?"

Ver. 24. *O wretched man that I am, &c.*] Not as considered in Christ, for as such he was a most happy man, being blessed with all spiritual blessings, and secure from all condemnation and wrath; nor with respect to his inward man, which was renewing day by day, and in which he enjoyed true spiritual peace and pleasure; nor with regard to his future state, of the happiness of which he had no doubt; he knew in whom he had believed; he was fully persuaded nothing could separate him from the love of God; and that when he had finished his course, he should have the crown of righteousness laid up for him: but this exclamation he made on account of the troubles he met with in his Christian race; and not so much on account of his reproaches, persecutions, and distresses for Christ's sake; though these were many and great, yet these did not move or much affect him, he rather took delight and pleasure in them; but on account of that continual combat between the flesh and spirit in him; or by reason of that mass of corruption and body of sin he carried about with him; much such a complaint Isaiah makes, ch. vi. 5. which in the Septuagint is, ὦ τάλας ἐγώ, *O miserable I*. This shews him to be, and to speak of himself as a regenerate man; since an unregenerate man feels no uneasiness upon that score, or makes any complaint of it, saying as here, *who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* or *this body of death*; by

[m] Bereshit Rabba, Parash. 9. fol. 7. 4.
[n] Tzeror Hammor, fol. 93. 2. & 112. 3. & 115. 2. & 144. 4. & 145. 1, 2.
[o] Caphtor, fol. 14. 2.

[p] Zohar in Gen. fol. 56. 2.
[q] Pirke Abot R. Nathan, c. 16. fol. 5. 2.
[r] Machzor Jud. Hispan. apud L. Capell. in Rom. vi. 16.

which some understand, this mortal body, or the body of flesh subject to death for sin; and suppose the apostle expresses his desire to quit it, to depart out of it, that he might enjoy an immortal life, being weary of the burden of this mortal body he carried about with him: so Philo the Jew * represents the body as a burden to the soul, which νεκροφορεῖν, *it carries about as a dead carcass*, and never lays down from his birth till his death: though it should be observed, that when the apostle elsewhere expresses an earnest longing after a state of immortality and glory, some sort of reluctance and unwillingness to leave the body is to be observed, which is not to be discerned here; and was this his sense, one should think he would rather have said, when shall I be delivered? or why am I not delivered? and not who shall deliver me? though admitting this to be his meaning, that he was weary of the present life, and wanted to be rid of his mortal body, this did not arise from the troubles and anxieties of life, with which he was pressed, which oftentimes make wicked men long to die; but from the load of sin, and burden of corruption, under which he groaned, and still bespeaks him a regenerate man; for not of outward calamities, but of in-dwelling sin is he all along speaking in the context: wherefore 'tis better by *this body of death* to understand what he in ch. vi. 6. calls *the body of sin*: that mass of corruption that lodged in him, which is called *a body*, because of its fleshly carnal nature; because of its manner of operation, it exerts itself by the members of the body; and because it consists of various parts and members, as a body does; and a *body of death*, because it makes men liable to death: 'twas that which the apostle says *slew* him, and which itself is to a regenerate man, as a dead carcass, stinking and loathsome; and is to him like that punishment Mezentius inflicted on criminals, by fastening a living body to a putrid carcass[t]: and it is emphatically called the body of *this* death, referring to the captivity of his mind, to the law of sin, which was as death unto him: and no wonder therefore he so earnestly desires deliverance, saying, *who shall deliver me?* which he speaks not as being ignorant of his deliverer, whom he mentions with thankfulness in the next verse; or as doubting and despairing of deliverance, for he was comfortably assured of it, and therefore gives thanks before-hand for it; but as expressing the inward pantings, and earnest breathings of his soul after it; and as declaring the difficulty of it, yea, the impossibility of its being obtained by himself, or by any other than he, whom he had in view: he knew he could not deliver himself from sin; that the law could not deliver him; and that none but God could do it; and which he believed he would, through Jesus Christ his Lord.

Ver. 25. *I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord*, &c.] There's a different reading of this passage; some copies read, and so the Vulgate Latin version, thus, *the grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord*: which may be considered as an answer to the apostle's earnest request for deliverance, *who shall deliver me?* the grace of God shall deliver me. The grace of God the father, which is communicated through Christ the Mediator by the spirit, the law of the spirit of life which is in Christ, the principle of grace formed in the soul by the spirit of God, which reigns in the believer as a governing principle, through righteousness unto eternal life, will in the issue deliver from in-dwelling sin, and all the effects of it: but the more general reading is, *thanks be to God*, or *I thank God*; the object of thanksgiving is God, as the father of Christ, and the God of all grace: the medium of it is Christ as Mediator, through whom only we have access to God; without him we can neither pray to him, nor praise him aright; our sacrifices of praise are only acceptable to God, through Christ; and as all our mercies come to us through him, it is but right and fitting that our thanksgivings should pass the same way: the thing for which thanks is given is not expressed, but is implied, and is deliverance; either past, as from the power of Satan, the dominion of sin, the curse of the law, the evil of the world, and from the hands of all spiritual enemies, so as to endanger everlasting happiness; or rather, future deliverance, from the very being of sin: which shews, that at present, and whilst in this life, saints are not free from it; that it is God only that must, and will deliver from it; and that through Christ his son, through whom we have victory over every enemy, sin, Satan, law, and death; and this shews the apostle's sure and certain faith and hope of this matter, who concludes his discourse on this head thus: *so then with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin*; observe, he says, *I myself*, and not another; whence it is clear, he does not personate another man in this discourse of his; for this is a phrase used by him, when he can't possibly be understood of any other but himself; see Rom. ix. 3. 2 Cor. x. 1. and xii. 13. he divides himself as it were into two parts, *the mind*, by which he means his inward man, his renewed self; and *the flesh*, by which he designs his carnal I, that was sold under sin: and hereby he accounts for his serving, at different times, two different laws; *the law of God*, written on his mind, and in the service of which he delighted as a regenerate man; *and the law of sin*, to which he was sometimes carried captive: and it should be taken notice of, that he does not say *I have served*, as referring to his past state of unregeneracy, but *I serve*, as respecting his present state as a believer in Christ, made up of flesh and spirit; which as they are two different principles, regard two different laws: add to all this, that this last account the apostle gives of himself, and which agrees with all he had said before, and confirms the whole, was delivered by him, after he had with so much faith and fervency given thanks to God in a view of his future complete deliverance from sin; which is a clinching argument and proof that he speaks of himself, in this whole discourse concerning in-dwelling sin, as a regenerate person.

* De Agricultura, p. 191.

[t] Alexander ab. Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 3. c. 5.

CHAP. VIII.

As the former chapter shews that sanctified ones are not free from the being of sin in them, which is a ground of general complaint and uneasiness; this chapter shews, that justified ones are freed from the guilt of sin, and secure from punishment for it; and have the utmost reason to rejoice and be glad, and even to triumph in a plerophory and full assurance of faith, on account of the various privileges they enjoy, through the grace of the Father, of the Son, and of the Spirit; and which are distinctly, largely, and severally mentioned: it begins, ver. 1, with taking notice of a particular privilege saints have in Christ, and, by virtue of union to him, security from all condemnation; and which is inferred from their sure and certain deliverance from sin by Christ, ch. vii. 25. the persons sharing in this privilege are described by their being in Christ, and by their walking after the spirit of Christ, in consequence of it: a reason confirming this privilege is given, ver. 2. taken either from the Gospel, declaring the saints' freedom from the law: or from the power and efficacy of the spirit, delivering them from the tyranny and dominion of sin; or rather from the holiness of Christ's human nature, as a branch of their justification: this privilege is made more fully to appear, and the saints' interest in it by the mission of Christ, to bring in everlasting righteousness for them, which is the foundation of it, ver. 3. the occasion of which was the weakness of the law, or rather the impotency of man, through the corruption of nature, to fulfil the law: the sender, or the efficient cause of this mission, is God the father: the person sent, his own son; the manner in which he was sent, in human nature, which had the appearance of being sinful; what God did in it, he condemned sin in it; which is a reason, why there's no condemnation to them, that are in him; and the end of all this, ver. 4. was, that the law of righteousness might be perfectly fulfilled by Christ for them, or by them in him; who are described in part, as in ver. 1. upon the repetition of which part of the description, the apostle proceeds to shew the difference between unregenerate and regenerate persons, ver. 5. partly by their characters; the one being carnal, or after the flesh, the other being spiritual, or after the spirit; and by their different affections, the one minding the things of the flesh, the other the things of the spirit; the different issue and effect of which, namely, a carnal and a spiritual mind, are observed, ver. 6. death following upon the one, life and peace upon the other: the reasons of which, with respect to the former, are given, ver. 7. taken from the enmity of the carnal mind to God, and the non-subjection of it to the law of God, and the impossibility of its being subject to it; and therefore nothing but death can be expected; from whence this conclusion is made, ver. 8. that unregenerate men are not in a state, nor in a capacity to please God, or do what is acceptable to him, the above being the disposition and temper of their minds: and then in ver. 9. the apostle returns to the argument from whence he had digressed, and suggests, that though he had said the above things of unregenerate men, he had other thoughts of those to whom he writes: they were not in the flesh, nor minded the things of the flesh, and so were not liable to condemnation and death; and which he proves by the inhabitation of the spirit of God in them; for such who have him not, have no proof nor evidence of their being Christ's, and so consequently have no proof of their security from condemnation; and partly by Christ's being in them, and which is the evidence of their being in Christ, and so of the above privilege, ver. 10. the consequence of which is, that though by reason of sin the body is mortal, and does die, yet the soul lives not only naturally, but spiritually, by faith in Christ now, and in glory hereafter, by virtue of Christ's righteousness imputed to it, and so is free from condemnation and death; besides, by virtue of the spirit's dwelling in them, their mortal bodies will be quickened in the general resurrection, ver. 11. and from all these blessings of divine goodness, both in soul and body, the apostle infers, that the saints are under obligation, not to live in a carnal, but in a spiritual manner, ver. 12. and to which he exhorts, ver. 13. and presses by motives, taken from the different consequences of those things; death following by living after the flesh, and life through the mortification of sin, by the spirit of God: and whereas the walking after the spirit, by which he had described those that are safe from condemnation, is owing to their being led by him; and their being led by him, being an evidence of their divine sonship, ver. 14. from hence he passes to consider the privilege of adoption: and that these saints were interested in this privilege, he proves ver. 15. partly by their not having the spirit of bondage which belongs to servants; and partly by their having the spirit of adoption, who had made known this grace unto them, and their interest in it: and that they had received him as a spirit of adoption, was evident by their calling God their father under his influence; and also by the witness he bore to their spirits, that they were the children of God, ver. 16. of which they were conscious: and from this privilege of adoption, the apostle concludes heirship, ver. 17. and which is of such a nature, that there is none like it; both with respect to the subject of it, God himself; with respect to him with whom they are heirs, Christ Jesus; and the way in which they come to share the glorious inheritance with him, is through suffering with him, and for him; and this they need not grudge to do, since there is no comparison between their sufferings, and the glory they shall enjoy, ver. 18. which both Jews and Gentiles were in the expectation of: the latter of which are described in ver. 19, 20, 21, 22. by their name, the creature, the whole creation; and by their present condition, the Gospel being come among them to the conversion of many, which raised an expectation of many sons and daughters being born to God among them, ver. 19. and by their former state and condition, ver. 20. which is mentioned, to illustrate the grace of God in the present blessing bestowed upon

them, in sending the Gospel to them: which state was a subjection to vanity, through the god of this world, who led them captive at his will, ver. 21. and then by the deliverance of them, they were in hope and expectation of, from bondage to liberty, ver. 21. and this groaning and travailing in birth in a spiritual sense, for the bringing forth of many sons to God among the Gentiles, the apostle, and other ministers of the word, who had preached the Gospel among them, were witnesses of, ver. 22. yea, not only the Gentiles, but the Jews also, who are described as having the first fruits of the spirit, ver. 23. were waiting for the manifestation of the children of God among the Gentiles, with them to complete at last the mystical body, who shall share together the glory before spoken of, which their sonship and heirship entitle them to; and for which there is encouragement to wait with patience and in hope, from the connexion of salvation with the grace of hope; and from the nature of the thing hoped for, which is unseen, but certain, ver. 24, 25. From hence the apostle proceeds to consider another privilege which the saints have, who are in the spirit, and walk after the spirit, the spirit helps their infirmities; particularly in prayer, the matter of which, in some cases, they are at a loss about, ver. 26. and this he does, by making intercession for them; the manner in which this is done in them, is with unutterable groans; and the rule according to which it is made, is the will of God, the mind of the spirit being known by the searcher of hearts, ver. 27. in a word, such are the privileges of believers in Christ, that every thing in the whole world, in heaven, and in earth, in themselves and others, whether good or bad, prosperous or adverse, work together for their good, so that nothing can go wrong with them in the issue, ver. 28. who are described by their love to God, and by their effectual vocation, according to his purpose; which being mentioned, leads the apostle to the source and spring of all these and other privileges, the everlasting love of God; signified by his fore-knowledge of his people, ver. 29. which is the cause of their predestination to a conformity to the image of Christ, the first-born among many brethren; with which predestination, vocation, justification, and glorification, are inseparably connected, ver. 30. from all which blessings of grace it may be concluded, that God is on the side of such persons, who are interested in these favours; and nothing is to be feared, but every good thing is to be expected by them, ver. 31, which is confirmed by an argument from the greater to the lesser, that if God has given his son for them, he will freely give all things to them, ver. 32. in a view of which, the apostle rises up in a triumph of faith, and challenges all the enemies of the saints, and denies that any charge can be brought against them of any avail, since God is the justifier of them, ver. 33. or that they shall ever enter into condemnation, being secured from it by the death of Christ; and which security is yet more strengthened by his resurrection, session at the right hand of God, and intercession for them, ver. 34. and then asks, since Christ has shewn such love to them, by these instances of it, what can separate from it, ver. 35. and enumerates several things which befall the saints in this life, which, however mean and abject they may render them in the esteem of men, don't at all abate the love of Christ to them: that such is their case, that they are exposed to afflictions and sufferings, and even death itself, for the sake of Christ, is proved ver. 36. by a testimony out of Psal. xliv. 22. and then an answer is returned to the above question in the negative, that none of the things mentioned could separate them from the love of Christ; so far from it, that by virtue of Christ who had loved them, they were conquerors, and more than conquerors in all these things, and over all their enemies, ver. 37. and the chapter is concluded in ver. 38, 39. with the full and firm persuasion of the apostle, that nothing in the whole universe, in the whole compass of created beings, be they what they will, good or bad, or which are or shall be, an enumeration of many of which is made, should ever separate him, or any of the people of God from his love, which is in Christ Jesus: so that upon the whole, notwithstanding in-dwelling sin, notwithstanding the various afflictions which attend them in this world, yet in consideration of the many privileges they enjoy, and the glory they are heirs of, they have great reason to rejoice, and look upon themselves to be in the most safe and happy condition.

Ver. 1. *There is therefore now no condemnation, &c.*] The apostle having discoursed largely in the preceding chapter, concerning the struggle and combat believers feel within themselves, and opened the true causes and reasons of the saints' grievances and complaints, and what gives them the greatest uneasiness in this life, proceeds in this to take notice of the solid ground and foundation they have of spiritual peace and joy: which arise from their justification and adoption, the purposes and decrees of God, and particularly the everlasting and unchangeable love of God in Christ, the source, spring, and security, of all the blessings of grace. The chapter begins with a most comfortable account of the safety of believers in Christ; the apostle does not say there is nothing *condemnable* in them, for sin is in them, and is condemnable, and condemned by them; and is hurtful to their spiritual joy and comfort, though it cannot bring them into condemnation, because of their being in Christ Jesus: he says there is *οὐδὲν κατάκριμα, not one condemnation* to them, or one sentence of condemnation against them; which must be understood not of illegal ones, for they are liable to many condemnations from their own hearts, from the world and the devil; but of legal, justifiable ones, and there are none such, neither from God the Father, for he justifies; nor from the Son, for by his righteousness they are justified; nor from the Holy Spirit, who bears witness to their spirits, that they are in a state of justification: there's not one condemnation lies against them, with respect to their numerous sins, original and actual, though every sin deserves one; not one from the law of God, of which sin is a transgression, for though that is a condemning law, yet it is only so to them that are under it; not to them that are Christ's, whom he has redeemed from it: moreover, the apostle says, that there's no condemnation *now* to the saints; which *now* must not be considered, as if it supposes that there was formerly condemnation to them; 'tis true indeed they were under a sentence of condemnation, as considered in Adam, and under a covenant of works with him, and

in their own apprehensions when convicted; but as considered in Christ, as the elect of God always were, and who was their surety, and so their security from all eternity, they never were in a state of condemnation: nor does this suppose, that there may be condemnation to them hereafter, though not now; for sin, the cause of condemnation, is removed; Christ has bore the condemnation their sins deserved in himself; their justification is from all sin, past, present, and to come; their union to Christ is indissoluble, and neither the love of Christ, nor the justice of God, will admit of their condemnation: for this *now*, is not an *adverb* of time, but a *note of illation*: the apostle inferring this privilege, either from the grace of God, which issues in eternal life, ch. vi. 23. or from that certain deliverance believers shall have from sin, for which he gives thanks, ch. vii. 24, 25. The privilege itself here mentioned is, *no condemnation*: condemnation is sometimes put for the cause of it, which is sin, original and actual: now though God's elect are sinners, both by nature and practice, and after conversion have sin in them, their sanctification being imperfect, yet there's none in them with respect to justification; all is transferred to Christ, and he has removed all away; he has procured the pardon of all by his blood, he has abolished all by his sacrifice, he justifies from all by his righteousness, and saves his people from all their sins: condemnation may also be considered with respect to guilt; all mankind are guilty of Adam's sin, and are guilty creatures, as they are actual transgressors of the law; and when convinced by the spirit of God, acknowledge themselves to be so; and upon the repetition of sin, contract fresh guilt on their consciences; but an heart sprinkled with the blood of Christ, is clear of guilt; for all the guilt of sin is removed to Christ, and he has took it away; hence there's no obligation to punishment on them, for whom Christ died: again, condemnation may design the sentence of it: now though the law's sentence passed upon all in Adam, and so upon God's elect, as considered in him; yet as this sentence has been executed on Christ, as their surety, in their room and stead, there's none lies against them: once more, condemnation may mean actual damnation, or eternal death, the wages of sin, which those who are in Christ shall never die; they are ordained to eternal life, and are redeemed from this death; they are made alive by Christ, and have eternal life secured to them in him, and which they shall certainly enjoy: the persons interested in this privilege are described, as such *which are in Christ Jesus*; not as mere professors are in Christ, who may be lost and damned: but this being in Christ, respects either that union and interest which the elect of God have in Christ, from everlasting; being loved by him with an everlasting love; betrothed to him in a conjugal relation; chosen in him before the foundation of the world; united to him as members to an head; considered in him in the covenant of grace, when he engaged for them as their surety; and so they were preserved in him, notwithstanding their fall in Adam; in time he took upon him their nature, and represented them in it; they were reckoned in him when he hung upon the cross, was buried, rose again, and sat down in heavenly places; in consequence of which union to Christ, and being in him, they are secure from all condemnation: or this may respect an open and manifestative being in Christ at conversion, when they become new creatures, pass from death to life, and so shall never enter into condemnation: hence they stand further described, as such *who walk not after the flesh*; by which is meant, not the ceremonial law, but the corruption of nature, or the corrupt nature of man, called *flesh*, because propagated by carnal generation, has for its object fleshly things, discovers itself mostly in the flesh, and makes persons carnal and fleshly: the apostle does not say, there is no condemnation to them that have no flesh in them, for this regenerate persons have; nor to them that are in the flesh, that is, the body; but who walk not after the flesh, that is, corrupt nature; and it denotes such, who do not follow the dictates of it, don't make it their guide, or go on and persist in a continued series of sinning: *but after the spirit*; by which is meant, not spiritual worship, in opposition to carnal ordinances; but rather, either a principle of grace, in opposition to corrupt nature, called *spirit*, from the author, subject, and nature of it; or the Holy Spirit of God, the efficient cause of all grace: to walk after him, is to make him our guide, to follow his dictates, influences, and directions; as such do, who walk by faith on Christ, and in imitation of him, in the ways of righteousness and holiness; and such persons walk pleasantly, cheerfully, and safely: now let it be observed, that this walk and conversation of the saints, is not the cause of there being no condemnation to them; but is descriptive of the persons interested in such a privilege; and is evidential of their right unto it, as well as of their being in Christ: and it may be further observed, that there must be union to Christ, or a being in him, before there can be walking after the spirit. The phrase, *but after the spirit*, is left out in the Alexandrian copy, and in the Vulgate Latin, and Syriac versions; and the whole description of the persons in some copies, and in the Ethiopic version.

Ver. 2. *For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, &c.*] These words are of difficult interpretation. They may be understood of the Gospel revealing and declaring deliverance from the law of Moses; wherefore there can be *no condemnation* by it. The Gospel may be designed by *the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus*; which may be called a *law*, not as succeeding the law of works, by which that is abrogated; nor as requiring conditions to be performed, or as enjoining duties to be observed, or as delivering out threatenings in case of disobedience; but as it is a doctrine, order, and chain of truths, as the Hebrew word תורה signifies, and which is sometimes used for the Gospel, Isa. ii. 3. and xlii. 4. as νομος is, Rom. iii. 27. It may be called the law, or doctrine *of the spirit*, because the spirit is the author of it, and makes it powerful and effectual to the good of souls; by it the spirit of God is conveyed into the heart; and the substance of it are spiritual things: and the law of *the spirit of life*, because it discovers the way of life and salvation by Christ; is the means of quickening dead sinners; of working fa[ith in]
them, by which they live on Christ, and of
drooping saints; and also it affords spirit[ual]
the support of life: and this may

Christ, or by him, inasmuch as it comes from, and is concerning him; he is the sum, the substance, and subject-matter of it: *the law of sin and death* may intend the law of Moses, called *the law of sin;* not as if it was sinful, or commanded or encouraged sin, for it severely prohibits it; but because by it, through the corruption of man's nature, sin is irritated, and made to abound; it is the strength of sin, and by it is the knowledge of it: and it may be called *the law of death*, because it threatened with death, in case of disobedience; it sentences and adjudges transgressors to death; and when it is attended with power, it strikes dead all a man's hopes of life, by obedience to it; it leaves persons dead as it finds them, and gives no life, nor hopes of it; by it none can live, or be justified: now, though Christ is the author of deliverance from it, yet the Gospel is the means of revealing and declaring this deliverance; which designs not an exemption from obedience to it, but freedom from the curse and condemnation of it; and this sense well agrees with the foregoing verse: likewise the words are capable of being understood of the power and efficacy of the spirit of God, in delivering regenerate persons from the dominion and tyranny of sin; and which may be considered as a reason why they *walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit: life* may well be ascribed to the spirit of God, or be called *the spirit of life*, because he has life in himself as the Father and Son have; and is the author of life to others, of natural life to all men as creatures, and of spiritual life to the people of God in regeneration; and is a quickening spirit to them afterwards, as he will be to the dead bodies of the saints in the resurrection: by *the law* of the spirit may be meant, the energy and power of the spirit in conversion; which work requires power, and a man has no power of himself to effect it; but there is a power in the spirit, which works irresistibly, though not by any force or compulsion to the will, but it moves upon it sweetly, powerfully, and effectually: and all this may be said to be *in Christ:* the life which the spirit is the author and giver of, is in Christ as the head of his people, the proper repository of all grace, and the fountain of life; the spirit himself is *in* him, both as God and as man, and as Mediator, hence the saints receive him and his gifts and graces from him; and the law of the spirit, or his power and efficacy in working, is *in* or *by* Christ, through his sufferings and death, and in consequence of his mediation: now this powerful and quickening efficacy of the spirit delivers regenerate persons from the force and tyranny of sin, called here *the law of sin and death;* a *law of sin*, because it has power and dominion over unregenerate persons, its throne is in the heart of man, and its laws are many and powerful; and *the law of death*, because its reign is tyrannical, barbarous and cruel, 'tis *unto death:* and from its governing influence, and tyrannical power, does the spirit of God free his people in regeneration; not from the being of sin; nor from the rage of it, and disturbance it gives; nor from such power of it, but that they may fall into sin; but so as that sin does not properly reign over them, nor legally, nor universally, or so as to bring a death on their graces, and their persons into condemnation. Once more, these words may be understood of the holiness of Christ's human nature, as a branch of our justification, and freedom from the guilt of sin, and condemnation by it: for as *the law of sin and death* may design inherent corruption, and the force and power of it in the saints; so the opposite to it, the *law of the spirit of life in Christ*, may mean the purity and holiness of his human nature. That Christ's human nature is pure and holy is certain, from express texts of Scripture, from its union to the son of God, from the ends and purposes of its assumption, from the inefficacy of Satan's temptations, and from the whole course of his life and conversation; for though he was in the likeness of sinful flesh, was reckoned a sinner by men, was attended with infirmities, the effects of sin, though not sinful, had all the sins of his people imputed to him, and endured afflictions, and at last death; yet his nature was pure and untainted: for he did not descend from Adam by ordinary generation; and though made of a woman, yet the flesh he took of her was sanctified by the Holy Ghost; his body was prepared by God, and curiously wrought by the spirit, from whom his whole human nature received a fulness of habitual holiness: and this may be called *the spirit of life* in him, because he is a quickening spirit in regeneration, justification, and the resurrection from the dead; *the law* of it, because the holiness of his nature lies in, arises from, and is conformable to a law that is within him, written on his heart; and because, together with his obedience and death, it has a force, power, and authority, to free from condemnation; for this is not a mere necessary qualification of him to be the Mediator, or what renders his obedience, sacrifice, and intercession, efficacious and valuable, or is merely exemplary to us, but is what is imputed to us, as a part of our justification. The law requires a holy nature of us, we have not one, Christ assumed one for us, and so is the end of the law, or answers the requirement of the law in this respect, as well as in all others: and hence, though sanctification begun in us, does not free us from the being of sin, and all its force and power, yet perfect sanctification in Christ frees from all condemnation by it.

Ver. 3. *For what the law could not do, &c.*] This is not to be understood of *the law of the mind*, in opposition to *the law of sin*, which indeed is very feeble and impotent; man had a power originally of obeying the divine commands, but through sin he has lost his strength and power; and even a renewed mind can't perform what it would, which is owing to the flesh, or corrupt nature; it has strong desires after holiness, and keeping all the commandments of God; but these desires can't be fulfilled by it, and indeed without Christ it can do no good thing: nor is the ceremonial law intended, though this is weak, and there are many things it could not do; it could not expiate and atone for sin; nor remove the guilt of it, nor cleanse from the filth of it: but the moral law is here designed; this, though it can, and does accuse of sin, can convince of it, can curse, condemn, and adjudge to death for it; yet it could not condemn sin itself, which is only abolished by Christ; it can't restrain from sin, nor change a sinful nature, nor sanctify an impure heart; nor free from the guilt of sin, nor comfort a distressed mind under a sense of it; it can't subject persons, or bring them to obedience to itself, its own laws; it can't justify any

before God, or give life, or save from death; the reason is, *in that*, or because *it was weak through the flesh*. The weakness of the law is total and universal, it has no strength at all; though not original and natural, but accidental; 'tis owing to the flesh, or the corrupt nature of man: or rather the weakness is in sinful men, and not in the law; and the sense is this, that human nature is so weakened by sin, that it is incapable of fulfilling the law; the weakness of the law is not from itself, but from man: to this agrees what the Jewish writers [u] say, "there is not a word in the law "*weak*, or broken; wherefore when thou considerest "and observest it, that thou dost not find it strong, "as an hammer that breaks the rocks, ואי חלשא מינך "הוא, *but if weak, it is of thyself.*" To which may be added that usual saying of theirs, אין עז אלה תורה, *there is no strength but the law* [w]; unless the apostle can be thought to oppose this notion of theirs. Wherefore because of the weakness of the law, or of human nature to fulfil it, *God sending his own son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.* The person sending is *God*, who gave the law weakened by the flesh, against whom we have sinned: and who is righteous, pure, and holy: which considerations enhance his grace and goodness, in the mission of Christ. This must be understood of God the father, who is here manifestly distinguished from the Son; and who is God, but not solely, or to the exclusion of the Son and Spirit; and who sent Christ, though not singly, for the *Lord God and his Spirit sent* him, Isa. xlviii. 16. though as it is most agreeable for a father to send his son, this is generally ascribed to him; and he being the first person in the Godhead, is the first in order of working, and so in redemption. The person sent is *his own son*: not by creation, as angels and men are; nor by adoption, as saints are; nor is he called so, on account of his incarnation, resurrection, or mediatorship, for he was the son of God antecedent to either of them; but his own proper son, and not in any metaphorical sense; a son of the same nature with him, begotten of him, and his son in that nature in which he is God. The act of sending, does not suppose inequality of nature; for though he that is sent is not greater, yet as great as he that sends; two equals, by agreement, may send each other; a divine person may assume an office, and under that consideration be sent, without supposing inferiority of nature, as in the case of the Holy Spirit; and an inferiority as to office, is allowed in the case of the son; God sent his son under the character of a servant, to do work: nor does this act imply change of place; there is indeed a *terminus a quo*, from whence he was sent, from heaven, from his father there; and there is a *terminus ad quem*, to which he was sent into this world; but then this coming of his from heaven to earth, was not by local motion, but by assumption of nature: nor was it out of any disrespect to his son, but out of love to us, that he sent him; nor was he sent against his will; he shewed no reluctance at the proposal to him in the council of peace, but the utmost willingness; nor any at his coming into the world: nor at the work itself, which he entered upon, and went through with the greatest eagerness and cheerfulness: nor does it suppose him whilst sent, and here on earth, to be in a state of absence and separation from his father; he was still in his bosom, yet in heaven, and his father always with him: but it supposes that he existed before he was sent: that he was a person, and distinct from the father, or he could not be sent by him; that he had authority from him, considered in his office-capacity: in a word, this sending of the son, designs the manifestation of him in human nature; as appears from the form and manner in which he was sent, *in the likeness of sinful flesh*: which expresses the reality of his incarnation, of his having a true real human nature; for *flesh* is not to be taken strictly for a part of the body, nor for the whole body only, but for the whole human nature, soul and body; which though it looked like a sinful nature, yet was not sinful: *the likeness* of it denotes the outward appearance of Christ in it; who was born of a sinful woman; was subject to the infirmities of human nature, which though not sinful, are the effects of sin; was reckoned among transgressors, was traduced as one himself by men, and treated as such by the justice of God; he having all the sins of his people on him, for which he was answerable: *and* hence God, *for sin, condemned sin in the flesh*: not the law, which was weak through the flesh; nor sinners, who broke the law; but sin itself, the transgression of the law, all kind of sin, and all that is in it. The act of condemning it, does not design God's disapproving of it, and judging it to be evil; this he could not but do, as being contrary to his nature, an act of hostility against him, a breach of his law, and what brings ruin upon his creatures; and this he would have done, if Christ had never suffered in the flesh; and he has taken other methods, both among his own people and the world, to shew his dislike of sin: nor does this act intend the destruction of the power and dominion of sin, in regeneration; this is the work of the spirit, and is done in our flesh, and not in the flesh of Christ; but it is to be understood of the condemnation and punishment of sin, in the person of Christ: sin was laid on him by the father, and he voluntarily took it upon himself; justice finding it there, charges him with it, demands satisfaction, and condemns him for it; and hereby sin was expiated, the pardon of it procured, and it was entirely done away: now this is said to be done *for sin*; some join the phrase with the former part of the text, either with the word *sending*, and take the sense to be, that God sent his son for, or on the account of sin, to take it away, and save his people from it; or *with sinful flesh*, which was taken from a sinful person; but it stands best as it does in our version, and may be rendered *of sin*; for God condemned sin of sin in Christ, that is, by the vengeance he took of it, in the strictness of his justice, through the sufferings of his son, he shewed sin to be exceeding sinful indeed; or rather *by sin*; that is, by an offering for sin, so the word is used in Heb. x. 6, 8. and answers to חטאה, in Psal. xl. 6. by being made which, sin was condemned *in the flesh* of Christ, who was put to death in the flesh, *for* the sins of his people, and bore all the punishment

[u] Zohar in Lev. fol. 8. 2.

[w] Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 4. 4. & 9. 4.

due unto them: from hence we learn the evil of sin, the strictness of justice, and the grace of the Redeemer.

Ver. 4. *That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us,* &c.] By *the righteousness of the law,* is not meant the righteousness of the ceremonial law, though that was fulfilled by Christ: but of the moral law, which requires holiness of nature, righteousness of life, and death in case of disobedience; active righteousness, or obedience to the precepts of the law, is designed here. This is what the law requires; obedience to the commands of it is properly righteousness; and by Christ's obedience to it we are made righteous, and this gives the title to eternal life: now this is said to be *fulfilled in us;* this is not fulfilled by us in our own persons, nor can it be; could it, where would be the weakness of the law? man might then be justified by it, and so the grace of God, and the righteousness of Christ, must be set aside: there never was any mere man that could fulfil it; for obedience to it must not only be performed perfectly, but with intenseness of mind and spirit; a man must be sinless in thought, word, and deed; and this would be to put man upon a level with Adam in a state of innocence, and the angels in heaven: nor is this to be understood of any righteousness inherent in man; internal holiness is never called the righteousness of the law; and could it be thought to be righteousness, yet it can never be reckoned the whole righteousness of the law: and though it is a fruit of Christ's death, it is the work of the spirit, and is neither the whole, nor any part of our justification: but this is to be understood of the righteousness of the law fulfilled by Christ, and imputed to us; Christ has fulfilled the whole righteousness of the law, all the requirements of it; this he has done in the room and stead of his people; and is imputed to them, by virtue of a federal union between him and them, he being the head, and they his members; and the law being fulfilled by him, it is reckoned all one as it was fulfilled in, or if by them; and hence they are personally, perfectly, and legally justified; and this is the end of Christ's being sent, of sin being laid on him, and condemned in him. The descriptive character of the persons, who appear to be interested in this blessing, is the same with that in ver. 1. *who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit;* see the note there.

Ver. 5. *For they that are after the flesh,* &c.] By *flesh* is meant the corruption of nature; and they may be said to be *after* it, not all that have flesh in them, for the best of saints have it in them; regenerating grace does not remove it from them; there's a difference between being in and after the flesh, and flesh being in us; but such who are as they were born, who have nothing but flesh, or corrupt nature in them, in whom that is the governing principle, whose minds are carnal, and whose whole walk and conversation is such, are here meant: and these persons *do mind the things of the flesh;* not merely things corporeal, belonging to the welfare of the body; or things natural for the improvement of the mind; or things civil, as riches, &c. which may be minded and sought after in a lawful way; but things sinful, the lusts, works, and sins of the flesh: which they may be said to *mind,* since they judge them to be good; the bent and application of their minds are to them; their affections are set upon them; they are solicitously careful to provide for them, and savour and relish them: nor is it to be wondered at, since these are natural to them; they are opposite to God and so agreeable to them; they have no mind, thought, affection, or relish, for any thing else; and it is entirely owing to mighty grace, that any mind the things of the spirit: *but they that are after the spirit;* not such who follow the dictates of their own spirits; or are outwardly reformed; nor all that have spiritual gifts; or profess themselves to have the grace and spirit of God; but such who are born again, are renewed in the spirit of their minds, in whom grace is the governing principle: the work of the spirit is begun in them, though not perfected: the spirit himself dwells in them, and they walk after him; their minds and conversations are spiritual, though there may be a great deal of carnality in their hearts, thoughts, words, and actions, which is matter of grief unto them: these mind *the things of the spirit;* the graces of the spirit; spiritual blessings; the doctrines of the Gospel; spiritual sacrifices and services: these have some understanding of, can discern the difference between them and carnal things, judge and approve of them as right; have a great esteem and affection for them, and taste a sweetness in them. They have no mind naturally to these things; nor is the bias of their minds altered by themselves, nor could it; this is wholly the work of the spirit of God; and these things are minded only because, and as they are agreeable to the spiritual part, the inward man.

Ver. 6. *For to be carnally minded is death,* &c.] The phrase the apostle here uses, includes the best part of corrupt man; the mind, the understanding, the judgment, the will, the affections, the thoughts, the reason, and reasonings of man; and may be rendered, *the wisdom,* or *prudence of the flesh,* so called, to distinguish it from that wisdom which is from above; from that natural and civil wisdom, which is laudable; and it shews that the wisest part of man is but carnal: all sorts of persons destitute of the grace of God are concerned herein; or this is applicable to them all, as the sensualist, the worldling, the proud Pharisee, and the wise disputer of this world. This wisdom of the flesh, or carnal-mindedness, *is death;* not that it is conversant about death; or that such persons are thoughtful of it, endeavour to make it familiar to them; or are desirous of it, and esteem it as a privilege; this only spiritually-minded men do: but the sense is, that this issues in death; death is not the object, but the end of carnal-mindedness; carnal-mindedness, so far as it prevails in the saints, brings a death upon them. 'Tis true, indeed, they cannot die a spiritual, or an eternal death; yet sometimes they are very dead and lifeless in their frames, in the exercise of grace and discharge of duty; which is frequently owing to their carnality: and the effect of this must needs be death in carnal men; since it alienates from God; it renders them transgressors of the law, and obnoxious to its curse; it sets the soul against, and diverts it from Christ the way of life: and if grace prevent not, must be the cause of, and issue in eternal death; because it is sin and sinful, it is enmity to God, it disqualifies for life, and makes persons fit companions for the heirs of wrath: *but to be spi-*

ritually minded, is life and peace; spiritually-minded men are the only living persons in a spiritual sense, for all that are in and after the flesh are dead; and so far as carnal-mindedness prevails in professors, there is a deadness in them as to all spiritual exercises; and oftentimes as to outward appearance, there is no difference between them and dead men: but spiritually-minded men are evidently living persons; they have a spiritual discerning of spiritual things; they breathe after them, savour and relish them; they talk of spiritual things, and walk in a spiritual manner; they are not only alive, but lively in the exercise of grace and discharge of duty; and are the means of enlivening others; and their end will be everlasting life; which is certain from the declared will and promise of God, and from the grace of life and spirit of life which are in them. *Peace* also is another effect of spiritual-mindedness; such enjoy peace of conscience: this is a fruit of the spirit; a part of the kingdom of grace they are possessed of; and the things their minds are conversant with are productive of it; which is the gift of God, passes all understanding, and is of more worth than all the world: such men are also of peaceable dispositions in commonwealths, in neighbourhoods, in families, and churches; induced thereunto by the noblest arguments; and their end will be peace, which will be perfect and eternal.

Ver. 7. *Because the carnal mind is enmity against God, &c.*] These words contain a reason why the issue of carnal-mindedness is death; because the carnal mind, the wisdom of the flesh, is not only an enemy, but enmity itself against God; against his being; it reasons against it; it wishes he was not; it forms unworthy notions of him; thinks him such an one as itself; and endeavours to bury him in forgetfulness, and erase out of its mind all memorials of him: it is at enmity against his perfections; either denying his omniscience; or arraigning his justice and faithfulness; or despising his goodness, and abusing his grace and mercy: it finds fault with, and abhors his decrees and purposes; quarrels with his providences; 'tis implacable against his word and Gospel; especially the particular doctrines of grace, the Father's grace in election, the Son's in redemption, and the Spirit's in regeneration; and has in the utmost contempt the ordinances and people of Christ. This enmity is universal, 'tis in all men in unregeneracy, either direct or indirect, hidden or more open; 'tis undeserved; 'tis natural and deeply rooted in the mind, and irreconcileable without the power and grace of God. It shews itself in an estrangedness from God; in holding friendship with the world, in harbouring the professed enemies of God, in living under the government of sin and Satan; in hating what God loves, and in loving what God hates; in omitting what God commands, and committing what he forbids: it manifests itself in their language, and throughout the whole of their conversations. *For it is not subject to the law of God:* carnal men are subject to the law's sentence of condemnation, but not to its precepts, by obedience to them; there may be an external, and which is a servile obedience to it, but not a free, voluntary, internal one, and still less a perfect one: the carnal mind is so far from an obediential subjection to the law, that it flies off from the law, and the law from that; it hates and despises it, thwarts and contradicts it in every instance, and, as much as in it lies, makes it void; which fully proves the enmity of the carnal mind against God; for hereby his being is tacitly denied, his sovereignty disputed, his image defaced, his government withdrawn from, and these persons are designed, and declare themselves enemies to him: *neither indeed can be;* without regenerating grace, without the power and spirit of God, unless it is written upon the heart by the finger of God: for carnal men are dead in sin, and so strengthless to obey the law; and besides, the carnal mind, and the law of God, are directly contrary one to another. Where's man's power and free will? no wonder the carnal mind don't stoop to the Gospel of Christ, when it is not, and cannot be subject to the law of God. Hence we see the necessity of almighty power, and efficacious grace in conversion. It is Christ's work to subject men to the law, and which is done when he justifies by his righteousness: agreeably to which the Targum on Isa. liii. 11. paraphrases it thus: "in his wisdom he shall justify the righteous, that " לשעבדא סגיאין לאורייתא, *he may subject many to the* " *law.*" And in ver. 11. the transgressors he hath subjected to the law.

Ver. 8. *So then they that are in the flesh, &c.*] They that are in the flesh are the same who are said to be after it, ver. 5. and are there described. Such *cannot please God;* men, whilst unregenerate, and as such, cannot please God; for though the persons of God's elect are well-pleasing to him always, as considered in Christ, in whom they are loved with an everlasting love, and were chosen in him, and all provisions of grace and glory made for them in him; yet as considered in themselves, and whilst in the flesh, do not please him; for they are straying from him, are alienated from his life, are destitute of all grace, and particularly faith, without which it is impossible to please him; are filthy and unclean, and hence, whilst such have no enjoyment of him, or communion with him; wherefore he sends his spirit to work in them that which is well-pleasing in his sight: but this is not to be understood so much of persons, and their non-acceptableness to God, as of the inability of unregenerate men to obtain the good will of God, or make their peace with him; which they have no inclination to, being enmity against him; and were they inclined to it, know not how to go about it; nor can they draw nigh to God to treat with him about terms of peace; nor can they do that which can procure peace; Christ is the only person that can make peace, and has done it: or rather, of the impotency of natural men to do any thing which is pleasing in the sight of God. There are many things which are pleasing to him, such as prayer, praise, giving of alms, keeping his commandments, and walking in his ways; but these unregenerate men cannot do in any acceptable manner to God; for they are without the spirit, without Christ, without faith; and in all they do have no view to the glory of God: they have neither grace, nor strength, nor right principles, nor right ends.

Ver. 9. *But ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, &c.*] That is, ye are not carnal, but spiritual men; or ye are not in a state of unregeneracy, but in a state of grace: the reason proving this is, *if so be,* or *seeing*

that the spirit of God dwell in you: the inhabitation of the spirit is a distinguishing character of a regenerate man; which is to be understood not of his omnipresence, nor of a participation of his gifts, whether ordinary or extraordinary: nor does the spirit of God only dwell in his people by his graces, but in person as in office, and in a way of special favour; as a spirit of illumination, regeneration, sanctification, and faith, as a comforter, a spirit of adoption, an intercessor, and as a pledge and seal of happiness: which inhabitation is personal; is not peculiar to him to the exclusion of the father and of the son; is expressive of property and dominion; is not confined to the souls of men, for he also dwells in their bodies; it is operative, powerful, and perpetual; it is the security of the saints' perseverance, and the pledge of their resurrection and future glory. This is owing not to any goodness in them, or to any fitness and preparations of theirs to receive him; but to a federal union to Christ and relation to him, to our Lord's ascension and intercession, and to the love and grace of the father; and this proves a man to be a regenerate man, to be in the spirit, and not in the flesh; for the spirit of God is never in this sense in an unregenerate man, nor is he in any such sense without his grace; so that the in-dwelling of the spirit is the grand evidence of relation to God, of an interest in Christ and union to him, and of a man's state and condition Godward; *now if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his.* By *the spirit of Christ*, is not meant the human soul of Christ; nor his divine nature; nor his Gospel, which is the spirit that gives life; but the Holy Ghost, the third person in the Trinity, the same which is called the spirit before; and proves Christ to be God, he proceeds from him as from the father, is sent by him, and with which Christ's human nature was fitted and filled. The Jews[a] often speak of רוח המשיח, or רוחא דמשיח, *the spirit of the Messiah.* Now to have him is not barely to partake of his gifts, but of his graces; to be possessed of him as one's own; to have communion with him, and to have him dwelling in us. There are some who have him not, nor never will have him, being none of Christ's; and God's elect, whilst in an unregenerate state, are without him; and whilst such, though they are his chosen and adopted ones, they are his by his father's gift and his own purchase, they are his pardoned ones through his blood, and his justified ones through his righteousness; yet they are not his regenerated, called, and sanctified ones; nor can they claim any interest in him; nor are they known to be his by themselves or others; nor have they any communion with him, or enjoyment of him.

Ver. 10. *And if Christ be in you*, &c.] Not as he is in the whole world, and in all his creatures, or circumscriptively, and to the exclusion of himself elsewhere; for his person is above in heaven, his blood is within the vail, his righteousness is upon his people, and his spirit and grace are in them; and so he comes to be in them, he is formed in their hearts by the spirit of God in regeneration, when the Father reveals him not only to them, but in them; and he himself enters and takes possession of them as his own, manifests himself to them, communicates his grace, and grants them communion with him. This being their case, *the body is dead because of sin*; by which is meant, not the body of sin, though this is called a body, and a body of death, yet is not dead, much less is it so by reason of sin; but this fleshly body, because liable to afflictions, which are called deaths, has the seeds of mortality in it, and shall in a little time die, notwithstanding the gift of it to Christ, though it is redeemed by his blood, and united to him; the reason of it is not merely the decree of God, nor does it arise from the original constitution of the body, but sin is the true reason of it, sin original and actual, in-dwelling sin, but not by way of punishment for it, for Christ has bore that, death is one of the saints' privileges, it is for their good, and therefore desired by them; but that they might be rid of it, and free from all those troubles which are the consequents of it: *but the spirit is life, because of righteousness*; not the spirit of God, who lives in himself, is the author of life to others, of natural and spiritual life, continues as a principle of life in the saints, is the pledge of everlasting life, and is so to them because of the righteousness of Christ nor grace, or the new creature, which is sometimes called spirit, and may be said to be life, it lives unto righteousness, and is owing to and supported by the righteousness of the son of God; but the soul of man is here meant, in opposition to the body, which is of a spiritual nature, immaterial and immortal; and this may be said in believers to be life or live, for it not only lives naturally, but spiritually; it lives a life of holiness from Christ, a life of faith upon him, and a life of justification by him, and will live eternally; first in a separate state from the body after death, till the resurrection morn, it does not die with the body, nor sleep with it in the grave, nor is it in any *limbus* or state of purgatory, but in paradise, in heaven, in the arms and presence of Christ, where it is not inactive, but employed in the best of service: and after the resurrection it will live with the body in glory for evermore; and this is owing to righteousness, not to the righteousness of man, but the imputed righteousness of Christ; for as it was sin, and loss of righteousness thereby which brought death on man, the righteousness of Christ is that on which believers live now, and is their right and title to eternal life hereafter.

Ver. 11. *But if the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead*, &c.] These words are not to be understood as they are by some, of the continued work of sanctification in the heart by the spirit of God; for regeneration, and not sanctification, is signified by quickening, which quickening is when the spirit of God first takes up his dwelling in the soul; besides, the apostle had spoke of the life of the spirit or soul before; and they are mortal bodies, and not immortal souls, which are said to be quickened, for these cannot mean the body of sin, or the remains of corruption, as they are said to be, and which are never quickened, nor never can be. To understand the words in such a sense, is not so agreeable to the resurrection of Christ here mentioned; whereas Christ's

[a] Zohar in Gen. fol. 19. 3. & 107. 3. & 128. 2. Baal Hatturim in Gen. 1, 2. Caphtor, fol. 113. 2.

resurrection is often used as an argument of ours, which is designed here, where the apostle argues from the one to the other. The spirit *dwells* in the saints as his temples: the spirit that dwells in them is, *the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead*; by whom is meant God the father, to whom the resurrection of Christ from the dead is here and elsewhere ascribed. This *periphrasis* of him is used, to express the power, justice, and grace of God in the resurrection of his son; to shew that the spirit of God was concerned in it; and the greatness of the person of the spirit that dwells in the saints; and what reason they have to believe the sanctification of their souls, and the redemption of their bodies, since such a divine spirit dwells in them; wherefore, *he that raised up Christ from the dead*, which is the father, *shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his spirit that dwelleth in you*: not the souls of the saints, for these die not: but their *bodies*, called *mortal*, because appointed to death, are under the sentence of it, and in which it already works; *your* bodies and not others; mortal ones, and not airy, celestial, immortal ones; the very same they carry about with them here, and in which the spirit of God had dwelt. These shall be quickened. The Jews frequently express the resurrection by תחית המתים, *the quickening of the dead*: some distinguish [r] between תקומה, *the resurrection* of the dead, which is common to the wicked, and תחייה, *the quickening* of them, peculiar to the righteous: though, it is observed, this distinction does not always hold: however, this act of quickening seems here designed to express the peculiar blessing of the saints; for though the wicked shall be raised from the dead, yet they will not rise with the saints, nor by virtue of union to Christ, nor to an eternal life of joy and happiness; in this sense the saints only will be quickened, *by the Spirit*, not as an instrument, but as a co-efficient cause with the Father and Son: or *because of the spirit that dwelleth in you*, the bodies of the saints are the temples of the Holy Ghost, they are sanctified by him, where he continues to dwell by virtue of union to Christ, and in consequence of it will quicken them at the last day; so the Jews say, that the Holy Ghost brings to the resurrection of the dead [s].

Ver. 12. *Therefore, brethren, we are debtors*, &c.] The appellation, *brethren*, is not used, because they were so by nation or by blood, though many in the church at Rome were Jews; nor merely in a free familiar way of speaking; but rather on account of church membership, and especially because they were in the same spiritual relation to God and Christ: and the use of it by the apostle, shews his great humility and condescension, and his love and affection for them, and is designed to engage their attention and regard to what he was about to say, to them and of them; as that they were *debtors*; which is to be understood of them not as sinners, who as such had been greatly in debt, and had nothing to pay, and were liable to the prison of hell; for no mere creature could ever have paid off these debts; but Christ has done it for them, and in this sense they were not debtors: but they were so as saints, as men freed from condemnation and death; which doctrine of Christian liberty is no licentious one; it does not exempt from obedience, but the more and greater the favours are, which such men enjoy, the more obliged they are to be grateful and obey; they are debtors, or under obligation, *not to the flesh*, to corrupt nature, *to live after the flesh*, the dictates of that; nor should they be, both on God's account, since that is enmity to him, and is not subject to his law; and on their own account, because it is an enemy to them, brings reproach on them, and exposes them to death; but though it is not expressed, it is understood, that they are debtors to God; to God the father, both as the God of nature, and of grace, as their covenant God and father in Christ, who has blessed them with all spiritual blessings in him; to Christ himself, who has redeemed them by his blood: and to the spirit of God who is in them, and for what he has been, is, and will be to them.

Ver. 13. *For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die*, &c.] Such persons are dead, whilst they live, and shall die a second or an eternal death, if grace prevent not. It may be asked, whether one that has received the grace of God in truth, can live after the flesh; flesh, or corrupt nature, though still in such a person, has not the dominion over him: to live in sin, or in a continued course of sinning, is contrary to the grace of God; but flesh may prevail and greatly influence the life and conversation, for a while; how long this may be the case of a true believer, under backslidings, through the power of corruptions and temptations, cannot be known; but certain it is, that it shall not be always thus with him. It may be further inquired, whether such an one may be so left to live after the flesh, as to die and perish eternally; Christ expressly says, such shall not die that live and believe in him; grace, which is implanted in their souls, is an incorruptible and never-dying seed; grace and glory are inseparably connected together; but then such persons may die with respect to their frames, their comforts and the lively exercise of grace, which seems to be here intended; as appears from the next clause, *but if ye through the spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live*. This is not to be understood of the mortification of the body itself; nor does it design any maceration or afflicting of it by any severities of life; nor of the destruction of the body of sin by Christ: or of the being and principles of sin in the saints by the spirit of Christ; which is contrary to Scripture, to the experience of the saints, who find it in them, alive in them, and to their expectations, whilst in this world: nor is this mortification to be considered as a part of regeneration, which by some divines is made to consist in a sense of sin, grief for it, and hatred of it, in avoiding it, and in an expulsion of vicious habits and inclinations: but it should be observed, that the apostle is writing to persons that were already regenerate; nor does he ever exhort persons to regenerate themselves, which he would do here, if this was the sense; regeneration is a work of the spirit of God, in which men are passive, whereas in the mortification here spoken of the saints are active, under the influence of the spirit of God: besides, regeneration is done

[r] Vid. Buxtorf Lexic. Rabbin. p. 745, 746.

[s] Misn. Sota, c. 9. sect. 15.

at once, and does not admit of degrees; and in and by that, sin, as to its being and principle, is so far from being destroyed, that it seems rather to revive in the sense and apprehension of regenerated persons: but it is a mortification of the outward actings of sin in the conversation, called, *the deeds of the body:* and in the Claromontane exemplar, and in the Vulgate Latin version, *the deeds of the flesh:* or as the Syriac version renders it, הופכי, *the conversations*, or manners of it, and so the Ethiopic version; that is, its outward course of life: and it signifies a subduing and weakening the vigour and power of sin in the lives and conversations of the saints, to which the grace and assistance of the spirit are absolutely necessary; and such who are enabled to do so, *shall live* comfortably; they shall have communion with Christ here, and shall live a life of glory with him hereafter. Such a way of speaking as this is used by the Jews; say they *, "what "shall a man do that he may *live?* it is replied, ימית "עצמו, *he shall mortify himself:*" which the gloss explains by *he shall humble himself;* walk humbly before God and men, in his life and conversation.

Ver. 14. *For as many as are led by the spirit of God,* &c.] Not by the spirit of the world, or of the devil, or by their own spirits: the act of leading ascribed to the spirit is either in allusion to the leading of blind persons, or such who are in the dark; or rather to the leading of children and teaching them to go; which supposes life in those that are led, and some degree of strength, though a good deal of weakness; and is a display of powerful and efficacious grace, and is always for their good: the spirit of God leads them from sin, and from a dependence on their own righteousness, in paths they formerly knew not, and in which they should go, in the paths of faith and truth, of righteousness and holiness, and in a right, though sometimes a rough way; he leads them to the person, blood, and righteousness of Christ, and to the fulness of grace in him; into the presence of God, to the house and ordinances of God; into the truths of the Gospel, from one degree of grace to another, and at last to glory; which he does gradually, by little and little he leads them to see the iniquity of their hearts and natures, to lay hold on Christ and salvation by him, into the doctrines of grace, and the love and favour of God, and proportionably to the strength he gives: now such persons, *they are the sons of God:* not in so high a sense as Christ is; nor in so low a sense as Adam was, and angels are; much less in such sense as wicked magistrates be; nor merely as professors of religion in common; but by adoption, not national, such as that of the Jews, but special; and which has some agreement with civil adoption, it being of persons to an inheritance, which they have no legal right unto, and it is done freely; though there's a difference between the one and the other; for in divine adoption there is no need on the adopter's side; nor no worth on the side of the adopted; proper qualifications are conveyed to them for the enjoyment of the inheritance, and which is enjoyed, the father and first-born being living, and is an inheritance which vastly exceeds all others: now this blessing of being the sons of God, is owing not to ourselves, nor to our earthly parents, but to God; to the Father, who predestinated to it, and fixed it in the covenant of grace, to Christ, 'tis by him, as the son of God, it is through him, as the Mediator, and it is for him, it is for his glory; and also to the Spirit of God, who manifests it, works faith to receive it, witnesses to it, and seals up to the full enjoyment of it. This favour is an instance of surprising grace, exceeds other blessings, makes the saints honourable, is attended with many privileges, and lasts for ever: such who are in this relation to God, ought to ascribe it to his grace, to requite him with thankfulness, and a becoming conversation, to be followers of him, and to love, honour, and obey him.

Ver. 15. *For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear,* &c.] By *the spirit of bondage* is meant, not the spirit of God: for this is just the reverse of his character, who is a *free spirit*, or רוח נדיבה, *a spirit of liberty;* and is contrary to his work and office, which is to shew a soul its state of bondage by nature, and to deliver out of it; and though fear may arise from the convictions of sin, yet this he removes by discoveries of love; moreover, his work is to make application of grace and righteousness to sensible sinners, and to administer comfort to distressed minds, and make them meet for glory; and it is also contrary to the character of the persons in whom he dwells, who are the sons of God; besides, the spirit of God, as a spirit of adoption, is in the text itself manifestly opposed to this spirit: but by it is intended a man's own spirit whilst in a state of unregeneracy, and particularly whilst under a work of the law; and it refers to that *pharisaical* spirit which prevailed among the Jews. Men in a state of nature are under a spirit of bondage to the lusts of the flesh; by these they are captivated and enslaved, and the consequence of it is a fearful apprehension, when convicted, of death, judgment, and wrath to come. They are in slavery to the god of this world, who leads them captive, and by injecting into them fears of death, are subject to bondage. The Jews in particular were in bondage to the law, ceremonial and moral; to the ceremonial law, as circumcision, observation of days, and multitudes of sacrifices. This law was an hand-writing of ordinances against them; it obliged them to keep the whole moral law; the sacrifices of it could not take away sin; the breach of it, being punishable with death, must unavoidably induce a *spirit of bondage unto fear:* they were in bondage to the moral law, which naturally genders to it, as it demands perfect obedience, but gives no strength to perform; as it shews a man his sin and misery, but not his remedy, as it accuses of, charges with sin, and curses and condemns for it: moreover, a spirit of bondage is brought upon persons through it, when they seek for justification and salvation by the works of it, for such obey it with mercenary views, not from love, but fear: and their comforts rise and fall according to their obedience: now these believers, though they had formerly been under such a spirit of bondage, were now delivered from it; nor should they return to it again: *but ye have received the spirit of adoption,* by which is designed not a spirit

* T. Bab. Tamid, fol. 32. 1. Vid. T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 63. 2. Raya Mehimna in Zohar in Exod. fol. 35. 3.

of charity, or love, or inherent grace: adoption is not owing to inherent grace, or is any part of it: regeneration and adoption differ; adoption makes men the children of God, regeneration makes them appear to be so by giving them the nature of children; adoption is not a work of grace in us, but an act of grace without us, having its complete being in the mind of God; it is antecedent to a work of grace, inherent grace is a consequence of it, though no man knows, or has the comfort of his adoption, until he believes: rather a filial child-like spirit, such a spirit as becomes the children of God is here meant; a spirit of freedom with God, of reverence of him, and of love of him, and of obedience to him, springing from filial affection and without mercenary views; a meek, harmless, and inoffensive spirit. Though it seems best of all to understand by it the Holy Spirit of God, who is distinguished from the spirit of believers, ver. 16. and is called the spirit of his son in a parallel place, Gal. iv. 6. and stands opposed here to a spirit of bondage, and may be so called because as a spirit of grace he flows from adoption; and is the discoverer, applier, witness, and ratifier of the blessing of adoption; and is the pledge, earnest, or seal of the future adoption or eternal inheritance: now the spirit is received as such from the father and the son into the hearts of believers, by the means of the Gospel, in order to make known their adoption to them, which is an instance of grace, and ought to be acknowledged; for *we cry Abba, father*: by the help of the spirit of adoption; *we*, the saints under the Gospel dispensation, in opposition to the legal one, under which they had not that freedom; *cry*, which denotes an internal vehemency and affection of soul, and an outward calling upon God, as a father, with confidence; *Abba, father*: *father* is the explanation of the word *Abba*, and which is added for explanation sake, and to express the vehemency of the affection, and the freedom and liberty which belongs to children: the words in the original are, the one a Syriac word in use with the Jews, the other a Greek one, and denotes that there is but one father of Jews and Gentiles. The word *Abba* signifies *my father*, and is expressive of interest and of faith in it; and read backwards is the same as forwards, God is the father of his people in adversity as well as prosperity; it is the word used by Christ himself in prayer, and which he directs his people to; to say no more, it is a word which the Jews did not allow servants, only freemen to make use of, and to be called by; "it is a tradition, (say they [b],) that servants and "handmaids, they don't use to call אבא פלוני ואימא "פלונית, *father such-a-one, or mother such-a-one*;" in allusion to which the apostle suggests, that only freemen, such as have the spirit of adoption, and not servants or bondsmen, can make use of this word Abba, or call God their father.

Ver. 16. *The spirit itself beareth witness*, &c.] The thing which the spirit of God witnesses to is, *that we are the sons of God*: which supposes the case in some sense doubtful and uncertain, at least that it is called in question; not by others, though it sometimes is, as by Satan, which need not seem strange, since he called in question the sonship of Christ himself, and by the world who know them not, and by good men, till better informed: but the testimony of the spirit is not for the satisfaction of others, but the saints themselves; who are ready to doubt of it at times, because of the greatness of the favour, and their own sinfulness and unworthiness, especially after backslidings, through the temptations of the devil, and because of their many trials and afflictions. Now this witness of the spirit is to establish and confirm it; not to make the thing itself surer, for that stands on the sure foundation of predestination, on the unalterable covenant of grace, on union to Christ, redemption by him, the gift of Christ, and continuance of the spirit; but to assure them of it, and of their interest in it; for the testimony is given *to our spirits*: so the words are read by the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, and by the Vulgate Latin; which reading seems better than *with our spirits*; for our own spirits are no witnesses to ourselves: the father and son are co-witnesses of the spirit, but not our own spirits; the spirits of the saints are they which receive the witness of the spirit of God, to which it is made; not to their ears, for it is not an audible testimony; but to their hearts, it is internal; to their renewed souls, where faith is wrought to receive it; to their understandings, that they may know and be assured of it; to their spirits, which are apt to faint and doubt about it. Now it is *the spirit itself* that bears this witness, and not others, or by others, but he himself in person; who is a divine witness, whose testimony therefore must be greater than others, and a faithful one, who will never deceive; for he witnesses what he knows, and what is sure and certain; his very being and habitation in the saints are witnesses and proofs of their adoption; his powerful operations and divine leadings persuade to a belief of the truth of it; and by shedding abroad the father's love in the heart, and by the application of Gospel promises, he causes and encourages them to *cry Abba*, father; which is a wonderful instance of his condescension and grace.

Ver. 17. *And if children, then heirs*, &c.] Children, whether natural or adopted, are heirs to their parents, and according to the Roman laws, which some think the apostle here respects, whether male or female; but according to the Jewish laws [c], females did not inherit only in case of want of male issue; for though Job's daughters inherited with his sons, this was a peculiar case; and the Jewish writers say [d], it was מתוך חשיבתן ויופין, *on account of their worth and beauty*; yet adopted children among them, whether male or female, were equal to natural children in possessing the inheritance; however, the apostle includes both here, who are all one in Christ Jesus, and are all the children of God by faith in him, and so *heirs of God*: either efficiently, he makes them heirs; they are not so by nature, nor do they become such by the works of the law; but God of his rich grace adopts them into his family, begets them again, and freely bestows the inheritance on them: or subjectively, they are heirs of himself; he not only makes them his heirs, but he himself is their inheritance and portion; they are heirs of all things

[b] T. Hieros. Niddah, fol. 492. T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 16. 2. Massecheth Semachot, c. 1. sect. 13. Maimon. Hilch. Nechalot, c. 4. sect. 5.

[c] Misn. Bava Bathra, c. 8. sect. 2. T. Hieros. Bava Bathra, fol. 16. 1.

[d] Jarchi in Job xlii. 15.

which are his; they share in his love, grace, and mercy; and his wisdom, power, truth, and faithfulness, and indeed, every perfection of his are engaged on their side, and in their favour; all things are theirs who have God to be their God and father; the Gospel and the ministers of it are theirs; the world and the things of it, life and death, things present and things to come; heaven and happiness, which go by the names of glory, riches of glory, kingdom, eternal life and salvation, are all represented as things to be inherited by the saints. The Jews speak of God's inheriting of man, as the highest pitch of greatness man can arrive unto; thus explaining and paraphrasing on the names of the places from which the Israelites journeyed, Numb. xxi. 18, 19. say [e], "when a man makes himself as a wilderness, which is common to all, the law is given to him by gift, as it is said, *and from the wilderness to Mattanah*: and when it is given to him by gift, נחלו אל, *God inherits him*, as it is said, *and from Mattanah to Nahaliel*; the gloss upon it is, the law becomes to him כמו נחלה, *as an inheritance*; and when שנחלו אל, *God inherits him*, he ascends to his greatness, *i. e.* to the highest pitch of it, as it is said, from *Nahaliel to Bamot*;" for when a man is worthy of this, as one of their commentators [f] on this place observes, he is called, *the inheritance of God*, according to Deut. xxxii. 9. but our apostle speaks not of the saints as God's inheritance, which to be sure they are, but of God as theirs; and not of their inheriting the law, but God himself, which is certainly the highest pitch of honour and greatness that men can possibly enjoy. 'Tis added, *and joint-heirs with Christ*; it is through him they are heirs of God and of glory; and with him will they partake of and enjoy the inheritance, which is secured to them by their being co-heirs with him: nor does this at all derogate from the honour of Christ, as heir of all things, since he is the first-born among many brethren, and in this, as in all things, he has the pre-eminence. But before the saints enjoy the inheritance with Christ they must expect to suffer with him and for him; though in the issue they may be assured of this, that they shall be glorified together; their sufferings lie in the way to glory, and glory is and will be the end of their sufferings: *if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together*; Christ and his people being one, he the head, and they the members, suffer together; when he suffered, they suffered with him and in him, as their head and representative; and they partake of the virtue and efficacy of his sufferings; and they also suffer afflictions, many of them at least of the same kind with Christ, only with these differences; his were penal evils, theirs not; his were attended with a vast sense of wrath and terror, theirs oftentimes with joy and comfort; his were meritorious, not so theirs. Moreover, many of their sufferings are for the sake of Christ and his Gospel; on the other hand, by reason of that union which is between Christ and believers, he suffers with them, he reckons their afflictions his, and sympathizes with them; and the consideration of this greatly animates and encourages them in their sufferings, and especially when they observe that they shall be *glorified together*; not with his essential glory, nor with his mediatorial glory, but with that glory which his father has given him for them. There's a glorification of the saints in Christ, and a glorification of them by Christ, and a glorification of them with Christ, which will consist in likeness to him, and in the everlasting vision and enjoyment of him.

Ver. 18. *For I reckon, that the sufferings of this present time*, &c.] By *this present time* may be meant, the then present age, in which the apostle lived; which was an age in which the people of God suffered much, as was foretold by Christ, and which was necessary for the confirmation of the Gospel; for grace and strength answerable to their trials were given them; and the power of God was visibly to be seen in the supporting of them; though this was not the only suffering age: wherefore by the present time may be understood, the present time of life here on earth; which is a time of suffering, and which can't well be otherwise, considering the world in which we are, and the nature of it, the state and condition of our souls, and the constitution of our bodies, and the many enemies we have about us; but then this present time of life is the only suffering time to the saints, for no sooner are they removed from hence, but they are in heaven, where neither wicked men nor devils can reach them, where their souls are freed from sin and unbelief, from doubts and fears, and every thing that is distressing; and after the resurrection there will be no more diseases nor death in their bodies; and this present time is but a short time, a little while, and all sufferings will be at an end; wherefore they *are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us*. The future happiness of the saints is expressed by *glory*, of which the glory of this world is but a faint resemblance; a glory which is already given to Christ, and he is entered into the possession of; it is already, but as yet it is unseen, but will be *revealed* hereafter, when Christ himself shall appear in it; and it will not only be revealed to the saints, as the glory of Christ, as Mediator; and it will not only be visible upon them, upon their bodies, which will be made like to the glorious body of Christ; but it will be revealed *in* them, and greatly lie in the perfection of knowledge and holiness in their souls: now between the sufferings of the saints in the present state of things and their future happiness, is no comparison, either with respect to quality or quantity. Their afflictions are *light* in comparison of the due desert of sin, the sufferings of Christ, and the torments of the damned in hell, and when under divine supports; but glory is heavy, 'tis a *weight of glory*. The sufferings of the saints are but for a time, but their glory is eternal; nor is there any comparison to be made between them by way of merit, for there is no manner of proportion between the one and the other, nor can the one have any causal influence upon the other. This is the judgment of things the apostle made, *I reckon* or *I think*; which is said, not as his bare opinion, or as in the least doubting the truth of what he said; but having deliberately weighed things in his mind, and reasoned upon them, came to this conclusion, that so it must be. The allusion is either to logicians, who having settled the

[e] T. Bab. Nedarim, fol. 55. 1.

[f] En Yaacob, fol. 22. 1.

premises draw the conclusion; or to arithmeticians, who, having cast up the account, give the sum-total. Though, after all, the *glory* here spoken of may mean the glorious Gospel of Christ, which was more and more to be revealed in the Gentile world, *in* or *by us* the apostles, in comparison of which all their sufferings were as nothing.

Ver. 19. *For the earnest expectation of the creature, &c.*] Some by the creature understand the universe, all created beings animate and inanimate, which having suffered much by the sin of man, are introduced by a rhetorical figure, as waiting for deliverance and a restoration to their paradisaical estate; but some part of the world is manifestly distinguished from them, ver. 23. others think that angels are here meant, who being obliged to minister to sinful men, are represented as groaning and longing for the time when all the children of God shall be brought in, that they may be dismissed from their service; but what is said of subjection to vanity, of the bondage of corruption, and of their groaning and travailing in pain, can never agree with such happy spirits: others suppose that men in general are designed, being by sin brought into a state of bondage and corruption, subjected to vanity, attended with troubles, and liable to death, and so groan under their present miseries for deliverance; but to desire any thing of a spiritual nature can't be ascribed to men in general; and besides, as before observed, some persons are distinguished from them, ver. 23. others have been of opinion, that the new creature, or renewed persons, are here intended, who being burdened with in-dwelling sin, groan under it, long for deliverance from it, and are waiting for the heavenly glory; but these can't be said to be in a state of bondage to corruption, for they are freed from the dominion of sin, and are become the servants of righteousness. 'Tis best of all by *the creature* to understand the Gentile world. *The creature* here, and *the whole creation*, ver. 22. must be the same; now the phrase *πᾶσα κτίσις*, *the whole creation*, or *every creature*, as it may be rendered, signifies the nations of the world, in distinction to the Jews; see Mark xvi. 15. Col. i. 23. compared with Matt. xxviii. 19. and answers to בריות, *the creatures*; by which name the Jews often in their writings call the Gentiles, to distinguish them from the Israelites. Take two or three instances, as follow, "let your commerce "(say they[z]), &c. be in a peaceable manner, עם הבריות, "*with the creatures*: what do *the creatures* say concerning him? such an one, blessed be his father "who taught him the law, blessed be his master "who taught him the law; woe להם לבריות, *to* "*the creatures*, because they learn not the law: such "an one who hath learned the law, they observe "how beautiful are his ways, and how well ordered "his works; of him it is written, saying, *and said* "*unto me, thou art my servant, O Israel, in whom I will* "*be glorified*:" where *the creatures* and the Israelites are evidently distinguished from one another: again[a], "woe להם לבריות, *to the creatures*, who know not, "nor have they any regard for the service of their "Creator; for it is a tradition, (says R. Isaac,) that "*Bath Kol*, or a voice, goes out every day from "Mount Horeb, and says, woe להם לבריות, *to the* "*creatures*, because of the service of their Creator." And a little after, "if הבריות, *the creatures*, knew the "love with which the holy blessed God loves Israel, "they would roar like young lions to follow after him." Once more[b], "all the prayer של הבריות, *of the creatures*, "is only for the earth; Lord let the earth be fruitful, "Lord let the earth prosper; all the prayer של ישראל, *of* "*the Israelites*, is only for the house of the Lord, Lord "let the house of the sanctuary be built." Now what *the creature*, the Gentile world, is represented as earnestly waiting, and wistly looking out for, is *the manifestation of the sons of God*; which is made first at their conversion, and afterwards openly and more fully at the appearance of Christ in the resurrection morn. There's a manifestation of the sons of God, at conversion. They that are the sons of God, are his sons before by divine predestination, and through the covenant of grace; as such they were given to Christ; and under this character, and as standing in this relation, he assumed their nature, and died for them, in order to gather them together; and indeed, this previous relation is the ground and foundation of the spirit of Christ being sent down into their hearts, to manifest their adoption to them; for before conversion it is not manifested, neither to themselves nor others, but then it is in some measure made known. This may in a particular manner be applied to the Gentiles, and God's elect among them. They were the sons of God before they were manifested as such; they are spoken of in prophecy as in that relation; see Isa. xlv. 11. and seemed to be designed chiefly, if not altogether, by *the children of God scattered abroad*, in John xi. 51, 52. These were not known, nor looked upon by the Jews, to be the children of God; but when the Gospel came in among them, as the power of God, it manifested them to be such: so that where it was formerly said, *ye are not my people*, there it is said, *ye are the sons of the living God*, Hos. i. 10. But the full manifestation of the sons of God will be in their glorification at Christ's second coming; when they shall be openly taken into God's family, and shall be owned by Christ in this relation, before angels and men; they'll appear in themselves otherwise than now they do; they'll be put into the possession of the inheritance they are adopted to, and will have that honour and dignity which belong to their character actually conferred on them; so that they shall appear, not only to themselves, but to all the world, to be what they are: now this, in the whole compass of it, the Gentiles might be said to be in earnest expectation of, and waiting for. They may be said, in some sense, to expect and wait for the manifestation of the son of God himself, the Messiah, who is called *the desire of all nations*; for it was promised, that *to him should the gathering*, or, as some read it, *the expectation of the people*, or *nations be*: they also waited for his law, his doctrine, the everlasting Gospel, Isa. xlii. 4. and when that was come among them, and became the power of God to the salvation of many of them, this raised in them an earnest expectation of many, of multitudes of the sons of God being manifested among them, according to

[z] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 86. 1.
[a] Zohar in Exod. fol. 2. 3.

[b] Bereshit Rabba Parash. 13. fol. 11. 3.

several prophecies of the Old Testament, which largely speak of this matter; and they continue to wait for the bringing in of the fulness of them in the latter day, and for the ultimate glory, which all the sons of God, whether Jews or Gentiles, shall enjoy together.

Ver. 20. *For the creature was made subject to vanity,* &c.] This designs the vanity and emptiness of the minds of the Gentiles, who were without God and Christ, and the Holy Spirit, without the law and Gospel, and grace of God; also the vain conceits they had of themselves, of their wisdom, knowledge, learning, and eloquence; likewise their vain philosophy, particularly their gross idolatry, their polytheism, or worshipping of many gods; together with their divers lusts and vices, to which they were addicted, to such a degree, that they might be truly said to be made subject thereunto, being under the government of these things, slaves unto them, and in such subjection, as that they could not deliver themselves from it; though it is said, *not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope.* Though they were willingly vain, yet they were not willingly made subject to vanity; they willingly went into idolatrous and other evil practices, but the devil made them subject, or slaves unto them; he led them captive at his will, and powerfully worked in them, by divine permission, so that they became vassals to him, and to their lusts; for he seems to be designed, *by him who hath subjected the same*, and not Adam, by whom sin entered into the world.

Ver. 21. *Because the creature itself also,* &c.] The phrase *in hope*, which stands in our version, at the end of the preceding verse, should be placed in the beginning of this, and be read in connexion with ver. 19th, the 20th verse being a *parenthesis*, thus; *the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God, in hope that the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption*; and so it is placed in some copies, and in the Syriac version: that is, *the Gentiles* earnestly wait and expect a larger number of converts among them, in hopes that ere long the whole Gentile world will be freed from *the bondage of corruption*, under which it at present groaned; by which is meant, the bondage they were in, not only to their sinful lusts, but to Satan the god of this world; and particularly to their idols, by which they corrupted themselves, and to which they were enslaved: they hope for a deliverance from hence, *into the glorious liberty of the children of God*; which designs either the liberty of grace the children of God have here; and which consists in a freedom from the dominion of sin and Satan, from the law and bondage of it, in the free use of Gospel ordinances, in liberty of access to God, and a freedom from the fear of death, and a glorious liberty it is; or the liberty of glory the saints shall enjoy in the other world, which will lies in a freedom from the prison of the flesh, from the body of sin and death, from all sorrows and afflictions, from all reproaches and persecutions, from the temptations of Satan, from doubts, fears, and unbelief, and in the full vision of God through Christ, and in a free conversation with angels and saints.

Ver. 22. *For we know that the whole creation groaneth,* &c.] As a woman with-child, ready to bring forth: for 'tis added, *and travaileth in pain together until now*; regeneration is owing to the grace of God, which is compared to *seed*, of which men are born again; the means of conveying it is the Gospel, and ministers are the instruments of begetting souls to Christ, and who travail in birth till Christ be formed in them: now the Gospel being carried by the apostles into the Gentile world, and being succeeded there, it was like a woman big with-child, ready to bring forth many sons to God; for as it was prophesied, so it came to pass, that *more are the children of the desolate, than the children of the married wife*: and these births were attended with pain. The apostles preached the word with much contention, and the Gentiles received it in much affliction, though with the joy of the Holy Ghost; as a woman rejoices when a man-child is brought forth, though the birth has been attended with pain and labour. This was an united groan, and travail of all the converted Gentiles in the several parts of the world, together with the ministers of the Gospel, earnestly desiring more instances of conversion among them; and this vehement desire had appeared *until now*, from the first time of the preaching of the Gospel among the Gentiles, to the writing of this epistle; and supposes, that though there were many spiritual births, there were more to come; as there has been, and will be more abundantly, in the latter day: and moreover, this painful labour, and these united groans for spiritual births, the apostles were well acquainted with, and therefore could say, *we know*, &c. by their preaching among them, in whom they could easily observe, and do in their writings take notice, how eagerly desirous they were of having the Gospel preached unto them.

Ver. 23. *And not only they, but ourselves also,* &c.] Not only they Gentiles, but we Jews likewise: *which have the first-fruits of the spirit*; meaning either the apostles, who were all Jews, and who most of them received the extraordinary gifts of the spirit on the day of *Pentecost*, which was the day of the first-fruits, Numb. xxvi. 28. and to which there seems to be an allusion here; or else the Jewish converts in general: to the Jews the promises of the Messiah were made; to them he first came; the Gospel was first preached unto them, and some of them first believed in Christ; they had the grace of God communicated to them in conversion, which they received as the first-fruits, with respect to an after-increase; or in regard to glory, for like the first-fruits, grace is of the same kind with glory, and is a pledge and earnest of it; saints judge by grace the first-fruits, what glory is, and therefore long after it; now of these persons thus described 'tis said, *even we ourselves groan within ourselves*: their groans were inward from their hearts, not hypocritical; or were among themselves, common to them all; and that not merely on their own account, the corruptions of their hearts, the sufferings they endured for the sake of the Gospel, and in a longing expectation for the heavenly glory, but also for the conversion of the Gentiles, for which they incessantly laboured, and prayed night and day; *waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.* Adoption is explained by the redemption of the body; and by the one may be known what the other means: by *the redemption of our body*

is not meant the redemption of God's elect, body and soul, by the blood and death of Christ, which was already finished; and which the saints, who had received the first-fruits, were partakers of in themselves, and therefore could not be said to be waiting for it: but it designs either the redemption of the natural body, by the resurrection from the dead; when the bodies of the saints will be delivered from that mortality, corruption, weakness, and dishonour, under which they lie in the grave; when they will be refined and spiritualized, and freed from every thing which makes them an incumbrance, and an uneasiness to their souls or spirits now; or else the redemption of the mystical body the church, of which the Gentiles make a considerable part, and is to be understood of a deliverance of the church, from the distresses and persecutions it then laboured under; or rather of a making up of the body, the church, by a redemption or deliverance of that part of it, which lay among the Gentiles, from that vanity and bondage of corruption, to which it was subject, into the manifestation and glorious liberty of the sons of God: and then by *adoption* is meant, the special grace of adoption, manifested to the Gentiles in their effectual vocation; which the Jews who had received the first-fruits of the spirit were waiting for, and had good reason to expect, from many prophecies in the writings of the Old Testament; and to which they were the more encouraged, by many appearances of the grace and power of God, attending the ministry of the Gospel among them; and which adoption will be more fully manifested in the resurrection morn; wherefore also the inheritance, which the whole mystical body the church will then enter upon the possession of, may well be called *the adoption*, because the saints are adopted to it; adoption gives them the title to it, none but adopted ones will enjoy it; and their enjoyment of it will be the full manifestation and completion of the grace of adoption; this saints are waiting for, both for themselves and others, and 'tis worth waiting for; for it is *an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, which fades not away, reserved in the heavens:* and there is good ground to wait for it; 'tis a bequest of their heavenly father, who has adopted them; it is a gift of his free grace; 'tis already in the hands of Christ, with whom they are co-heirs; and they have already the spirit, as the earnest of it.

Ver. 24. *For we are saved by hope*, &c.] We who have received the first-fruits, who were in a lost perishing condition, and by nature no better than others, than the Gentiles, are saved by sin and wrath to come by Christ, with a spiritual and everlasting salvation. They were already saved in the preparations and purposes of God; in the covenant of grace; in the arms and hands of Christ, through his purchase; and as considered in him; and with respect to the inchoation and application of salvation, in effectual calling, and their right unto it by the righteousness of Christ; and with regard to the certainty of it, in faith and hope: the manner in which they are said to be saved, is *by*, or *in hope:* not that hope is the cause of salvation, but the means by which souls are brought to the enjoyment of it; salvation, or glory, is the object of it: *but hope that is seen, is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?* in the former clause, *hope* signifies the grace itself, but here the object of it; which is represented as unseen, not yet fully enjoyed, something future, and to be hoped for; as the resurrection of the dead, which is the object of hope, and is unseen, and even incredible to carnal reason, and is to come, and good foundation there is in divine revelation, to hope for it; and the hope of it is of great use to the saints, whilst in this world of trouble: eternal glory and happiness is also the object of the hope of believers; it is said to be the hope of their calling, which they are called by grace to; the hope of righteousness, which the righteousness of Christ is the ground and foundation of; and that blessed hope, the sum of their happiness; and hope laid up for them in heaven, where it is safe and secure; all which is unseen, and yet to come; but good reason there is to hope for it, since the Scriptures of truth so clearly express it; and the person, blood, and righteousness of Christ, lay such a solid foundation for hope of it: the Alexandrian copy reads, *why doth he yet wait for?* and so the Ethiopic version, with which agrees the Syriac version, reading the whole, *for if we see it, why should we wait for it?*

Ver. 25. *But if we hope for that we see not*, &c.] Whether it be the hour of death, or the second coming of Christ, or the resurrection of the dead, and eternal glory; all which are unseen by us, and to be hoped for: *then do we with patience wait for it;* as that which is certain and real, as something valuable, which will be satisfying, and be received with the utmost joy. This supposes, that the persons who wait for it believe it, and their interest in it, at least hope they have one; that they have a valuable esteem and affection for it; that they are not in a state of perfection and happiness; and that they sit loose by the things of this world, and are ready to part with the one, and grasp the other: the manner of their waiting is *with patience;* a grace, of which God is the efficient, Christ is the exemplar, and the word the means; and which is of great use under afflictions from the hand of God, under the reproaches and persecutions of men, under desertions and want of answers in prayer, under the temptations of Satan, and in the expectation of the heavenly glory.

Ver. 26. *Likewise the spirit also helpeth our infirmities*, &c.] The spirit of God which dwells in us, by whom we are led, who is the spirit of adoption to us, who has witnessed to our spirits, that we are the children of God, whose first-fruits we have received, over and above, and besides what he has done for us, *also helpeth our infirmities:* whilst we are groaning within ourselves, both for ourselves and for others, and are waiting patiently for what we are hoping for. The people of God, all of them, more or less, have their infirmities in this life. They are not indeed weak and infirm, in such sense as unregenerate persons are, who have no spiritual strength, are ignorant of their weakness, do not go to Christ for strength, nor derive any from him, and hence can perform nothing that is spiritually good: nor are they all alike infirm; some are weaker in faith, knowledge, and experience, than others; some are of more weak and scrupulous consciences than others be; some are more easily drawn aside through corruption and temptation than others are; some have weaker gifts, particularly in prayer,

than others have, yet all have their infirmities; not only bodily afflictions, persecutions of men, and temptations of Satan, but internal corruptions, and weakness to oppose them, and to discharge their duty to God and man; and also have their infirmities in the exercise of grace, and in the performance of the work of prayer; though they are not left to sink under them, but are helped by *the spirit:* by whom is meant, not any tutelar angel, or the human soul, or the gift of the spirit in prayer, but the Holy Spirit of God himself: who, as the word here used signifies, *helps together*, with hope and patience, graces which he has implanted, and which he invigorates and draws forth into act and exercise; or with the saints labouring under their burdens; or with the Father and the Son, who also are helpers of the saints: and this helping of them implies, that their infirmities and burdens are such as they must sink under, unless they are helped; and which is done by the spirit, by bringing to remembrance, and applying the precious promises of the Gospel, by shedding abroad the love of God in their hearts, by acting the part of a comforter to them, by putting strength into them, and by assisting them in prayer to God: *for we know not what we should pray for as we ought.* The children of God are not ignorant of the object of prayer, that it is God, and not a creature, God, as the God of nature, providence, and grace, God in the persons of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Spirit, and with a view to his glorious perfections: nor of the way of coming to God in prayer, through Christ; nor of the manner of performing it in faith, with fervency, sincerity, reverence, humility, and submission; nor who they should pray for, for themselves, for all men, even enemies, particularly for the saints, and ministers of the Gospel; nor of many other things respecting prayer, as that it is both their duty and privilege; their own inability, and the need of the assistance of the spirit in it; but what they are ignorant of is chiefly the matter of prayer: indeed the whole Bible is an instruction in general to this work, so is the prayer Christ taught his disciples, and the several prayers of saints recorded in the Scriptures; the promises of God, and their own wants and necessities, may, and do, greatly direct them: as for instance, when under a sense of sin, to pray for a discovery of pardoning grace; when under darkness and desertions, for the light of God's countenance; when under a sense of weakness of grace, and the strength of corruptions, for fresh supplies of grace and strength, for communion with God in ordinances, for more grace here, and glory hereafter; but what of all things they seem to be, at least at some times, at a loss about, is what to pray for with respect to things temporal, such as riches, honour, friends, &c. to have present afflictions removed, or temptations cease; and too often it is, that they pray with greater importunity for lesser things, than for things of more importance; and more from an intemperate zeal, and with a view to self, than for the glory of God: *but the spirit itself maketh intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered*: not the spirit of a man; or the gift of the spirit in man; or a man endued with an extraordinary gift of the spirit; but the Holy Ghost himself, who makes intercession for the saints: not in such sense as Christ does; for he intercedes not with the father, but with them, with their spirits; not in heaven, but in their hearts; and not for sinners, but for saints: nor in the manner as Christ does, not by vocal prayer, as he when on earth; nor by being the medium, or way of access to God; nor by presenting the prayers of saints, and the blood and sacrifice of Christ to God, as Christ does in heaven; nor as the saints make intercession for one another, and for other persons: but he intercedes for them, by making them to intercede; he indites their prayers for them, not in a book, but in their hearts; he shews them their need, what their wants are; he stirs them up to prayer, he supplies them with arguments, puts words into their mouths, enlarges their hearts, gives strength of faith in prayer, and all the ardour and fervency of it; he enables them to come to God as their father; and gives them liberty and boldness in his presence, which requires an heart sprinkled from an evil conscience, faith in the blood and righteousness of Christ, and a view of God, as a God of peace, grace, and mercy; and this intercession he makes, *with groanings which cannot be uttered*; not that the spirit of God groans, but he stirs up groans in the saints; which suppose a burden on them, and their sense of it: and these are said to be *unutterable*; saints, under his influence, praying silently, without a voice, as Moses and Hannah did, and yet most ardently and fervently; or as not being able to express fully what they conceive in their minds, how great their burdens are, and their sense of their wants.

Ver. 27. *And he that searcheth the hearts, &c.*] This is peculiar to God, and a *periphrasis* of him; angels, neither good nor bad, can search into the hearts of men; one man can't know the heart of another, nor any man fully know his own; this is the prerogative of God: and *he knoweth what is the mind of the spirit;* not the spirit of men, but of God: that affectionate desire and meaning of the spirit of God, in the unutterable groans of the saints; he knows the wise meaning there is in them, for so φρονημα may signify, and is opposed to the carnal mind, or wisdom of the flesh, which desires foolish things. The searcher of hearts knows this, not barely by his omniscience, but he regards it, approves of it, attends, and gives an answer to it; which is no small encouragement to pray, though it be but with sighs and groans unutterable; since the omniscient God understands, and respects such kind of prayer: and the reason is, *because he*, the spirit of God, *maketh intercession for the saints, according to the will of God:* the persons for whom he intercedes are *saints:* to whom Christ is made sanctification; who are called to be saints; are sanctified by the spirit of God, and walk after him: now such are the objects of God's delight, they are chosen by him, preserved in Christ, and have his righteousness imputed to them; to these he has made known his Gospel, has given his grace, and will at last the inheritance; so that intercession made for such will certainly be regarded: it may be rendered, *he maketh intercession for holy things according to God:* for spiritual blessings, divine favours, things that belong to God; or divine things, which are agreeably to his nature and will: and since it is the Holy Spirit that makes intercession, and the per-

sons are holy for whom he makes it, and this is made for holy things, and all according to the will of God, which the spirit of God must fully know, saints may be confident of the prevalence and success of such intercession.

Ver. 28. *And we know that all things work together for good*, &c.] There is a temporal good, and a spiritual good, and an eternal one. Temporal good is what the men of the world are seeking after, and generally have the greatest share of, and the saints the least; and yet they have as much as is needful for them, and what they have, they have with a blessing; and even sometimes afflictions work for the temporal good of God's children: spiritual good lies in a lively exercise of grace, and a conformity of the soul to God; and is what the men of the world least regard, and the saints most; and sometimes afflictions issue in this sort of good, as they do also in eternal good, for they work for us an exceeding weight of glory: by *all things* may be meant, all beings good and bad: all good beings increated or created: increated, as Jehovah the Father, all his perfections, purposes, promises, provisions, and performances; Jehovah the Son, as the mighty God, and as Mediator, all that he is in himself, all that he has in himself, all that he has done, or is doing, all his titles, characters, and relations; Jehovah the Spirit, in his person, offices, and operations; these all have worked together in the council of peace, in the covenant of grace, and in redemption; and they do work together in sanctification, and so they will in glorification, and that for the good of the saints: all created ones, as good angels, good magistrates, good ministers of the Gospel: all evil beings, as devils, persecuting magistrates, heretics, and false teachers: all things, good and bad: all good things, outward peace and prosperity, external gifts, the ministry of the word, the administration of ordinances, church censures, admonitions, and excommunications: all evil things, sin the evil of evils: original sin, or the fall of Adam, which contains all other sins in it, was attended with aggravating circumstances, and followed with dismal consequences, yet has been overruled for good: hereby a Saviour became necessary, who was sent, came, and wrought out salvation; has brought in a better righteousness than Adam lost; entitled his people to a better life than his was, and makes them partakers of the riches both of grace and glory: actual sin, inward or outward; in-dwelling sin, which is made use of, when discovered, to abate pride, to lead to an entire dependence on Christ, to teach saints to be less censorious, to depend on the power and grace of God to keep them, and to wean them from this world, and to make them desirous of another, where they shall be free from it; outward sins, of others, or their own; the sins of others, of wicked men, which observed, raise an indignation in the saints against sin, and a concern for God's glory, and to look into their own hearts and ways, and admire the grace of God to them, that this is not their case; of good men, which are recorded, and may be observed, not for example and encouragement in sin, but for admonition, and to encourage faith and hope under a sense of it; of their own, for humiliation, which issues in weakening the power of sin in themselves, and the strengthening of the graces of others: but from all this it does not follow, that God is the author of sin, only that he overrules it to wise and gracious purposes; nor should any take encouragement to sin, to do evil that good may come; nor is sin itself a real good; nor is it to be said that it does no hurt; for though it can't hinder the everlasting salvation of God's people, it does a great deal of hurt to their peace and comfort; and that it is made to work in any form or shape for good, is not owing to its own nature and influence, which is malignant enough, but to the unbounded power and unsearchable wisdom of God: all evils or afflictions, spiritual and temporal, work together for good; all spiritual ones, such as the temptations of Satan, which are made useful for humiliation, for the trial of grace, to shew us our weakness, our need of Christ, and to conform us to him, and also to excite to prayer and watchfulness; the hidings of God's face, which make his presence the more prized when enjoyed, and the more desirable. Temporal afflictions, afflictions in body, name, or estate, nay even death itself, all work together for the good of God's people. The Jews tell us of one Nahum, the man Gamzu, who, they say, was* so called, because of every thing that happened to him he used to say, גם זו לטובה, *Gam zu letobah, this is also for good*: and they give instances of several misfortunes which befell him, upon which account he used these words, and how they proved in the issue to his advantage: agreeably to this is the advice given by them, "for ever (say "they[1]) let a man be used to say, all that the Lord "does, לטב עביד, *he does for good*." Now that all things do work together for good, the saints *know*, and are firmly persuaded of; both from the word and promises of God, and from the instances of Jacob, Joseph, Job, and others, and also from their own experience: and it is to be observed, that it is not said that all things *have* worked together, and so they may again, or that they *shall* work together, but all things *work* together for good; they *now* work together, they are always working together, whether it can be observed or no: prosperity and adversity, whether in things temporal or spiritual, work *together*, and make a curious chequer-work in providence and grace; which will be viewed with admiration another day: one copy reads, *God works together*, or *causes all things to work together for good*; and so the Ethiopic version, *we know that God helps them that love him, to every good thing*; and to this agrees the Syriac version, *we know that to them that love God, he in every thing helps them to good*; and certain it is, that God is the efficient cause, that makes all things work together for his people's good. The persons to whom all things work together for good, are described as such *that love God*; a character, which does not agree with all the sons and daughters of Adam: love to God is not naturally in men; it is wrought in the soul in regeneration, and is an evidence of it; it grows up with faith, which works by it; without it, a profession of religion is vain; and where it is once wrought, it lasts for ever; it ought to be super-

* T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 21. 1. Sanhedrin, fol. 108. 2. Cosri, fol. 101. 1.

[1] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 60. 2.

lative and universal, constant, warm and ardent, hearty and sincere: such who have it, shew it by a desire to be like to God, and therefore imitate him, by making his glory the supreme end of their actions; by being careful not to offend him; by delighting in his presence, in his people, word, ordinances, ways, and worship; and by undervaluing the world, and all things in it, in comparison of him; who is to be loved for the perfections of his being, the characters and relations he stands in and bears to his people, and on account of the love with which he has loved them, and which is indeed the spring and source of theirs. They are further described, as such *who are the called according to his purpose.* The called of God and of Jesus Christ; not to any office, or by the external ministry of the word only, but by special grace; from darkness to light, from bondage to liberty, from the company of sinful men to fellowship with Christ, from a trust in their own righteousness to a dependence on his; to grace here, and glory hereafter; which is done according to the purpose of God: the persons called are fixed upon by God; none are called but whom God purposed to call; those who are called can assign no other reason of it than the will of God; and no other reason but that can be given why others are not called; the time when, the place where, the means whereby persons are called, are all settled and determined by the will, and according to the purpose of God.

Ver. 29. *For whom he did foreknow,* &c.] The foreknowledge of God here, does not intend his prescience of all things future; by which he foreknows and foretels things to come, and which distinguishes him from all other gods; and is so called, not with respect to himself, with whom all things are present, but with respect to us, and which is eternal, universal, certain, and infallible; for in this sense he foreknows all men, and if this was the meaning here, then all men would be predestinated, conformed to the image of Christ, called by grace, justified and glorified; whereas they are a special people, whom God has foreknown: nor is this fore-knowledge to be understood of any prevision or foresight of the good works, holiness, faith, and perseverance of men therein, upon which God predestinates them to happiness; since this would make something out of God, and not his good pleasure, the cause of predestination; which was done before, and without any consideration of good or evil, and is entirely owing to the free grace of God, and is the ground and foundation of good works, faith, holiness, and perseverance in them: but this regards the everlasting love of God to his own people, his delight in them, and approbation of them; in this sense he knew them, he foreknew them from everlasting, affectionately loved them, and took infinite delight and pleasure in them; and this is the foundation of their predestination and election, of their conformity to Christ, of their vocation, justification, and glorification: for these *he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his son:* having perfect, distinct, special knowledge of them, joined with love to them, he predetermined, or fore-appointed them in his eternal mind, in his everlasting and unchangeable purposes and decrees to this end, conformity to the image of Christ; which is not to be understood of the spirit of Christ: God's elect indeed are chosen to be holy, and through sanctification of the spirit, but are never said to be conformed, or made like to the spirit, nor is the spirit ever called the image of Christ; but this designs either likeness to Christ as the son of God, or conformity to him in his human nature. There is indeed a great disparity between the sonship of Christ, and of the saints; he is the eternal and natural son of God, he is the one and only-begotten son, they are adopted ones, yet in some things there is a likeness; as he is the son of God, so are they the sons of God, though not in the same sense; as he is a beloved son, so are they; as he is the first-born with respect to them, they are the first-born with respect to angels; as he has an inheritance, so have they; moreover, he has a very great concern in their sonship; the predestination of them to it is by him; the blessing itself is founded on union to him, on their conjugal relation to him, and his assumption of their nature; it comes to them through his redemption, and is actually bestowed on them by him; and this conformity to Christ as sons, will more fully appear hereafter, when they shall be like him, and see him as he is: or this may be understood of the saints' conformity to Christ in his human nature, both here and hereafter: here in holiness; the image of God was in man, in his first creation, this is defaced by sin; and in regeneration, the image of Christ is instamped, his grace is wrought in them, his spirit is put into them, to enable them to walk in him, and after him: this will be complete hereafter, and will consist in perfect holiness, being freed from the very being, as well as the power and guilt of sin; in perfect knowledge of every thing that will tend to their happiness; and in glory like to Christ, both in soul and body: *that he might be the first-born among many brethren:* the persons among whom Christ is the first-born are described by their relation, *brethren;* to one another, being related to the same father, regenerated by the same grace, taken into the same family, and heirs of the same glory; and to Christ, which relation, as brethren to him, is not merely founded on his incarnation, but in their adoption; and which is evidenced by their regeneration, and doing the will of his father; and which relation he owns, and is not ashamed of: they are also described by their number, *many;* for though they are but few, when compared with the world; yet they are many, a large number, considered by themselves; and among these, Christ is the *first-born;* he is the first-born of God, the begotten of the father, he is the first-begotten, and as such he is the only-begotten; he is the first-born of Mary, she had none before him, and he is the only one that ever was born in the manner he was; he is the first-begotten from the dead, his resurrection is called a begetting, and he was the first in time that rose from the dead by his own power, and to an immortal life, and the first in causality and dignity. Christ is the first-born with respect to all creatures in general; he was begotten of the father before all creatures were; he is the first cause of them all, the governor, basis, and support of them: and he is the first-born with respect to the saints; who are of the same nature with him, are made partakers of the divine nature, are sons in the same family, though not in the same class of sonship: moreover, this character may regard not so

much birth as privilege which belongs to Christ as Mediator; who, as the first-born had, has the blessing, the government, the priesthood, and the inheritance; all which is owing to, and is one end of divine predestination. The Cabalistic [m] writers among the Jews give the name of *first-born* to the second Sephira, number, or person, *Wisdom*, which answers to the son of God.

Ver. 30. *Moreover, whom he did predestinate,* &c.] Not to sufferings, which are not expressed nor designed, but to grace and glory after mentioned. This predestination is of particular persons, who, in consequence of it, are called, justified, and glorified; it is the effect of divine grace, and entirely owing to it; it is the source of all the other blessings of grace, and is therefore placed at the head of them, and secures them all: *them he also called:* not to afflictions: many may be called to afflictions, and endure them, who are neither justified nor glorified; besides, the people of God, though they meet with many afflictions, between their call to eternal glory, and their enjoyment of it, yet they are not so much called to afflictions, as to patience under them: their call is of grace, by special grace, to peculiar blessings of grace, and to a kingdom and glory; and this their calling is secured by predestination, and connected with glorification: *and whom he called, them he also justified:* the meaning of which is, not that he approved of them as sincere and faithful, on account of their faith and patience in sufferings; for neither of their sufferings, nor of their faith and patience in them, is there the least mention in the passage; nor can any instance be produced of the use of the word *justified* in this epistle, or elsewhere in this sense: but the meaning is, that such persons whom God predestinates and calls, he makes them righteous by the imputation of the righteousness of his son unto them; which is unto all, and upon all them that believe; by which they are justified before God, and in their own consciences, from all sin, and so secured from all wrath and condemnation; wherefore glorification stands inseparably connected with it: *and whom he justified, them he also glorified;* which is not meant of being made glorious under sufferings; nor of being made glorious by the extraordinary gifts of the spirit; for the word is never used in this sense, nor is God ever said to glorify his people in this way; and the apostle is speaking of the saints in general, and not of particular ones: if this was the sense, none would be predestinated, called, and justified, but such who have the extraordinary gifts of the spirit; and none would have the extraordinary gifts of the spirit, but such persons; whereas many have had these, and yet no interest in the grace of God, and everlasting happiness: but eternal glory is here meant, which is what the apostle had been speaking of in the context; is what the elect are predestinated and called unto; and which their justification gives them a right and title to; and will consist in a likeness to Christ, in communion with him, in an everlasting vision of him, and in a freedom from all that is evil, and in an enjoyment of all that is good: and so the great end of predestinating grace will be answered in them mentioned in the foregoing verse; now this glorification may be said to be already done, with respect to that part of God's elect, who are in heaven, inheriting the promises; and is in some sense true also of that part of them which is on earth, who are called and justified; being made glorious within by the grace of Christ, and arrayed and adorned with the glorious robe of his righteousness; by the one they have a meetness, and by the other a right to eternal glory; of which this grace they have received is the beginning, pledge, and earnest: besides, they are already glorified in Christ, their head and representative, and in the view of God, and with respect to the certainty of it, it being prepared and made ready for them, is in the hands of Christ for them, and is insured to their faith and hope. It is an observation of a Jewish writer [n], "that a thing שנגזר להיות, *which is decreed to* "*be*, is spoken of in the past tense:" this is the Scripture style concerning things decreed, and such is the glorification of all God's elect.

Ver. 31. *What shall we then say to these things?* &c. Either to these afflictions, shall we murmur and repine at them? no, since they work together for our good, and are not to be compared with our future glory, which is certain; for if we suffer with, and for Christ, we shall be glorified together: or to these blessings just now mentioned, as the fore-knowledge of God, divine predestination, effectual calling, free justification, and eternal glorification, what can be said *to* these? nothing can be added to them, they are a complete set of blessings, wanting nothing; nor can the greatness of them be fully expressed, or the freeness of God's grace displayed in them, sufficiently declared: what remains for us to do, but to be thankful for them, and glory in them? or what can be said *against* them? nothing at all, they can't be contradicted or gainsayed; they are true and faithful sayings; they can never be made void, and of no effect, by hell or earth; nor ought our unbelieving hearts to have any thing to say against interest in them: or what is to be said, or inferred *from* them? why, the free, sovereign, unchangeable, and everlasting love of God, in providing and bestowing such benefits; and the certainty of salvation, which is infallibly secured hereby: *if God be for us;* or, *seeing he is for us*, has an affection for us, which appears from the gift of himself, Son, and Spirit, and all the blessings of grace and glory; and is on our side: as that he is on the side of his people, is evident from his preservation of them from the evils of the world and their own corruptions; from the supports he gives them under afflictions and temptations; from his carrying on the work of grace upon them, notwithstanding all the opposition made unto it; and from their safety and security they enjoy by him, notwithstanding the power of their enemies; he is so for them, and on their side, as that he will certainly save them. This he has determined to do, he has sent his son to obtain salvation for them, his spirit to apply it to them, and keeps them by his power to the full enjoyment of it: and since this is the case, *who can be against us?* none can be against them. There are some that can't possibly be against them; if Jehovah the Father is not against them, the Son can't be against them, nor the Spirit; good angels can't be against them, so far from it, that they rejoice at their good, minister to them, and are a guard about them; the law can't be against them, be-

[m] Vid. Cabala Denudata, par. 1. p. 200. & par. 2. p. 7.

[n] Aben Ezra, in Jon. ii. 2.

cause it is fulfilled in them; nor justice, because it is satisfied, and all its demands answered: and though there may be some who may be against them, and oppose themselves to them, yet their opposition is to no purpose; they will never prevail over them to their ruin and destruction; as neither sin, nor Satan, nor the world, nor death itself.

Ver. 32. *He that spared not his own son, &c.*] 'Tis said that God spared not the angels that sinned, nor the old world, which was full of violence, nor Sodom and Gomorrah, whose wickedness was great, nor the Egyptians and their first-born, refusing to let Israel go, nor the Israelites themselves, when they transgressed his laws, nor wicked men hardened in sin; all which is not to be wondered at; but that he should not spare *his own son*, his proper son, of the same nature with him, and equal to him, the son of his love, and who never sinned against him, is very amazing: he spares many of the sons of men in a providential way, and in a way of grace, but he did not spare his own son, or abate him any thing in any respect, what was agreed upon between them, with regard to the salvation of his people; as appears by his assuming human nature, with all its weaknesses and infirmities; by his having laid on him all the iniquities of his people, and all the punishment due unto them he inflicted on him, without the least abatement; and by his sufferings not being deferred at all, beyond the appointed time; when full satisfaction for all their sins were demanded, the whole payment of their debts to the uttermost farthing insisted on, and all done according to the utmost strictness of divine justice: and which was not out of any disaffection to him; nor because he himself deserved such treatment; but because of the counsel, purpose, and promise of God, that his law and justice might be fully satisfied, and his people completely saved: moreover, the sense of the phrase may be learnt from the use of it in the Septuagint version of Gen. xxii. 12. *thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me*, which that renders *ως εφεισω, thou hast not spared thy beloved son for me*; so God did not spare his son, because he did not withhold him: *but delivered him up for us all*. That is, God the father delivered him, according to his determinate counsel and fore-knowledge, into the hands of wicked men, into the hands of justice, and to death itself; not for all men, for to all men he does not give Christ, and all things freely with him, nor are all delivered from condemnation and death by him; wherefore if he was delivered up for all men, he must be delivered up in vain for some: but for *us all*, or *all us*, whom he foreknew, predestinated, called, justified, and glorified; and not merely as a martyr, or by way of example only, and for their good, but as their surety and substitute, in their room and stead: wherefore *how shall he not with him freely give us all things?* Christ is God's free gift to his elect; he is given to be a covenant to them, an head over them, a Saviour of them, and as the bread of life for them to live upon; he's freely given; God could never have been compelled to have given him; Christ could never have been merited by them; nothing that they could give or do could have laid him under obligation to have bestowed him on them; yea, such were the persons, and such their characters, for whom he delivered him up, that he might have justly stirred up all his wrath against them; and yet such was his grace, that he has given his own son unto them; and not him alone, but *all things with him*: all temporal good things, needful and convenient; all spiritual blessings, a justifying righteousness, pardon of sin, sanctifying grace, adoption, and eternal life: and all *freely*, in a sovereign way, according to his own good will and pleasure, without any obligation or compulsion; not grudgingly nor niggardly, but cheerfully and bountifully, absolutely, and without any conditions; for he is not moved thereunto by any thing in them, or performed by them.

Ver. 33. *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? &c.*] The *elect* of God are a certain select number of persons, whom he has so loved, as of his sovereign good will and pleasure, to choose in Christ before the foundation of the world, unto eternal life and salvation, by certain ways and means of his own appointing, as sanctification and faith, so that they are peculiarly his: but are these persons chargeable with nothing criminal? yes, with Adam's sin; with a want of original righteousness; with multitudes of sins before conversion, some of them with very great ones; and all, even after conversion, with frequent infirmities and backslidings: and will none rise up and exhibit charges of this nature against them? yes, enow; they very often bring charges against themselves; they are very apt to charge one another; Satan, the accuser of the brethren, lays many things to their charge very frequently, and so do the men of the world; but all these charges avail nothing, since none of the divine persons, Father, Son, and Spirit, lay any thing against them: not God the father, for *it is God that justifieth*; he against whom sin is committed, who is the lawgiver, and the righteous judge, justifies them from every charge; not by teaching them the way of justification, nor by infusing righteousness into them, or on account of any works of righteousness done by them, but by pronouncing them righteous through the imputation of the righteousness of his son unto them: observe, that *God's elect*, as such, are the objects of justification; which proves the eternity of it; the speciality of it as belonging to particular persons, and the everlasting security and continuance of it.

Ver. 34. *Who is he that condemneth, &c.*] That is, the elect of God: all mankind are deserving of condemnation, and are under the sentence of it, as in Adam: some are fore-ordained to condemnation; all in final impenitence and unbelief, are condemned already; and the whole world of the ungodly will be condemned at the last day; but none of God's elect are, or shall be condemned; for they are loved with an everlasting love; they are chosen unto salvation; they are in Christ, where there's no condemnation; they are brought to believe in him, and by him are justified from all sin, and so are secure from condemnation. They are indeed deserving of it as others, considered in themselves; and are under the sentence of it, as in Adam, with the rest of mankind; and in their own apprehensions, when convinced of sin, righteousness, and judgment. And are there none that will condemn them? yes, their own hearts often condemn them; they are very forward to condemn one another; the world condemns them, and so does the god of this

but neither Father, Son, nor Spirit, will condemn them; not the Father, for he justifies; nor the Son, for *it is Christ that died*: that he died is certain; the death he died was the death of the cross; the persons he died for were God's elect; the reason of his dying for them was to make atonement for their sins; this came to pass through his substitution in their room and stead; this death of his was but once, yet of an eternal efficacy, and so a full security of them from all condemnation: for sin, the cause of condemnation, was removed by it; the condemnation itself was bore by Christ in their stead; the law and justice of God were satisfied by it; pardon of sin was procured by his blood; and complete justification obtained by his active and passive obedience; all which is confirmed by his resurrection, session at God's right hand, and intercession: wherefore 'tis added, *yea, rather that is risen again*. As the death, so the resurrection of Christ, is the security of God's elect from condemnation; inasmuch as Christ rose again, as a conqueror over death, and over sin, the sting of death, and over Satan, who had the power of death; and also as a surety, having given satisfaction to law and justice: he engaged as a surety for his people; God in justice, and according to his righteous law, dealt with him, and by him as such; he satisfied both, and therefore was set free by them; hence neither law nor justice can condemn; besides he rose again as a common person, head and representative of his people, and for their justification: he first stood charged with all their sins, which by his father, and with his own consent, were imputed to him; he was condemned and suffered death for them; when he rose from the dead, he was justified and acquitted from them all; and all his people were justified in him, and with him: yea, the resurrection of Christ is *rather* a greater security from condemnation, than his death; Christ's death expiated sin, but his resurrection brought in the everlasting righteousness; notwithstanding Christ's death, had he not risen again, we should have been in our sins, and so liable to condemnation; Christ's dying shewed that he was arrested and condemned, but his resurrection shews that he is discharged, and we in him: *who is even at the right hand of God*. The ascension of Christ, his entrance into heaven, and session at the right hand of God, are also a very considerable security of God's elect from condemnation; for when he ascended, from earth to heaven in human nature, accompanied by angels, of which they and his disciples were witnesses, he led captivity captive, or triumphed over those that led his people captive, as sin, Satan, the law, death, and every other enemy of theirs; he entered into heaven to prepare it for them, to take possession of it in their name, to appear in the presence of God for them, and as having obtained the eternal redemption of them, where he was received with a welcome, as the surety and head of the chosen ones, and then sat down at the right hand of God: which shews that he had done his work, and to satisfaction, is advanced above all, power is given to him, all things are put under him, and he is head over all things to the church: and since he is at the right hand of God, as an advocate and intercessor for his people, it will be to no purpose, and of no avail, that Satan, or any other enemy, is at their right hand to resist them: *who also maketh intercession for us*: which is done, not by vocal prayer, as in the days of his flesh on earth; or as supplicating an angry judge; or as controverting a point in the court of heaven; but by the appearance of his person for us, by the presentation of his sacrifice, by offering up the prayers and praises of his people, by declaring it as his will, that such and such blessings be bestowed upon them, and by seeing to it, that the benefits of his death are applied to those, for whom they were designed; which intercession of Christ proceeds upon the foot of a satisfaction made; it always continues, and is ever prevalent, and so has a considerable influence to secure from condemnation. The apostle, in this verse, seems to have in view a passage in Job xxxiv. 29. which the Septuagint render, *and he gives peace, and who is he that condemneth?*

Ver. 35. *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?* &c.] By *the love of Christ* is not meant the saints' love to Christ, but his love to them; he is indeed the object of their love, and so strong is their love to him, that it can never be destroyed; for though there may be an abatement in the fervour of it, it can never be lost; yet this is never called the love of Christ: besides, the apostle is speaking not of their love to Christ, but of the love of God and Christ to them, throughout the context; and his design is, to strengthen the faith of God's people, and comfort their souls, under their various afflictions: now nothing more effectually serves such purposes, than the love of Christ; and the things here instanced in are such, as are apt to inject doubts and fears, about interest in the love of Christ, and of the love of God in Christ, as it is interpreted in some following verses: moreover, the separation here interrogated is not of Christ from us, but of us from him; whereas was it our love to Christ, which is here meant, it should rather have been put, who shall separate him from us, and not us from the love of Christ? That Christ does love the elect of God, who are the persons here spoken of, is evident from his undertaking for them, espousing their persons, assuming their nature, dying in their room and stead, paying off their debts, and redeeming their persons, by going to prepare a place for them, by interceding for them, by supplying them with all grace, and using them in the most free and familiar manner; which love of his is wonderful, matchless, and inconceivable, special and peculiar, free and undeserved, exceeding affectionate, unchangeable, durable, and for ever. This is the bond of union to Christ; and the union which is made by it is exceeding near and close; it is real, perfect, and indissoluble, nothing can separate from it: not *tribulation*; or *affliction*, which springs from his love, and is the fruit of it; and notwithstanding that, he rests in his love; this is not taken away, but is often sensibly enjoyed, in the midst of afflictions: *or distress*; whether of body or mind; straitness in the affairs and circumstances of life, or straitness of mind, in the exercise of grace, and discharge of duty; for *though we believe not, yet he abides faithful* to his covenant and promises: *or persecution*; from the world; for this is rather an evidence that Christ has loved them, chosen and called them, because the world hates them: *or famine*; want of the necessaries of life, as food and drink; being exposed to great hunger and thirst, which has some-

times been the lot of the dear children of God: *or nakedness;* want of proper clothing, or the use of common apparel; wandering about in sheep-skins and goat-skins, which has been the case of some, of whom the world was not worthy, and so no proof of separation from the love of Christ: *or peril;* dangers from different quarters, by different persons and ways; such as the Apostle Paul had trial of, who was highly in the love of Christ, 1 Cor. xi. 26. *or sword;* that is, death by the sword; which death James the brother of John died: now, though this may separate the head from the body, and separate soul and body, yet can't separate from the love of Christ.

Ver. 36. *As it is written, for thy sake we are killed,* &c.] This passage is a citation out of Psal. xliv. 22. and the meaning is, that for the sake of God, and his pure worship, Old-Testament saints were frequently put to death, or exposed to the persecutions of men, which often issued in death; as New-Testament saints have been, for the sake of Christ and his Gospel, even *all the day long;* that is, they were liable to death all the day long; or every day, one or other of them was put to death: *we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter;* they were reckoned as fit for nothing else, and were continually exposed unto it; were used as sheep are, as if they were made for no other use and service, but to be slaughtered; hence they are called, *the flock of slaughter;* and as this expresses the brutality of their persecutors, so their harmlessness, meekness, humility, and patience in sufferings, being under them like lambs or sheep. This testimony is produced, to shew that suffering death has been the common lot of the saints in all ages: and is designed to animate the people of God under the Gospel dispensation, to suffer with cheerfulness; the allusion may be to the lambs and sheep daily slain for sacrifice; either to the lambs of the sacrifice slain morning and evening; or to others that were slain in any part of the day from morning to night, for other sacrifices, in the court of the tabernacle and temple.

Ver. 37. *Nay, in all these things,* &c.] The former words being inserted in a parenthesis, these are an answer to the question in ver. 35. *who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation?* &c. *nay;* it shall not, nor any of the other things mentioned: *in all these things;* afflictions, distresses, persecutions, famine, nakedness, sword, or any other thing of the same kind: *we are more than conquerors;* not only over sin and Satan, but the world, the reproaches, afflictions, and persecutions of it; which they cheerfully and courageously undergo, insomuch that they are not only conquerors, but *more than conquerors;* they have above overcome, they have exceedingly the better of it; for they not only patiently bear afflictions and persecutions, but they glory in them; their experience, faith, and joy, are often increased by them; they have sometime solicited, and even wearied their persecutors; they have got the victory with ease, over Satan and his hellish emissaries, by the blood of the Lamb, and the word of their testimony: but this is not owing to themselves, or through their own strength, but *through him that loved us;* meaning either God the father, whose love is mentioned in the following verses, or rather the Lord Jesus Christ; and so some copies express it, *through Christ that loved us;* *through him,* who has got the victory over all his and his people's enemies, and makes them sharers in his conquests; *through him,* who is able to help them, and has strength sufficient to carry them through, and brings them off more than conquerors; who has loved them, still loves them, and whose love engages his power to stand by them and protect them against all their enemies.

Ver. 38. *For I am persuaded, that neither death,* &c.] These words with the following, express the strong persuasion, and full assurance of faith the apostle had, that nothing whatever could separate him and the rest of God's people, from his love towards them in Christ Jesus. This persuasion not only regards himself, but others; and is not conjectural, but certain; and which did not arise from any special and extraordinary revelation, but is founded upon the nature of the love of God itself, the security of it in Christ, and of the persons of God's elect in him; upon eternal predestination, and the unalterable purposes of God; upon the promise and oath of God; upon adoption, and the gracious witnessings, assistances, and inhabitation of the spirit; and is greatly increased by the consideration of the death, resurrection, and intercession of Christ. The things enumerated, which are not able to separate from the love of God, are as follow: *death;* death separates men from the world, their worldly habitations and substance; it separates the soul from the body, and one friend from another; and in process of time, may take off all thoughts and affections for departed friends, but it is not able to separate from the love of God; it is so far from it, that it lets the soul into the fullest enjoyment of it: and as corporeal death, so no other kind of death can do it; for if the death of the body can't, the death of afflictions never can; and as for a moral or spiritual death, and an eternal one, these shall never befall the children of God: *nor life;* this natural and temporal life, which is frail and mortal; the love of God is better than this life, and this itself is the effect of divine favour; wherefore this can never separate from the love of God, nor any thing in it: the life of believers is indeed filled up with troubles and exercises, and attended with much imperfection and sin; but nothing does, or can alienate the affections of God from his children; for though he exercises them with the trials of life, and chastises them for their sins, yet his loving kindness he does not take away from them: *nor angels;* by whom are meant evil angels, the devils; for as for good angels, they never attempt to separate God and his people; they rejoice at their good, minister to them, are their guardians whilst here, at death they carry their souls to heaven, and at the last day will gather all the elect together; but evil angels do endeavour it, by temptations to sin, and accusations for it; by stirring up heresies and persecutions, in order to destroy them, but cannot succeed; for the saints are upon God's heart, are in Christ's hands, and on him the rock; and the spirit of God is in them, who is greater than he that is in the world: *nor principalities;* civil magistrates; who though they may separate them from their company, and cast them out as evil; may separate them in prisons one from another; and separate

soul and body, by killing the latter, which is all they can do: yet they can't separate neither soul nor body from the love of God: the Jews often say, that if all the nations of the world were gathered together, they could not extinguish [a] or cause to cease [a], or take away the love which is between God and his people Israel [b]: *nor powers*; either the same with the former; or false teachers who had the power of working miracles in confirmation of their doctrines, by which they deceived many; and if it had been possible, would have deceived the elect of God, but that was impossible: *nor things present*; present evils, the afflictions of the present life; God does not cease to love when he afflicts his people; yea, afflictions spring from his love, and in them he afresh manifests his love to them; they are overruled for their good, and issue in eternal glory. Present temptations also may be meant. The best of saints have been exposed unto them; Christ himself was not exempted from them; these don't, nor can't separate from the love of God; which is manifest from the regard which God and Christ have to tempted ones, by sympathizing with them, supporting and succouring of them, rebuking the tempter, and delivering from them. Present desertions, or the hidings of God's face, which often is the case of his dear children, can have no such effect; their relation to God still continues; they have great nearness unto him, are engraven on the palms of his hands, are set as a seal on his heart, and he bears a strong affection to them; though, for wise reasons, he is pleased for a moment to hide himself from them: yea, the present body of sin and death saints carry about with them in this life, can't separate them; sin has separated the angels from God, who rebelled against him; it drove Adam out of the garden of Eden, and will exclude the wicked from the divine presence to all eternity; and it often separates between God and his own people, with respect to communion, but never with respect to union to him, or interest in him; for he knew what they would be when he set his love upon them; his love broke through all the corruptions of nature and sins of life in their conversion; and appears to continue the same from the strong expressions of his grace to them, notwithstanding all their backslidings: could sin separate in this sense, no one would remain the object of his love. Now this does not suppose that God loves sin, nor does it give any encouragement to it; for though it cannot separate from interest in God, yet it often does from the enjoyment of him. Again, present good things may be designed, the good things of this life, temporal enjoyments; these are given in love; and though they may be but few, they are in mercy, and with a blessing; and the great mercy of all is, that these are not their all, nor do they take off their value and esteem for the love of God, which is better to them than all the things of life; and though *the prosperity of fools shall destroy them*, the prosperity of the saints shall never be their ruin: *nor things to come*; whether good or bad, prosperous or adverse; more afflictions, fresh difficulties with the body of sin; an hour of temptation, and time of distress that is to come upon all the earth; or the evil days of old age; God will never leave, nor forsake his people, or cause his loving kindness to depart from them, in whatsoever state or condition they may come into: the Vulgate Latin version adds, nor *fortitude*: and the Ethiopic version, *nor powers*; and one copy adds it in the beginning of the next verse, *nor power*.

Ver. 39. *Nor height, nor depth*, &c.] Neither heaven, earth, nor hell, nor any of the inhabitants of either, or any thing in either; no high or low place, to be cast down from the one, or into the other; nor the height of honour and prosperity, or the depth of meanness and adversity; nor the height of power, or depth of policy in men or devils; *nor any other creature*. This takes in the whole compass of created beings in heaven, earth, and sea; and most strongly expresses the inseparableness of the saints from the love of God, by any thing or creature whatever; nothing in the whole universe *shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord*: by *the love of God*, is not meant the saints' love to God; for though this is sometimes called the love of God, it is from him, as the author of it, and to him, as the object of it, and may be said to be in Christ, or by him, and can never be lost; yet the apostle would not have expressed such a strong confidence and full persuasion about this, and would rather have said, had this been his meaning, that nothing shall be able to separate our love from God, or God from our love, and not us from the love of God; besides, he is speaking of that love by which we are more than conquerors, and manifestly intends the love with which God loves his people, particularly the love of God the father: and this is *in Christ Jesus our Lord*; he has expressed it in and through Christ, in choosing and blessing them in him, and in sending him to die for them; and it still continues in him, and is in him as their Lord, head, husband, and Redeemer; and is a reason why nothing can separate them from it: which is to be understood, not of the effects of love, and the application of it, which may be suspended for a time; nor of the manifestation and sense of it, which believers may be without for a while; nor of any sort of separation from God, for saints themselves may be separated from him, with respect to intimate sensible communion and fellowship; but the sense of this passage is, that they can never be separated from the love of God, so as that that union which is made by it between God and them can ever be dissolved, or they cease to have any share or interest in his love. This the apostle was persuaded could never be.

[a] Targum in Cant. viii. 7.
[b] Shemot Rabba, sect. 49. fol. 144. 1.
[c] Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 2. fol. 179. 4.

CHAP. IX.

THE apostle having discoursed of justification and sanctification, and of the privileges of justified and sanctified ones, proceeds to treat of predestination, the source and spring of all the blessings of grace; and to observe how this distinguishing act of God's sovereign will has taken place, both among Jews and Gentiles; in treating of which, he knew he should go contrary to the sense of his countrymen the Jews, who have a notion that all Israel shall have a part in, or inherit the world to come[a]: and that the Gentiles will be for ever miserable; and nothing was more disagreeable to them, than to talk of their rejection of God, and the calling of the Gentiles; wherefore that it might be manifest, that it was not out of pique and ill will to them, that the apostle said the things hereafter related; he expresses the most cordial affection to them imaginable, and which he introduces in ver. 1. by way of appeal to Christ, who knew the truth of what he was about to say, and who could, together with the spirit of God and his own conscience, testify for him that it was no lie: the thing he appeals for the truth of, is in ver. 2. that the salvation of the Jews lay near his heart; that it was no pleasure to him to think or speak of their rejection, but was what gave him continual pain and uneasiness: and his great desire for their good is expressed in a very strong and uncommon manner, ver. 3. the reasons of it are partly the relation they stood in to him, being his brethren and kinsmen; and partly the many privileges they had been favoured with of God; an enumeration of which is given, ver. 4, 5. and foreseeing an objection, he prevents it, which might be made, that if the Jews were cast off, the promise of God to that people that he would be their God, would become void, and the preaching the Gospel of Christ to them of no effect; to which he answers by distinguishing between Israel and Israel, or the elect of God among them, and those that were not: wherefore though the latter were rejected according to the purpose of God, the promise and preaching of the word had their effect in the former, ver. 6. and that there was such a distinction, he proves from the two sons of Abraham, Isaac and Ishmael, who were both Abraham's seed; yet one was a child of promise, and the other a child of the flesh, and were emblematical of the children of the promise, and the children of the flesh among that people; ver. 7, 8, 9, 10. and further confirms this by the instance of Jacob and Esau, who were born of the same parents, and were twins; and yet one was in the favour of God, and the other not; and that this was owing not to works, but to the sovereign will of God in election, he proves by observing that this was before good or evil were done by either of them, ver. 11. and that this was notified to Rebekah before, ver. 12. as appears from a passage in Gen. xxv. 23. and by another passage in Mal. i. 2, 3. which is cited, ver. 13, then an objection is started, ver. 14. that if God loves one, and hates another, both being in equal circumstances, as Jacob and Esau were, he must be guilty of unrighteousness; which he answers and removes, first by a detestation of such a charge against God, and then by producing testimonies out of the books of Moses, proving both election and reprobation, as being not of the works of men, but of the will of God: the former of these he proves, ver. 15. from Exod. xxxiii. 19. by which it appears, that the choice of men to salvation is not according to the will of man, but according to the grace and love of God, ver. 16. the latter he proves by the case of Pharaoh, ver. 17. and the Scripture relating to that, Exod. ix. 16. and from both testimonies concludes, ver. 18. that God's having mercy on one, and hardening another, are according to his sovereign will and pleasure; then another objection rises up, if so, God has no reason to find fault with men that are hardened in sin, since they are according to his will, and in sinning do but fulfil it, and which no man resists; and this objection is formed in a very pert and sneering manner, and insinuates that God is cruel and acts unreasonably, ver. 19. to which he answers, by putting the objector in mind that he was a man, a mere creature that started it, and that it was God against whom it was made; and by observing the folly and madness of replying against God, and the absurdity of such a procedure, taken from the consideration of the one being a creature, and the other the Creator, ver. 20. and by instancing in the case of the potter, who has power over his clay, to form it in what shape, and for what use he pleases, ver. 21. and accommodates this, both to the affair of election and reprobation, and to the business of the latter first, ver. 22. where he observes the end of God in it to shew forth his power and wrath, and describes the subjects of it, which clears him from injustice, and points at the patience of God towards them, which frees him from the charge of cruelty, ver. 22. and then proceeds to apply the metaphor before used, to the objects of election styled vessels of mercy, and the end of the Lord to manifest the riches of his glory in them, and the method he takes to bring them to eternal happiness, by preparing them for it by grace, ver. 23. which is done in effectual vocation, the objects of which are both Jews and Gentiles, ver. 24. That it is the will of God that the Gentiles should be called, he proves, ver. 25, 26. from some passages in Hosea, ch. ii. 23. and i. 10. and that God had chosen, and so would call some among the Jews, he clearly makes appear, ver. 27, 28, 29. from some prophecies of Isaiah, ch. x. 22, 23. and i. 10. and then he concludes the chapter by observing the free and distinguishing grace of God, in the calling of the Gentiles, and the justification of them by the righteousness of Christ; that such who were far off from it, and sought not after it, should enjoy it, ver. 30. when the Israelites, who were diligent and zealous in seeking after a righteousness to justify

[a] Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 11. sect. 1.

them before God, yet did not arrive to one, ver. 31. the reasons of which are given, ver. 32. because it was not the righteousness of faith, or the righteousness of Christ received by faith they sought; but a legal one, and by works which can never be attained by sinful men: they sought after a wrong righteousness, and in a wrong way, because they stumbled at Christ, and rejected him and his righteousness; and this removes an objection which is suggested in the two preceding verses, that God is unrighteous in calling the Gentiles, who never sought after righteousness, and in rejecting the Jews that followed after one: and that they did stumble at Christ and his righteousness, is no other than what was foretold in Isa. viii. 14. and that whoever believes in Christ, whether Jew or Gentile, shall be saved, he suggests is a doctrine agreeably to Isa. xxviii. 16. which passages are referred to, ver. 33.

Ver. 1. *I say the truth in Christ, I lie not,* &c.] The apostle being about to discourse concerning predestination, which he had mentioned in the preceding chapter, and to open the springs and causes of it, and also concerning the induration and rejection of the Jewish nation; he thought it necessary to preface his account of these things with some strong assurances of his great attachment to that people, and his affection for them, lest it should be thought he spoke out of prejudice to them; and well knowing in what situation he stood in with them, on account of his preaching up the abrogation of the ceremonial law, and how difficult it might be for him to obtain their belief in what he should say, he introduces it with a solemn oath, *I say the truth in Christ, I lie not:* which refers not to what he had said in the foregoing chapter, but to what he was going to say; and is all one as if he had said, as I am in Christ, a converted person, one born again, and renewed in the spirit of my mind, what I am about to speak is truth, and no lie; or I swear by Christ the God of truth, who is truth itself, and I appeal to him as the true God, the searcher of hearts, that what I now deliver is truth, and nothing but truth, and has no falsehood in it. This both shews that the taking of an oath is lawful, and that Christ is truly God, by whom only persons ought to swear: *my conscience bearing me witness.* The apostle, besides his appeal to Christ, calls his conscience to witness to the truth of his words; and this is as a thousand witnesses; there is in every man a conscience, which unless seared as with a red-hot iron, will accuse or excuse, and bear a faithful testimony to words and actions; and especially a conscience enlightened, cleansed, and sanctified by the spirit of God, as was the apostle's: hence he adds, *in the Holy Ghost:* meaning either that his conscience was influenced and directed by the Holy Ghost in what he was about to say; or it bore witness in and with the Holy Ghost, and the Holy Ghost with that; so that here are three witnesses called in, Christ, conscience, and the Holy Ghost; and by three such witnesses, his words must be thought to be well established.

Ver. 2. *That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart.*] This is the thing he appeals to Christ for the truth of, and calls in his conscience and the Holy Ghost to bear witness to. These two words, *heaviness* and *sorrow*, the one signifies grief, which had brought on heaviness on his spirits; and the other such pain as a woman in travail feels: and the trouble of his mind expressed by both, is described by its quantity, *great*, it was not a little, but much; by its quality it was internal, it was *in* his *heart*, it did not lie merely in outward shew, in a few words or tears, but was in his heart, it was a heart-sorrow; and by its duration, *continual*, it was not a sudden emotion or passion, but what had been long in him, and had deeply affected and greatly depressed him: and what was the reason of all this? it is not expressed, but may pretty easily be understood; it was because of the obstinacy of his countrymen the Jews, the hardness of their hearts, and their wilful rejection of the Messiah; their trusting to their own righteousness, to the neglect and contempt of the righteousness of Christ, which he knew must unavoidably issue in their eternal destruction; also what greatly affected his mind was the utter rejection of them, as the people of God, and the judicial blindness, and hardness of heart, he full well knew was coming upon them, and which he was about to break unto them.

Ver. 3. *For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ,* &c.] Some consider this as the reason of the apostle's great heaviness, and continual sorrow of heart, because he had made such a wish as this, and read the words, *for I have wished,* or *did wish;* that is, in my unregenerate state, whilst I was a persecutor of Christ, and a blasphemer of his name, I wished to be for ever separated from him, and to have nothing to do with him; for then I thought I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus, and this I did out of respect to the Jewish nation, and because I would not relinquish the Jewish religion; but oh! what a trouble of mind is it to me? what uneasiness does it give me when I think of it, and reflect upon it? But this can never be the apostle's meaning, for he would never have appealed to Christ in so solemn a manner, and took an oath upon it, for the truth of his enmity to Christ, and alienation from him before conversion, which every body knew; nor was it any thing strange, that whilst he was an unbelieving Jew, he should wish himself separated from Jesus of Nazareth, and always to remain so; and his having done this before his embracing of Christianity could be no evidence of his present affection for the Jewish nation, especially since he repented of it, and was sorry for it. But this wish, whatever is meant by it, is mentioned as an instance of his great love to his countrymen the Jews. Many have thought that his meaning is, that he had so great a value for them, that he could even wish himself, and be content to be eternally separated from Christ, everlastingly banished from his presence, never to enjoy communion more with him, or in other words, to be eternally damned, that they might be saved. But this is what could never be, and which he knew was impossible to be done, and was contrary to that strong persuasion he had just expressed in the close of the foregoing chapter. Nor is it consistent with his love to Christ, to wish any thing of this kind; it would make him to love the Jews much better than Christ; since, according to this sense, he must wish to be parted from him, that they

might be saved, and consequently must love them more than Christ: nor is it consistent with, but even contrary both to the principles of nature and grace; it is contrary to the principles of nature, for a man to desire his own damnation upon any consideration whatever; and it is contrary to the principle of grace, which always strongly inclines to be with Christ, and not separated from him; in a word, to be accursed from Christ in this sense, could be no proper means of the salvation of the Jews, and therefore it cannot be thought to be desirable, or wished for. Some things are said indeed for the qualifying of this sense of the words, as that the apostle said this inconsiderately, when he was scarcely himself, through an ecstacy of mind, and intemperate zeal, and an overflow of affection for his nation; but this is highly to reflect upon the apostle, and to represent him in a very unworthy manner, when 'tis certain he said this with the greatest deliberation and seriousness; he introduces it in the most solemn manner, with an appeal to Christ, the Holy Spirit, and his own conscience, and therefore it could never drop from him through incogitancy, and an overheated affection. Again, 'tis said, that this wish was made with a condition, if it was the will of God, but that he knew was not; or if it could be for the good of these people, this also he knew it could never be: the best qualification of it is to say 'tis an hyperbolical expression; and, so if it is, it must be with a witness, being such an hyperbole, as is not to be matched in sacred or profane writings. The words of Moses are thought to be a parallel one, *blot me, I pray thee, out of the book which thou hast written*, Exod. xxxii. 32. but that is not to be understood of the book of eternal life; but either of the book of the law, as R. Sol. Jarchi expounds it, which God had ordered him to write, and his desire is, that his name might not stand there; or rather of the book of this temporal life, that he might die and not live. It remains then that these words must have another meaning. Now let it be observed, that the word [Greek], here translated *accursed*, answers to the Hebrew word חרם, which, with the Jewish writers, is one sort of excommunication in use among them, and the greater sort; the form of it, as given by them, is very horrible, and shocking[*]; see the note on John ix. 22. and so we may observe the word *anathema* here used is mentioned as a form of excommunication in 1 Cor. xvi. 22. Gal. i. 8, 9. of all such as love not Christ and his Gospel, and make it appear by their principles or practices, or both, that they do not, and so ought to be removed from the communion of churches. Now, taking the word in this sense, the apostle's meaning is, that he could wish to be excommunicated from Christ; that is, from the body of Christ, from the church of Christ, Christ mystical, as the word *Christ* is used, 1 Cor. xii. 12. to be deprived of the ordinance of Christ's house, to be degraded from his office in it, and not to be so much as a member in it. He saw that these branches, the people of the Jews, were going to be cut off, and no longer to be of the church of God; and such was his affection to them, that he could have wished rather to be cut off himself, that they might be spared; and this was an instance of great love to them, since, next to Christ, the church and the ordinances of it were exceeding dear unto, and highly valued by the apostle. Again, it is worthy of observation, that the Hebrew word חרם, which the Septuagint render by [Greek], the word in the text, is used for any thing devoted to God, and which could not be alienated to any other use or service; and if it was a man, or any among men that was devoted, it was not to be redeemed, but was *surely to be put to death*, Lev. xxvii. 29. Some have thought that Jephthah's daughter was put to death upon this law; but be that as it will, the apostle here may reasonably be thought to allude unto it, and his sense be this, that he could wish himself [Greek], *to be devoted unto death*, not from Christ, but *by* Christ; and some copies read [Greek], *by*: I could wish that my dear Lord and Master, as if he should say, would appoint and order me to die, might this nation of mine but escape that ruin and destruction I see is coming upon them, as a nation and a church; I could be content to die the most accursed death, and be treated in the most ignominious manner, might they but be saved; a like expression is that of R. Ishmael[*], בני ישראל אני כפרתן, *may I be an expiatory sacrifice for the children of Israel*; which (says one commentator[*]) "he said, מתוך חבתן, *because of his love to them*; and "it is as if he should say, all the punishment which "is right to come upon them, I will take it on myself, "in order to atone for them;" and says another[*], "the "sense is, he took upon him their redemption, and "this he said, לרוב אהבתו, *because of the greatness of* "*his love*:" now for a man to die for his country, that a whole nation perish not, was agreeably to the sentiments both of Jews and Gentiles, and was the highest instance of love among men; *greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends*: and this is carrying the sense of the apostle's wish high enough, and not too far. The persons on whose account he could have expressed this wish, are described by their natural relation to him, *my brethren, my kinsmen, according to the flesh*: he calls them his brethren, not in a spiritual sense, nor in a strict natural sense, but in a general way, as being of the same nation: it is a saying with the Jews[*], כל ישראל אחים, *all the Israelites are brethren*; for the same reason he calls them *kinsmen*: and these appellations he uses to remove that ill will and prejudice they had conceived in their minds against him, and to signify the ground of his affection for them: and he adds, *according to the flesh*, to distinguish them from his spiritual brethren and relations; for though they were brethren in a national sense, they were not all so in a spiritual relation.

Ver. 4. *Who are Israelites, &c.*] Which were their national name, as descended from Jacob, whose name was Israel; and it was accounted a very honourable one; see Phil. iii. 5. 2 Cor. xi. 22. and the very name they bore gave the apostle some concern that they

[*] Vid. Buxtorf. Lexic. Rabbinic. p. 827, 828.
[*] Misn. Negaim, c. 2. sect. 1.
[*] Bartenora in ib.
[*] Maimon. in Misn. Negaim, c. 2. sect. 1.
[*] Caphtor, fol. 28. 1.

should be cut off; and then he proceeds to enumerate the several distinguishing favours and privileges they had been partakers of: *to whom pertaineth the adoption;* not that special adoption, which springs from eternal predestination, is a blessing of the covenant of grace, comes through the redemption of Christ, and is received and enjoyed only by believers in him; for all that were Israelites, were not in this sense the children of God; but national adoption is here meant, by which the whole body of that people, as a nation, were the sons of God, his first-born: *and the glory;* either the ark of the covenant, which is so called in Psal. lxiii. 2. according to Kimchi; or the clouds in the tabernacle and temple, which were called the glory of the Lord, and were symbols of his presence, the same with the Shekinah; and so Aben Ezra interprets *power*, the ark, and *glory*, the Shekinah, Psal. lxiii. 2. *and the covenants;* not the two Testaments, Old and New, but the covenant of circumcision, made with Abraham their father, and the covenant at Sinai they entered into with the Lord; some copies, and the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions, read, *the covenant: and the giving of the law;* מתן תורה, a way of speaking the p Jews make use of when they take notice of this privilege; for it was peculiarly given to them with great solemnity by God himself, through the disposition of angels into the hands of Moses the mediator, and by him to them; and on account of this, they reckoned themselves more beloved of God than the rest of mankind q: *and the service* of God; or *the service*, as in the Greek text. So the Jews r are used to call it עבודה, *the service;* and false worship is called by them עבודה זרה, *strange service;* which is the title of one of their Misnic tracts; and here it signifies the whole worship of God, in the whole compass of it, sacrifices, prayer, praise, &c. daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly: *and the promises;* both temporal and spiritual, especially such as related to the Messiah, and which now had their accomplishment.

Ver. 5. *Whose are the fathers, &c.*] Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; for, according to the s Jewish writers, "they call none in Israel אבות, *fathers*, but three, and "they are Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and they call "none *mothers* but four, and they are, Sarah, Re-"becca, Rachel, and Leah:" their descent from these fathers was a privilege, though they valued themselves too highly upon it; but what was the crown and glory of all, and which they took the least, though the apostle took the most notice of, is, *and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came:* that is, either of the fathers, or of the Israelites, from whom Christ, according to his human nature, sprung; being a son of Abraham, of the tribe of Judah, of the seed of David, and the son of Mary; hence the Messiah is called משיחא דישראל, *the Messiah or Christ of Israel* t: *who* is described as *over all*, angels and men, being the creator, upholder, and governor of them; and as having another nature, a divine one, being *God*, truly and properly God, *blessed for evermore;* in himself, and to be blessed and praised by all creatures. The apostle alludes to that well-known periphrastic name of God, so much used by the Jews, הקדוש ברוך הוא, *the holy, blessed God;* to which, by way of assent and confirmation, the apostle puts his *Amen*. Now all these particular privileges are mentioned by him, as what heightened his concern for these people; it filled him with heaviness and sorrow of heart, when he considered, that persons who had been partakers of such favours, and especially the last, that the Messiah should spring from them, be born of them, and among them, and yet that they should be given up to ruin and destruction.

Ver. 6. *Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect, &c.*] Or *it is not possible indeed that the word of God should fall;* see 1 Sam. iii. 19. This the apostle says, partly to relieve his own mind pressed with sorrow, and partly to obviate an objection some might make, or prevent any mistake any might be ready to go into; as though from what he suggested, that what God had said concerning the people of the Jews, was made void and without effect: for whether by the *word of God* are meant, the Scriptures in general, the prophecies of the Old Testament, these were now about to have their accomplishment, in the rejection of the Jews, and in the conversion of the Gentiles; or whether by it is designed the Gospel, this, as preached both by Christ and his apostles, had had its effect upon God's chosen ones among that people; it was become the power of God unto salvation, to the Jew first: or rather by it may be intended, God's word of promise to Abraham, that he would be a God to him, and to his seed after him; and that he and they should be heir of the world, of this and of that which is to come; particularly the heavenly inheritance, which he gave to him by promise; this was not made void, or had taken none effect: for this was made only to Abraham and his spiritual seed; and therefore though his carnal seed believed not, and for their unbelief should be cut off, this did not make the faith, or faithfulness of God of none effect: *for they are not all Israel, which are of Israel;* that is, they which are the descendants of the patriarch Jacob, whose name was Israel; or who are of the Israelitish nation, of the stock of Israel, belonging to that people; they are not all את ישראל, *the Israel*, by way of emphasis, as in Psal. xxv. 22. or the *Israel of God*, Gal. vi. 16. the Israel whom Jehovah the father has chosen for a peculiar people; which Christ has redeemed from all their iniquities; which the spirit of God calls with an holy calling, by special grace, to special privileges; the seed of Israel who are justified in Christ, whose iniquities are so pardoned and done away, that when they are sought for they shall not be found, and who are saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation: or in other words, though they are *Israel after the flesh*, yet not after the spirit; though they are by nation Israelites, they are not Israelites *indeed*, as Nathaniel was; they are Jews outwardly, not inwardly; they have not all principles of grace, uprightness, and sincerity in them: now to these spiritual Israelites, or seed of Abraham,

p T. Bab. Zebachim, fol. 116. 1. Zohar in Lev. fol. 5. 2, 3.
q Tzeror Hammor, fol. 103. 2.
r Vid. Pirke Abot, c. 1. sect. 2.
s T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 16. 2. & Gloss. in ib.
t Targum in Isa. xvi. 1, 5. Mic. iv. 8.

were the word of God, the promises of God concerning spiritual and eternal things made, and upon these they had their effect; and therefore it could not be said that the word of God had taken none effect; though the whole body of Israel after the flesh were cut off and rejected. Some copies, and the Vulgate Latin version, read, *who are Israelites:* and the Ethiopic version, *they are not all Israel who came out of Egypt.*

Ver. 7. *Neither because they are the seed of Abraham,* &c.] The Jews highly valued themselves, upon being the natural seed of Abraham; and fancied, upon this account, that they were children, which the apostle here denies: neither *are they all children;* as in the former verse, he explains in what sense they were Israelites, which he had mentioned among their high characters and privileges, as descending from Jacob, and in what sense they were not; so in this he shews in what manner the *adoption* belonged to them, and it did not: being Abraham's seed, they were his natural children, and the children of God by national adoption; but they were not all the spiritual children of Abraham, nor the children of God by the special grace of adoption; these characters only belonged to some of them, and which are equally true of Gentile believers; who being of the same faith with Abraham, are his children, his seed, and also the children of God: natural descent from Abraham avails nothing in this case, as is clear from the instance of Ishmael and Isaac. Ishmael was the natural seed of Abraham, as well as Isaac; but he was not a son of Abraham in a spiritual sense, nor a child of God; he was not a child of promise, this was peculiar to Isaac: *but in Isaac shall thy seed be called:* see Gen. xxi. 12. The meaning of which is, either that the progeny of Abraham in the line of Isaac should only be called, accounted, and esteemed, in an eminent sense, the seed of Abraham, and not his posterity in the line of Ishmael: agreeably to which the Jews say[c], that "Ishmael is not בכלל "זרעו של אברהם, *in the general account of the seed of* "*Abraham;* for it is said, *in Isaac shall thy seed be* "*called;* nor is Esau in the general account of the "seed of Isaac; hence, says R. Joden bar Shalom, in "Isaac, that is, in part of Isaac." So another[d] of their writers, on mentioning this passage, observes, "that it is said *in Isaac,* ולא כל יצחק, but *not all* "*Isaac;*" or all that sprung from him. Or this has respect to the most eminent and famous seed of Abraham, the Messiah, in whom all nations of the earth were to be blessed; who was to spring from him by Isaac, in the line of Jacob; and may likewise have a personal respect to Isaac himself, the son of the promise, a child of Abraham in a spiritual sense, when Ishmael was not; and to whom belonged the spiritual promises and blessings, and who was to be, and was effectually called by the grace of God; and may include also his whole seed and posterity, who, both natural and spiritual, were children of the typical promise, the land of Canaan, and the enjoyment of temporal good things; and the latter also children of the antitypical promise, or of those spiritual and eternal things, which God has promised to Abraham's spiritual seed, whether among Jews or Gentiles; and which always have their effect, and had, even when, and though Abraham's natural seed had a *lo ammi* written upon them.

Ver. 8. *That is, they which are the children of the flesh,* &c.] This is an explanation of the foregoing verse, and shews, that by *the seed of* Abraham are meant, the natural seed of Abraham, who are born after the flesh, or descend from him by carnal generation: *these are not the children of God:* that is, not all of them, nor any of them, on account of their being children of the flesh, or Abraham's natural seed; for adoption does not come this way; men do not commence children of God by their fleshly descent; they are not *born of blood,* but of God, who are the sons of God: *but the children of the promise are counted for the seed:* בני ברית, *children of the covenant,* is a common phrase with the Jews; who reckoned themselves as such, because they were the seed of Abraham: thus in their prayers they say[e] to God, "we are thy people, "בני בריתך, *the children of thy covenant,* the chil-"dren of Abraham thy friend." And so they were the children of the covenant, or promise, which God made with Abraham and his natural seed, respecting the land of Canaan, and their enjoyment of temporal good things in it; but they were not all of them the children of the promise, which God made to Abraham and his spiritual seed, whether Jews or Gentiles, respecting spiritual and eternal things; to whom alone the promises of God, being their God in a spiritual sense, of spiritual and eternal salvation by Christ, and of the grace of the spirit of God, and of eternal life belong: and who are the seed which were promised to Abraham by God, saying, *thou shalt be a father of many nations:* for which reasons, because these spiritual promises belong to them, and because they themselves were promised to Abraham, as his children, therefore they are called *children of the promise:* or rather, because as Isaac was a child of promise, being born after the spirit, by virtue of the promise of God, through his divine power and goodness, when there were no ground or foundation in nature, for Abraham and Sarah to hope for a son; so these are called *children of promise,* because they are born again, not through the power of nature, and strength of their own free will; they are not born of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God, according to the will of God and his abundant mercy, by the word of truth, through his power, spirit, and grace; and by faith receive the promises made unto them; and are counted and reckoned as *Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise,* whether they be Jews, or whether they be Gentiles: and since now the promises of God are all made good to these persons, the word of God is not without effect, or is not made void, by the casting off the children of the flesh, or the carnal seed of Abraham, who were not children of the promise in the sense here given.

Ver. 9. *For this is the word of promise,* &c.] The following passage is the Scripture, which contains the

[c] T. Hieros. Nedarim, fol. 38. 1.
[d] Yom Tob in Misn. Bava Metzia, c. 7. sect. 1.

[e] Seder Tephillot, fol. 3. 2. Ed. Basil. fol. 6. 1. Ed. Amsterd.

promise concerning the birth of Isaac; which was the produce, not of nature, but of divine grace and power; and was typical of the regeneration of God's elect, who *as Isaac was, are the children of promise*, Gal. iv. 28. for as Ishmael was a type of them that are born after the flesh, and are carnal men, so Isaac was a type of those, who are born after the spirit, and are spiritual men: the promise is, *at this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son*: the passage referred to is in Gen. xviii. 10. which there stands thus, *I will certainly return unto thee, according to the time of life, and lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son*: some difference there is between the words as cited by the apostle, and as they stand in the original text; the word *lo*, is omitted by the apostle, nor was there any necessity to repeat it, since it was used only to excite Abraham's faith, attention, and wonder; also the phrase *thy wife*, is neglected, the reason is, because the words in Genesis are an address to Abraham, here the substance of the promise to him is produced; besides it was not only well known in the apostle's time, that Sarah was the wife of Abraham, but that as such she brought forth Isaac, wherefore it was not so very necessary it should be mentioned here; add to this, that it is not repeated in Gen. xviii. 14. which will justify our apostle in the omission of it; but the greater seeming difference is, that what in Genesis is rendered, *according to the time of life*, is by the apostle, *at this time*; some think, that there may be an emendation of the present original text, and suppose a various reading, and that the apostle, instead of חיה, *life*, read הזה, *this*; but there is no occasion for such a supposition, or to make this amendment: for the phrase *the time of life*, signifies the present time, the *nunc stans*; so R. Levi ben Gersom[f], understands this phrase, *according to the time of life*, כעת הזאת שהיא קיימת ועמדת עתה, *according to this time which is now standing and abiding*; and adds, rightly is this said, because neither time past nor to come are to be found, only the present time, the *nunc stans*; and afterwards more than once explains it, of this present time, the next year: and so both R. Solomon Jarchi, and R. Aben Ezra[g], expound it, כעת הזאת, *according to this time*, the year following; that is, exactly according to this present time next year, or this time twelvemonth; besides, in Gen. xvii. 21. 'tis said, *at this set time*, and in ch. xviii. 14. *at the appointed time*; all which support the apostle in his version.

Ver. 10. *And not only this*, &c.] This instance of Ishmael and Isaac, is not the only one, proving that Abraham's natural seed, the children of the flesh, are not all children, the children of God: *but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac, it was said unto her*, the next verse being in a *parenthesis, the elder shall serve the younger*. The apostle was aware, that the Jews would be ready to say, that the instance of Ishmael and Isaac was not a pertinent one; since Ishmael was not born of Sarah, the lawful wife of Abraham, but of a bond-woman, which was the reason of his rejection, when Isaac was the son of promise, by the lawful wife, and that they were children of Abraham in the line of Isaac, and so children of the promise, as he was: wherefore he proceeds to mention the case of Jacob and Esau, which was not liable to any such exception; seeing they not only had the same father, but the same mother, Isaac's lawful wife; they were conceived by Rebecca at once, were in the same womb together, were twins, and if any had the preference and advantage, Esau had it, being born first; and yet a difference was made between these two by God himself, and which was notified by him to the mother of them, before either were born.

Ver. 11. *For the children being not yet born*, &c.] So says[h] the Chaldee paraphrast, "the prophet said "unto them, was it not said of Jacob, עד דלא אתיליד, "*when he was not yet born*, that he should be greater "than his brother?" the Syriac version supplies, *his children*, that is, Isaac's; and the Arabic version, *his two children*. This shews, that the apostle designs not the posterity, but the very persons of Jacob and Esau; since as he speaks of their conception in the verse preceding, so of their birth in this: and though in the words of God to Rebecca, and which are urged in favour of the other sense, it is said, *two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels, and the one people shall be stronger than the other people*: yet this primarily respects the persons of Jacob and Esau, as the roots of their respective offspring; and only secondarily their posterity, as branches that should sprout from them; it properly regards their persons, and only in an improper, figurative, and metonymical sense, their seed; for in no other sense could two nations, or two manner of people be in Rebecca's womb, than as there were two persons there, who would be the authors of two nations and people; and whatever may be said for their respective posterity, taking their rise from one common father Isaac, or for their being chosen or rejected as nations, before they were in being as such, yet it can't be said with any propriety, that *Rebecca conceived* their several offspring *by one, even by our father Isaac*: which sense well agrees with the scope of the apostle, which is to prove, that all were not Israel which were of Israel, and that all Abraham's natural seed were not the children of God; which he could not better exemplify, than in the persons of Jacob and Esau; for to have instanced in the posterity of Esau, would have been foreign to his purpose, and not accord with the continuation of his discourse in the following verses, which entirely proceeds upon the subject of personal election and rejection, and with the scriptural account of the personal characters of Jacob and Esau; and from hence, as from many other passages, it may be concluded, that predestination, whether to life or death, is a personal thing, concerns particular persons, and not nations, or collective bodies of men: *neither having done any good or evil*: Jacob and Esau were under all considerations upon an equal foot, were just in the same situation and condition, when the one was loved and the other hated; or in other words, when the one was chosen, and the other rejected; they were neither of them as yet born, and had they been born,

[f] Perush in Gen. fol. 26. 4. & 27. 2, 3. Vid. in 2 Reg. iv. 16.
[g] In Gen. xviii. 10.

[h] Targum in Hos. xii. 3.

their birth and parentage could have been no reason why one was chose and the other not, because in both the same; nor had the one performed a good action, or the other an evil one; so that Jacob was not loved for his good works, nor Esau hated for his evil ones: which confirms the truth of this doctrine, that the objects of predestination, whether to life or death, are alike, are in the same situation and condition: whether they are considered in the corrupt mass, or as fallen, they are all equally such, so that there could not be any reason in them, why some should be chosen and others left: or whether in the pure mass, antecedent to the fall, and without any consideration of it, which is clearly signified in this passage, there could be nothing in the one, which was not in the other, that could be the cause of such a difference made: so that it follows, that works neither good nor evil are the causes moving God to predestinate, whether to life or death; good works are not the cause of election to eternal life, for not only this act of distinguishing grace, passed before any were done, but also these are fruits, effects, and consequence of it, and so cannot be the causes thereof; God does not proceed in other branches of salvation, as in vocation, justification, *&c.* according to them, and therefore it can't be thought he should proceed upon this foot in the first step to it; and which is ascribed to his free grace, in opposition to works. Evil works are not the cause of the decree of rejection, for this also being as early as the decree of election, as it must unavoidably be, was before any evil works were done; sin is not the cause of God's decree, but of the thing decreed, eternal death; otherwise all the individuals in the world being equally in sin, must have been rejected: it remains then, that not any works of men, good or bad, are the cause of predestination in either of its branches, but the sovereign will and secret counsel of God: *that the purpose of God according to election might stand;* the decree of God, which is entirely free, and depends upon his own will and choice, stands firm and immutable, and is not to be disannulled by earth or hell, for it stands not on the precarious foot of works: *not of works;* did it, it would not stand sure, for nothing is more variable and uncertain, than the actions of men: *but of him that calleth:* who is the unchangeable Jehovah; it stands upon his invariable will and immutable grace, whose *gifts and calling are without repentance.*

Ver. 12. *It was said unto her, &c.*] To Rebecca, Gen. xxv. 23. *the elder shall serve the younger*, or *the greater shall serve the lesser*, an Hebrew way of speaking; so Japhet is called הגדול, *the great*, or, as we render it, *the elder*, Gen. x. 21. and the evil imagination is said[1] to be גדול, *greater*, that is, elder than the good, thirteen years; see the note on Luke xxii. 26. The sense is, Esau shall be a servant to Jacob; which is to be understood, not of temporal servitude; for in this sense he never was a servant to him: so far from it, that as soon as Jacob had got the birth-right and blessing, he was obliged to flee from the face and fury of Esau; and upon his return after many years, he sent messengers to Esau in a very submissive manner, charging them after this manner, *thus shall ye shall say to my lord Esau, thy servant Jacob saith thus, &c.* and when he found that his brother was coming to meet him, which threw him into a panic fear, lest he should *smite* him, *and the mother with the children*, he prepares presents for him; and when he came to him, bowed himself seven times, and his wives and children bowed likewise; and the language in which he addressed his brother Esau, all the while they were together, was that of *my lord:* now if this oracle was to be understood of outward temporal servitude, it is strange it should have no appearance, nor any shadow of an accomplishment in the persons of Jacob and Esau, supposing it was to have one in their posterity; and indeed the completion of it, in this sense, is not very evident in their offspring. It is certain, there was a long train of dukes and kings in Esau's family, before there was any king in Israel; the posterity of Esau were in lordly grandeur and splendour, when the children of Israel were grievously oppressed with hard bondage in Egypt. The single instance usually referred to, when the Edomites became tributaries to David, was near a thousand years after the giving out of this oracle; and this shew of servitude did not last long, for in Joram's time they revolted, and so continued; and it is evident, that at the time of the Babylonish captivity, the children of Edom were prosperous and triumphant, and said concerning Jerusalem, *Raze it, raze it, even to the foundation thereof:* this servitude therefore is to be understood in a spiritual sense, of Esau's exclusion from the favour of God, and blessings of grace, signified by his being rejected from inheriting the blessing, which was given to Jacob; and it appeared that he was not a son, but a servant, by his departure, and pitching his dwelling elsewhere; which shewed he had no interest in spiritual adoption, no right to the covenant of grace, nor was he an heir of heaven, all which were peculiar to Jacob: Esau was a servant of sin, under the dominion of it, and in bondage to it; whilst Jacob was the Lord's freeman, and, as a prince, had power with God and with men, and prevailed. Esau was serviceable to Jacob, both in things temporal and spiritual; as reprobates are to the elect, for all things are for their sakes, and work together for their good; Jacob's being obliged to flee from his brother, was for his good; by this means he got him a suitable wife, and large substance: his brother's meeting him on his return, which gave him so much pain and uneasiness, issued in his spiritual good; this sent him to the throne of grace, to humble himself before God, acknowledge his mercies, and his dependence on him, to implore his help, and plead his promises; and thus the oracle was verified in the persons of Jacob and Esau.

Ver. 13. *As it is written, &c.*] In Mal. i. 2, 3. *Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.* These words are explanative of the former; they are of like import, and the one interpret the other; and shew, that the former are to be understood in a spiritual, and not in a temporal sense, and of the persons, and not the posterity of Jacob and Esau; for though Malachi prophesied long after Jacob and Esau were personally dead, yet the Lord in that prophecy manifestly directs the murmuring Jews to the personal regard he had had

[1] Midrash Kohelet, fol. 80. 1.

to Jacob and Esau, and which had continued in numberless instances to their respective posterities, in order to stop their mouths, and reprove their ingratitude: and though he speaks of the nation of the Edomites, and to the posterity of Israel, yet it is evident, that he has a respect to the persons of Jacob and Esau, from whence they sprung, when he says, *was not Esau Jacob's brother?* now though an Edomite may be said to be brother to an Israelite, yet Esau is never said, nor can he with any propriety be said to be the brother of Jacob's posterity: it remains, that these words regard their persons, and express the true spring and source of the choice of the one, and the rejection of the other; and which holds true of all the instances of either kind: everlasting and unchangeable love is the true cause and spring of the choice of particular persons to eternal salvation; and hatred is the cause of rejection, by which is meant not positive hatred, which can only have for its object sin and sinners, or persons so considered; but negative hatred, which is God's will, not to give eternal life to some persons; and shews itself by a neglect of them, taking no notice of them, passing them by, when he chose others; so the word *hate* is used for neglect, taking no notice, where positive hatred can't be thought to take place, in Luke xiv. 26.

Ver. 14. *What shall we say then?* &c.] A form of expression the apostle frequently uses, when he is about to introduce an objection, as is what follows: *is there unrighteousness with God?* This is not an objection of his own, but of an adversary, which he takes up and returns an answer to; and which itself greatly serves to settle and confirm the true sense and meaning of the apostle in this place; as that it could not be, that election and rejection of men should proceed according to their merits; or that God chooses some for their good works, and rejects others for their wicked works, because no man could ever pretend to charge God with unrighteousness on this account; nor could it be that God chose and rejected men, upon a foresight of their good and evil works, for this also would not be liable to such an objection; nor that the Jews, having made the law of none effect by their traditions, despised the Gospel, crucified Christ, and persecuted his disciples, are therefore cast off, and the Gentiles, being obedient both in word and deed, are received into favour, for this likewise would not be chargeable with unrighteousness by men; but that two persons, as Jacob and Esau, and the same may be said of all mankind, being upon an equal foot, not being yet born, nor having done either good or evil, an inequality, a difference is made between them, by God himself; the one is chose, the other passed by: now in this is some shew, some pretence at least, for such an objection; nor is it any wonder to meet with it from the carnal reason of men; wherefore we may be sure that the latter, and not either of the former, is the true sense of the apostle; since only this, and not either of them, is liable to such an exception: let us attend to the apostle's answer, which is *first* in his usual manner, by way of detestation and abhorrence, *God forbid;* God is not unrighteous in his nature; nor in any of his ways and works; nor in this, in choosing some and rejecting others. There's no unrighteousness with God in that part of predestination, commonly called election; for this is neither an act of justice, nor injustice; not of justice, but of grace and mercy; of undue and undeserved grace and mercy, of mere sovereign grace and mercy; and is what God was not obliged to do; wherefore to choose some and not others, is no act of injustice; for injustice is a violation of justice, which has no place in this affair: if it is an act of injustice, it must be either to them that are chosen, or to them that are not; not to them that are chosen, to them it is an act of favour and good will, they are chosen to grace and glory, to holiness here, and happiness hereafter; not to them that are passed by, because they had no right nor claim to the grace and glory, which by this act are denied them, and therefore no injustice is done them. Every prince may choose his own ministers and favourites, and who he will have of his privy council, without doing any injustice to those he takes no notice of; every man may choose his own company, who he will converse with, without doing any wrong to such he does not think fit to admit to an intimacy with him; and yet men are not willing to allow the Most High that liberty, which every man daily takes, and may lawfully make use of: nor is there any unrighteousness with God in the other branch of predestination, commonly called reprobation, which is either negative or positive; negative reprobation is the act of preterition, or God's passing by, leaving, taking no notice of some, while he chose others: now the objects of this act are to be considered either in the pure, or in the corrupt mass; if in the pure mass, *i. e.* of creatureship, which seems to be the apostle's meaning, as being not yet created, made, or born, and having done neither good nor evil; no injustice is done by this act, for as it found them, it left them; it put nothing into them, no evil in them, nor appointed them to any, of any kind; man after, and notwithstanding this act, came into the world an upright creature, and became sinful, not by virtue of this act, but by their own inventions: or if considered as in the corrupt mass, as fallen creatures, sunk into sin and misery, which is the case of all mankind; since God was not obliged to save any of the sinful race of men, whose destruction was of themselves, it could be no injustice to pass by some of them in this condition, when he chose others; for if it would have been no injustice to have condemned all, as he did the angels that sinned, whom he spared not, it can be no act of injustice in him, to leave some of them in that condition, which sin had brought them into, whilst he has mercy on others; unless to have mercy on any, can be thought to be an act of injustice: what unrighteousness can there be in this procedure, any more than in drowning the world of the ungodly, whilst Noah and his family were saved in the ark? or in raining showers of fire and brimstone on Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities of the plain, whilst Lot, his wife, and two daughters, were delivered from the same? Positive reprobation is the decree, or appointment to damnation: now as God damns no man but for sin, so he has decreed to damn no man but for sin; and if it is no unrighteousness in him to damn men for sin, as to be sure it is not, so it can be no unrighteousness in him to decree to damn any for it: upon the whole it appears, that whatever shew,

upon first sight, there may be for a charge of unrighteousness against such a procedure of the Divine Being, there's no real foundation for it. The objection is to be treated with abhorrence and indignation.

Ver. 15. *For he saith to Moses*, &c.] That is, God said to Moses. The apostle goes on to answer to the above objections, by producing some testimonies out of the writings of Moses, in favour of both branches of predestination; shewing, that the doctrine he had advanced, was no other than what God himself had delivered to Moses, whose name and writings were in great esteem with the Jews, whereby the apostle might hope to give full satisfaction in this point. The first passage he cites, is in Exod. xxxiii. 19. *And will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy.* This is produced, in favour of special, particular, and personal election, and to clear it from any charge of unrighteousness; and by it it appears, that God bestows his grace and mercy in time, on such persons he has willed and determined from all eternity to bestow it; this is clear from hence, for since all this is dependent on his will, it must be as this was his will from eternity, seeing no new will can possibly arise in God, God wills nothing in time, but what he willed before time; that this grace and mercy are shewn only to some persons, and that the only reason of this is his sovereign will and pleasure, and not the works and merits of men; wherefore since this grace and mercy rise out of his own free good will and pleasure, and are by no means the creature's due, it most clearly follows, that God in determining to bestow his grace and mercy, and in the actual doing of it, whilst he determines to deny it, and does deny it to others, cannot possibly be chargeable with any unrighteousness.

Ver. 16. *So then it is not of him that willeth*, &c.] This is not a consequence drawn by an adversary, shewing that if this be the case, it signifies nothing for men to will or do, they may even sit still and do nothing, but depend on the mercy of God; but this is a conclusion of the apostle's from the above-cited testimony, inferring from thence, that election, which is what he is discoursing of, is *not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth:* that is, is not owing to the will or works of men, to the desires, inclinations, and affections of their minds, or to the actions of their lives; these are not the motives, conditions, or causes of this act: *but of God that sheweth mercy:* in a free sovereign way and manner, which he is not obliged to by any thing the creature wills or works; he is at full liberty, notwithstanding whatever they will or do, to give his grace and mercy, when, where, and to whom he pleases; and therefore to give it to some, and deny it to others, can never be accounted an act of injustice, since he is not bound to give it to any. Some make the *it* to be the blessing of Isaac, which was not of the will of any of the parties concerned; not of Isaac who willed it to Esau; nor of Esau who willed it to himself, but had it not; nor of the will of the persons who had their desires, not of the will of Rebecca, who was desirous of it for her son Jacob, nor of the will of Jacob, who desired it for himself, though he had it; nor of either of them that ran, not of Esau, who made haste to hunt for, and prepare venison for his father, nor of Jacob, who ran to the flock, for two kids of the goats; but of God that shewed mercy to him, who, according to his sovereign will and pleasure, had signified before to Rebecca, that *the elder should serve the younger:* as the apostle had mentioned this so lately, it might still be in his thoughts, and he may allude to it; but election being what he is discoursing of in the context, that is the *it* here designed; and what is true of that, is true of salvation in all its parts, and therefore some understand it in the large sense of salvation; though by others so qualified and limited, as to spoil the glory of the text: some saying that the sense is, it is not of him that willeth and runneth wrong, but of the grace and mercy of God; but as no man would ever assert, that salvation is of him that wills and runs wrong, so the apostle had no occasion to deny it: others say, that it is not only of him that wills, and only of him that runs, but also of God that sheweth mercy; making man's will and works joint causes with the mercy of God in man's salvation; and besides, as Austin [k] long ago observes, according to this sense, the words might as well be read, it is not only of God that sheweth mercy, but of him that willeth, and of him that runneth, which no Christian would dare to say: the true sense is, that as election, which is the leading step to salvation, is not owing at all to the will of men, but to the good pleasure and will of God; and not at all to the works of men, that being done before them, and they being the fruits and effects of that, but to the free love, grace, and good will of God; so salvation in all its parts and branches, as redemption, justification, regeneration, vocation, and conversion, faith, repentance, hope, love, &c. and eternal life, is not to be ascribed at all to the will of men, nor at all to the works of men, but entirely and alone to the love, grace, and mercy of God through Christ.

Ver. 17. *For the Scripture saith unto Pharaoh*, &c.] אמר קרא, *The Scripture saith*, is a Talmudic [l] way of speaking, used when any point is proved from Scripture; and is of the same signification with אמר רחמנא, *the merciful God says*; and so the sense of it here is, God said to Pharaoh; the testimony here cited, stands in Exod. ix. 16. where it is read thus, *for this cause have I raised thee up*, העמדתיך, *or made thee stand, for to shew in thee my power, and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth:* and is produced by the apostle in proof of the other branch of predestination, called reprobation, and to vindicate it from the charge of unrighteousness: in which may be observed, that the act of raising up of Pharaoh is God's act, *I raised thee up*; which may be understood in every sense that is put upon that phrase, unless that which some Jewish [m] writers have annexed to it, namely, that God raised Pharaoh from the dead; otherwise, I say, all the rest may well enough be thought to be comprised in it; as that God ordained and appointed him from eternity, by certain means to this end; that he made him to exist in time, or brought him into being; that he raised him

[k] Enchiridion, c. 32.

[l] T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 82. 2. & 84. 1. Bava Metzia, fol. 47. 1. Zebachim, fol. 4. 1, 2. & passim.

[m] Pirke Eliezer, c. 42.

to the throne, promoted him to that high honour and dignity; that he preserved him, and did not cut him off as yet; that he strengthened and hardened his heart, irritated, provoked, and stirred him up against his people Israel; and suffered him to go all the lengths he did, in his obstinacy and rebellion: all which was done, *for to shew in him his power*; his superior power to him, his almighty power in destroying him and his host in the Red sea, when the Israelites were saved: and the ultimate end which God had in view in this was, *that his name* might *be declared throughout all the earth*; that he himself might be glorified, and that the glory of his perfections, particularly of his wisdom, power, and justice, might be celebrated throughout the world. The sum of it is, that this man was raised up by God in every sense, for God to shew his power in his destruction, that he might be glorified; from whence the apostle deduces the following conclusion.

Ver. 18. *Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will,* &c.] These are the express words of the former testimony: it follows, *and whom he will he hardeneth*; which is the just and natural consequence of what is contained in the latter; for if God could, or he did, without any injustice, raise up Pharaoh, and harden his heart against him and his people, that he might rise up against him and destroy him by his power for his own glory, then he may harden any other person, and even whom he will: now this hardening of men's hearts may be understood in perfect agreement with the justice and holiness of God: men first harden their own hearts by sinning, as Pharaoh did; what God does, is by leaving them to the hardness of their hearts, denying them that grace which only can soften them, and which he is not obliged to give, and therefore does them no injustice in withholding it from them; by sending them both mercies and judgments, which through the corruption of their hearts, are the means of the greater hardening of them; so judgments in the case of Pharaoh, and mercies in the case of others; see Isa. vi. 10. Rom. xi. 8, 9, 10. by delivering them up into the hands of Satan, and to their own lusts, which they themselves approve of; and by giving them up to a judicial blindness and hardness of heart, as a just punishment for their impieties.

Ver. 19. *Thou wilt say then unto me,* &c.] That is, thou wilt object to me; for this is another objection of the adversary, against the doctrine the apostle was advancing: and 'tis an objection of a mere natural man, of one given up to a reprobate mind, of an insolent hardened sinner; it discovers the enmity of the carnal mind to God: it is one of the high things that exalts itself against the knowledge of him; 'tis with a witness a stretching out of the hand against God, and strengthening a man's self against the Almighty; 'tis a running upon him, even upon the thick bosses of his bucklers; it carries in it the marks of ill nature, surliness, and rudeness, to the last degree: *why doth he yet find fault?* The objector does not think fit to name the name of *God*, or *the Lord*, but calls him *he*; and a considerable emphasis lies upon the word *yet*: what as if he should say, is he not content with the injustice he has already exercised, in passing by some, when he chose others; in leaving them to themselves, and hardening their hearts against him, and to go on in their own ways, which must unavoidably end in destruction; but after all this, is angry with them, finds fault with them, blames, accuses, and condemns them, for that which they can't help; nay, for that which he himself wills? this is downright cruelty and tyranny. The objector seems to have a particular regard to the case of Pharaoh, the apostle had instanced in, when after God had declared that he had raised him up for this very purpose, to make known his power, and shew forth his glory in all the world, still finds fault with him and says, *as yet exaltest thou thyself against my people, that thou wilt not let them go?* and yet he himself had hardened his heart, and continued to harden his heart, that he might not let them go as yet; and when he had let them go, hardened his heart again to pursue after them, when he drowned him and his host in the Red sea; all which in this objection, is represented as unparalleled cruelty and unmercifulness; though it is not restrained to this particular case, but is designed to be applied to all other hardened persons; and to expose the unreasonableness of the divine proceedings, in hardening men at his pleasure; and then blaming them for acting as hardened ones, when he himself has made them so, and wills they should act in this manner: *for who hath resisted his will?* This is said in support of the former, and means not God's will of command, which is always resisted more or less, by wicked men and devils; but his will of purpose, his counsels and decrees, which stand firm and sure, and can never be resisted, so as to be frustrated and made void. This the objector takes up, and improves against God; that since he hardens whom he will, and there's no resisting his will, the fault then can never lie in them who are hardened, and who act as such, but in God; and therefore it must be unreasonable in him to be angry with, blame, accuse, and condemn persons for being and doing that, which he himself wills them to be and do. Let the disputers of this world, the reasoners of the present age, come and see their own faces, and read the whole strength of their objections, in this wicked man's; and from whence we may be assured, that since the objections are the same, the doctrine must be the same that is objected to: and this we gain however by it, that the doctrines of particular and personal election and reprobation, were the doctrines of the apostle; since against no other, with any face, or under any pretence, could such an objection be formed: next follows the apostle's answer.

Ver. 20. *Nay, but O man, who art thou that repliest against God?* &c.] Or *answerest again to God*: some have been so weak and wicked as to suggest, that the apostle met with an objection he could not answer, or give a fair solution of, and therefore takes the method he does: but when the several things returned in answer by the apostle are considered, it will appear that he has taken the wisest method to silence such an audacious objector, and that he abundantly clears God from the charge of cruelty and unmercifulness. And he answers *first*, by putting the insolent creature in mind of what he was; *nay, but O man, who art thou?* &c. Thou art man, and not God; a creature, and not the Creator; and must not expect that he, thy Creator, will give an account of his matters to thee, or a reason why he does this or the other thing. Thou art but a

man, who in his best estate was vanity, being mutable; thou art a fallen sinful creature, and obnoxious to the wrath and displeasure of God for thy sins, and darest thou to open thy mouth against him? thou art a poor, foolish, and ignorant man, born like a wild ass's colt, without understanding, and wilt thou take upon thee to confront, direct, or counsel the Most High, or tell him what is fitting to be done, or not done? *next* the apostle answers, by pointing out his folly and madness, in replying to God. To speak to God in behalf of a man's self at the throne of grace, in the most submissive manner, for any mercy or favour wanted, is an high privilege, and 'tis a wonderful condescension in God to admit of; and when a man, a good man takes upon him to plead with God on the behalf of others, of a wicked people, a sinful nation, he ought to set before him the example and conduct of Abraham, who in a like case acknowledged himself to be but dust and ashes, and more than once entreated, that the Lord would not be angry at his importunity; but for a man to answer again to God, which a servant ought not to do to his master, to litigate a point with God, to dispute a matter with him, is the highest instance of arrogance and impudence: *woe unto him that striveth with his Maker, let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth*: with their equals, with men like themselves, but let no man dare to *contend with* God; if he should, *he cannot answer him one of a thousand*; for *he is wise in heart*, in forming all his counsels, purposes, and decrees; *and mighty in strength*, to execute them: *who hath hardened himself against him and hath prospered?* Another way the apostle takes in answering the objection is, by shewing the absurdity of a creature's wrangling with God about his make, and the circumstances in which he is made: *shall the thing formed, say unto him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus?* reference is had to Isa. xlv. 9, 10. Now as it would be a most absurd thing for the clay, was it capable of speaking, to say to the fashioner of it, why dost thou put me into such or such a shape and form? or for any piece of workmanship to say to the maker of it, he has no hands, no head, no judgment and skill; or for a child to say to its parents, what begettest thou, or what hast thou brought forth? so absurd and unreasonable is it, for any to say to God, why hast thou appointed me to such and such ends and purposes, and has brought me into being in such a manner, and under such circumstances? There's a story in the Talmud [a], which may be pertinently produced here; "it happened to R. Eleazar ben Simeon, "of Migdal Gedur, that he went from his master's "house, and he was riding on an ass, and travelling "by the sea-side, and as he rejoiced exceedingly, "and his heart was lifted up because he had learnt "much of the law, there was joined to him a certain "man that was very much deformed, and says to him, "peace be upon thee Rabbi; but he did not return "the salutation to him, but says to him *Raca*, how "deformed is that man! perhaps all thy townsmen "are as deformed as thee; he replied to him, I don't "know, but go and say, לאומן שעשאני, *to the workman* "*that made me*, how ugly is this vessel thou hast "made, when he knew in himself that he has sinned; "upon this the Rabbi dismounted his ass, and fell "down before him, and said unto him, I entreat of "thee forgive me; he said unto him, I can't forgive "thee, till thou goest *to the workman that made me*, "and say, how ugly is this vessel which thou hast "made."

Ver. 21. *Hath not the potter power over the clay, &c.*] By the power the potter has over the clay, to shape it in what form he pleases, and out of it to make what vessels he pleases, and for what purposes he thinks fit, which will be most to his own advantage, the apostle expresses the sovereign and unlimited power which God has over his creatures; the passages referred to, are Isa. lxiv. 8. Jer. xviii. 1—6. in which God is represented as the potter, and men as clay in his hands; now if the potter has such power over the clay which he did not make, only has made a purchase of, or has it in his possession, much more has God a power, who has created the clay, to appoint out of it persons to different uses and purposes, for his own glory, as he sees fit; even *of the same lump, to make one vessel to honour, and another to dishonour.* The apostle seems to design hereby, to point out to us the object of predestination to be man, as yet not made, but as lying in the mere mass of creatureship, signified by the unformed clay, before put into any shape; and is an allusion to the first creation of man, out of the clay, or dust of the earth; for such a consideration of man best agrees with the clay, lump, or mass, not yet formed, than as already made, and much less as fallen and corrupted: for if men, in predestination, were considered in the corrupt mass, or as fallen creatures, they could not be so well said to be made out of it, both to honour and dishonour; but rather since they were all dishonourable, that some were left in that dishonour, and others removed from it unto honour: besides, if this is not the case, God must create man without an end, which is contrary to the principle of reason and wisdom; the end is the cause, for which a thing is what it is; and it is a known rule, that what is first in intention, is last in execution, and *vice versa*; the end is first fixed, and then the means; for God to create man, and then to fix the end of his creation, is to do what no wise potter would do, first make his pots, and then think of the end of making them, and the use they are to be put unto. To make one vessel to honour, and another to dishonour, is for God to appoint creatures, which are to be made out of the same mass and lump, for his own glory; which end, his own glory, he determines to bring about by different means, as these following: with respect to the vessels of honour, whom he appoints for his glory, he determines to create them; to suffer them to fall into sin, whereby they become polluted and guilty; to raise and recover them, by the obedience, sufferings, and death of his son; to regenerate, renew, and sanctify them, by his spirit and grace, and to bring them to eternal happiness; and hereby compass the aforesaid end, his own glory, the glorifying of his grace and mercy, in a way consistent with justice and holiness: with respect to the vessels of dishonour, whom

[a] T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 20. 2. Massechet Derech Eretz, c. 4. fol. 19. 1.

he also appoints for the glorifying of himself, he determines to create them out of the same lump; to suffer them to fall into sin; to leave them in their sins, in the pollution and guilt of them, and to condemn them for them; and hereby gain his ultimate end, his own glory, glorifying the perfections of his power, justice, and holiness, without the least blemish to his goodness and mercy: now if a potter has power, for his own advantage and secular interest, to make out of the same clay what vessels he pleases; much more has God a power, out of the same mass and lump of creatureship, to appoint creatures he determines to make to his own glory; which he brings about by different methods, consistent with the perfections of his nature.

Ver. 22. *What if God, willing to shew his wrath,* &c.] The apostle proceeds to clear God from any charge of cruelty and unmercifulness, by observing his conduct in time, both towards those he passes by, and towards those he chooses; for in this and the following verse, nothing is said relating to any act of God before time, every thing of that kind being considered already. In this verse, the apostle considers the conduct of God towards the vessels of dishonour; and let it be observed, that these are called *vessels of wrath fitted for destruction;* they are said to be *vessels*, and so no longer considered in the clay, in the mass and heap of creatureship, but as creatures formed and made, and brought into being; and so to be used as instruments in God's hands, to subserve his ends and purposes, and therefore called *vessels;* and not only so, but *vessels of wrath*, fallen sinful creatures, and so deserving of the wrath of God, and objects of his vindictive justice, in whom he may righteously display his wrath and vengeance: hence they may be so called, being as vessels filled with his wrath; as such who are the instruments and executioners of his wrath are called, in Isa. xiii. 5. כלי זעמו, *vessels of his wrath;* and in Jer. l. 25. where the Septuagint use the same phrase as here: and they are moreover said to be *fitted for destruction*, as Hamon is said to be by the Jews [a]; whom they affirm to be the same with Memucan? and ask why is his name called Memucan? and answer, שמוכן לפורענות, *because he was fitted for punishment:* so these are said to be *fitted for destruction*, that is, eternal damnation; not by God, for this does not respect God's act of ordination to punishment; but by Satan, the god of this world, that blinds them, who works effectually in them, and leads them captive at his will; and by themselves, by their own wickedness, hardness of heart, and impenitence, do they treasure up to themselves wrath, against the day of wrath, so that their destruction is of themselves: a phrase somewhat like this is used in Psal. xxxi. 12. where the Psalmist, under some dismal apprehensions of himself, says, that he was like כלי אבד, *a perishing vessel*, or *a vessel of perdition:* the Septuagint render it, σκευος απολωλος, *a lost vessel*. Now what is the method of the divine conduct towards such persons? he *endures* them *with much long-suffering;* as he did the old world, before he destroyed it; and as he did Pharaoh, before he cut him off: God not only supports such persons in their beings, amidst all their impieties and iniquities, but follows and fills them with his providential goodness, insomuch that many of them have more than heart can wish; nay, to many he affords the outward means of grace, which they slight and despise; externally calls them, but they refuse, loving darkness rather than light, and therefore are inexcusable: now if after all this patience, indulgence, and forbearance, when he could in justice have sent them to hell long ago, he *is willing to shew his wrath;* his displicency at sin and sinners, his vindictive justice, his righteous vengeance: *and to make his power known;* what it is he can do, by the utter destruction and damnation of such persons; what man in his senses can ever find fault with such a procedure, or charge it with tyranny, cruelty, and unmercifulness?

Ver. 23. *And that he might make known the riches of his glory,* &c.] That is, his glorious riches, the perfections of his nature, his love, grace, and mercy, his wisdom, power, faithfulness, justice, and holiness; all which are most evidently displayed in the salvation of his people, here called *vessels of mercy, which he hath afore prepared unto glory.* They are said to be *vessels*, and so considered as creatures, made and brought into being; *vessels of mercy*, and so fallen creatures, and by sin become miserable, for only such are objects of mercy: they are not called so, because deserving of mercy more than others, they are in no wise better than others, and are by nature children of wrath, even as others; but because God of his infinite goodness fills them with his mercy, displays it in them, in the redemption of them by his son, in the regeneration of them by his spirit, and in their eternal salvation: and these are by him *afore prepared unto glory;* to everlasting happiness, which he has chosen them to before time, and calls them to in time; to this glory he does not take them, until he has prepared them for it; which act of preparation does not regard the eternal predestination of them to eternal life, but an act of his grace towards them in time; and which lies in putting upon them the righteousness of his son, and in putting his grace in them; or in other words, in justifying them by the imputation and application of the righteousness of his son unto them, and by the regeneration, renovation, and sanctification of their hearts, by his spirit. Now what if God willing to make known his glorious perfections, by displaying his mercy to such sinners, and by preparing them for heaven in a way consistent with his holiness and justice, what can any man that has the exercise of his reason object to this? The whole of his conduct is free from blame and censure; the vessels of wrath he shews his wrath upon, are such as fit themselves for destruction, and whom he endures with much long-suffering and patience, and therefore he cannot be chargeable with cruelty; the vessels of mercy he brings to glory, none of them are taken thither, until they are prepared for it, in a way of righteousness and holiness, and therefore he can't be charged with acting contrary to the perfections of his nature.

Ver. 24. *Even us whom he hath called,* &c.] From election the apostle proceeds to vocation, the fruit and evidence of it, taking the same method he did in ch. viii. 30. with a view to treat of the call of the Gentiles,

[a] T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 12. 2.

of which he afterwards gives proof from prophecy; whence it appears to be according to divine predestination, upon which prophecy is founded; for God foretels that such a thing will be, because he has fore-ordained it shall be. These words are explanative of the former, and shew who the vessels of mercy are; they are such whom God calls by his grace. Election may be known by vocation, as the cause by its effect, and that without an extraordinary revelation. This may as well be known, as man's adoption, justification, and the forgiveness of his sins; for as all the chosen are, and shall be called in time, so all that are truly called by the grace of God, are manifestly, and to a demonstration, the chosen vessels of salvation: if a man is satisfied of his calling, he ought to be equally so of his election, the one being demonstrable by the other; and for such an one to doubt of it, is his sin and crime. Moreover, the above phrase, *afore prepared for glory*, is here further explained; to be afore prepared for glory, is no other than to be called, sanctified, and justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of our God; for this is the saints' preparation for glory, before they come to it; and hereby the means are expressed, even sanctification of the spirit, and belief of the truth, through which God appoints his people unto salvation: now this calling is to be understood, not of a call to any office, as of Aaron to the priesthood, of Saul to the kingdom, of the disciples of Christ to apostleship, or of ministers to the work of the ministry; for persons may be called to the highest office in church and state, as Judas to apostleship, and Pharaoh to the throne of Egypt, and yet have no share in electing grace: nor of a call by the external ministry of the word, which is often slighted, despised, and of none effect; in this sense many are called, who are not chosen: but of a call that is by the powerful, efficacious, and irresistible grace of God; a call that is internal, that reaches the heart, and not the ear only: a special one that is peculiar to God's elect, is by special grace, and is to special blessings, as both grace and glory; it is an high, heavenly, and holy calling, and is without repentance; between which and glorification, as between it and eternal election, there is a close and an inseparable connexion. The objects of this grace follow, *not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles;* not all the Jews, nor all the Gentiles, but some of each; as all are not chosen, all are not redeemed, only some out of every kindred, tongue, nation, and people; so not all, but some only are called by grace: and this is not peculiar to the Jews, it reaches to the Gentiles also; and under the present dispensation, to the far greater number of them.

Ver. 25. *As he also saith in Osee*, &c.] Ch. ii. 23. so *Hosea* is called *Osee*, as here, in the Septuagint in Neh. x. 23. Hos. i. 1, 2. That is, as God says in the prophecy of Hosea, which was given by divine inspiration; and speaks of the calling of the Gentiles, as the spiritual Israel, after God had wrote a *lo-ammi*, and a *loruhamah*, upon the people of the Jews; and shews, that he had appointed some from among the Gentiles, to obtain salvation by Jesus Christ; since he foretels their vocation, long before they were in being; which could have no other foundation than his own eternal sovereign will and pleasure: *I will call them my people, which were not my people*: his people they were before he called them, in some sense; inasmuch as he had chosen them for his people, had promised in covenant they should be, had given them to Christ as his people, and him to be a covenant to them; who, as such, made reconciliation for them, sanctified them by his blood, redeemed and saved them; but then they were not known to be the people of God, neither by themselves, who knew not God, and so could not know themselves to be his people; nor by others, by the Jews, by whom they were called the uncircumcision, sinners of the Gentiles; looking upon the character of the people of God, as only belonging to themselves: God had not as yet laid hold on them as his people, and claimed his right in them, and made known himself to them as their covenant God; he had not avouched them to be his people, nor had they avouched him to be their God; as yet they were not his willing people, nor a holy people, not being formed for himself, by his mighty grace; nor a people near unto him, with respect to worship and fellowship, but afar off from him. His calling them his people, is his acquainting them with their relation to him, which he had taken them in to himself, of his own grace; for so it is in Hos. ii. 23. *And I will say unto them which were not my people, thou art my people:* in effectual vocation, the spirit of God is sent down into the hearts of his people, to witness their relation to him, and to work faith in their souls, to receive the testimony; when they reply and say, *thou art my God*; and so they come to know themselves to be the people of God, of which they were before ignorant; and to be known by others, by being made a willing people, in the day of God's power upon them, willing to be saved by him in his own way, and willing to serve and worship him in his own ordinances, and according to his own appointment; and by being holy and righteous, having the characters, and enjoying the privileges of the people of God: *and her beloved, which was not beloved.* In the text in Hos. ii. 23. it is, *I will have mercy on her that had not obtained mercy;* hence the Vulgate Latin has added this clause to the text, though unsupported by any copy, or other version. The apostle is to be justified in his version, by the Septuagint interpreters, who have rendered the passage in Hosea, *I will love her that was not beloved;* and by the true sense of the word רחם there used, which signifies to love in the most kind, tender, and endearing manner; see Psal. xviii. 1. where the word is used and so rendered. The sense is not, that God's chosen ones among the Gentiles were not the objects of his love before calling; for their very calling is the fruit, effect, and so the evidence of love before. The love of God is from everlasting to everlasting, invariably and unchangeably the same; he had chosen them in his son; he had made a covenant with them in Christ, had put them into his hands, and made them his care and charge; he had sent him to die for them, and obtain'd eternal redemption for them; and all this before he called them, which abundantly proves his love to them: but this love was not manifested to their souls; it had not been shed abroad in their hearts; they had no sensation of it in their breasts; the streams of that river of God had not as yet flowed into their souls; nor

were they partakers of the effects of it in themselves; but being called by grace, they feel, they experience, and enjoy that, and all the happy fruits and effects of it: the loving kindness of God is let down into their hearts in effectual vocation, and with it he draws them to himself, as a fruit and evidence of his everlasting and unchangeable love to them.

Ver. 26. *And it shall come to pass that in the place, &c.*] This is another citation out of Hosea, and is to be seen in ch. i. 10. and the meaning is, that in those countries, as here in Great-Britain, in the very selfsame place, or spot of ground, *where it was said unto them, ye are not my people*; where were nothing but idolatry and idolatrous worshippers, and whose worship, works, and actions, declared them not to be the people of God: *there shall they be called the children of the living God*: not only children of God, but of the *living* God; in opposition to their idol-gods, their lifeless deities, and senseless statues of gold, silver, brass, wood, or stone, they fell down to and worshipped. The chosen of God among the Gentiles, were from all eternity predestinated to the adoption of children; this blessing was provided, laid up, and secured for them, in the covenant of grace; in this relation of children were they given to Christ, and under this consideration of them did he partake of the same flesh and blood with them, and died, to gather them together, who were scattered abroad in the several parts of the world; and because they were antecedently sons by adopting grace, therefore the spirit of God in effectual calling is sent down into their hearts to bear witness to their spirits, that they are the children of the living God, and to work faith in their souls to believe it; by which grace they receive this blessing, as all others, even the right and privilege of being the children of God: by this they claim it, and enjoy the comfort of it; and so are manifestatively, both to themselves and others, the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus; though this will more clearly appear another day, than it does now.

Ver. 27. *Esaias crieth concerning Israel, &c.*] The apostle having produced proper testimonies in proof of the calling of the Gentiles, proceeds to mention others; shewing, that some few of the Jews also were to be called, according to prophecy, founded upon divine predestination; which, though they are full proofs of the calling of some from among the Jews, yet at the same time suggest the casting off of the far greater number of them; and which is the apostle's view[x] in citing them, as appears from what he says both here and in the two following chapters. The first testimony is taken out of Isa. x. 22, 23. and is prefaced or introduced with these words; which either express the great concern of mind and sorrow of heart, with which the prophet spoke them, even with strong crying and tears, seeing a remnant of them only was to be saved; or they shew his heart's desire and prayer to God, *for Israel*, as the words may be rendered, how that he cried to the Lord for them, entreated him with earnestness and importunity, and wrestled with him on their behalf; or they declare the presence of mind, the freedom of expression, the boldness and intrepidity with which he delivered this message to the Jews, which he knew must be ungrateful to them; in doing which, he run the risk of losing his interest in their affections, if not his life; and inasmuch very probably they did not choose to hear it, but turned away from him, he cried aloud, he spared not, he lift up his voice like a trumpet, as he is bid to do elsewhere, resolving they should hear what he had to say, from the Lord of hosts. This is a form of speech used by the Jews, in citing Scripture; thus, הנביא צוח, *the prophet cries*[y], namely, in Isa. xxvi. which is spoken of the same prophet as here; and again[z], *the Holy Spirit* צווח, *cries, and says*, in some certain passage of Scripture; and in another place[a] the Holy Spirit *cried*, saying, as in Joel iii. 3. *they have cast lots for my people*. *Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea*: this part of the testimony seems rather to be taken from Hos. i. 10. which may easily be accounted for; since the apostle had just cited the words in Hosea, and so carrying them in his mind, transcribes this sentence from thence; it perfectly agreeing in sense with the passage in Isaiah he had in view, where it stands thus, *though thy people Israel be as the sand of the sea*; that is, though the number of them be such as to be compared thereunto; though they are many as the sand of the sea, as the Targum, Kimchi, and Aben Ezra explain it. This was promised unto Abraham, and had its accomplishment in the days of Solomon, and in after-times; they were for quantity, for number, as the sand of the sea, even innumerable; and for quality, being barren and unfruitful, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil-doers: *a remnant shall be saved*; that is, a few persons only; המעט יקרא שאר, *few are called a remnant*, as Kimchi on the place observes; these are the remnant among the Jews, according to the election of grace; the few that were chosen, though many were called by the external ministry of Christ and his apostles; the little city, and few men in it, even the escaped of Israel, he that was left in Zion, and that remained in Jerusalem; the little flock among them, which were as sheep among wolves; the few that entered in at the strait gate, and found the way to eternal life; the few that shall be saved, and these shall certainly be saved, with a spiritual and eternal salvation. These, according to the prophecy, were to return to the mighty God, the Lord Jesus Christ, the promised Messiah; be converted to him, and so saved by him with an everlasting salvation: God had resolved upon it, whose counsel shall stand; he had promised it in covenant, which is ordered in all things and sure; he sent his son to save these his people from their sins, who is become the author of eternal salvation to them; the grace of God is efficacious and powerful enough, to make them willing to be saved by Christ, and to bring them to him, to venture upon him, and commit their souls to him, to be saved by him; and almighty power is concerned, to keep them through faith unto salvation: so that this little remnant, through the father's everlasting and unchangeable love, the son's purchase, prayers, and preparations, and the spirit's grace, which works

[z] Tanchuma, fol. 17. 3. apud Surenhus. Biblos Katallages, p. 14.
[a] Mechilta, fol. 25. 1. Ib.

[y] Megillat Esther, fol. 92. 1.

them up for this self-same thing, shall be certainly and completely saved; though with respect to the difficulties attending it, which could have been surmounted by none but Christ, and by reason of their discouragements arising from sin, temptations, and persecutions, they may be said to be *scarcely* saved.

Ver. 28. *For he will finish the work*, &c.] This passage has some difficulty in it: some, instead of *work*, read *account*, and suppose it is an allusion to the balancing of accounts, when the remainder is cut off, which commonly is but little; and so regards the small number of the Jews that shall be called and saved, as before: others read it *the word*, and differently explain it; some understanding it of the incarnate Word, of his being emptied, and made of no reputation, of his being cut off in a very short time, a few years after he had entered upon his public ministry, and of the few persons converted under it; others of the law, of the cutting off, or abolishing the ceremonial law, perfecting or completing the moral law, and abbreviating it, or reducing it into a short compendium; others of the Gospel, bringing in and revealing a perfect righteousness, for the justification of sinners, which the law could not do; all foreign to the apostle's purpose. Those who think God's work, his strange work is meant, his work of punitive justice he will finish, *and cut it short in righteousness, because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth*, when he cut off and destroyed the greater part of the people of the Jews, and saved a remnant, seem to come nearer the mind of the prophet and the apostle's design, in citing this passage. The words as in Isaiah, I would choose to render and explain thus; כליון חרוץ, *the absolute*, or *precise degree*, so Aben Ezra interprets it, גזר מהשם, *that which is decreed by God*, the decree concerning the salvation of the remnant, שוטף צדקה, *he, i. e.* God *shall cause to overflow in righteousness*, as an overflowing river; that is, he shall abundantly execute it, he shall completely fulfil it, to finish and cut it short in the most righteous manner, consistent with all his divine perfections; כי כלה ונחרצה, *for the decree and that determined*, so Aben Ezra, גזרה נגזרת, *the decree decreed* by God, *the Lord God of hosts*, עשה, *shall execute*, accomplish, make short and full work of it, *in the midst of all the land*, that is, of Judea: so that the words contain a most strong and invincible reason, why the remnant shall be saved; because God has made an absolute decree, concerning the salvation of it, which he will accomplish in the fullest manner, agreeably to his justice and holiness: the λογος, or *word*, the apostle from the prophet speaks of, that should be finished, and cut short and accomplished in righteousness, is the sentence, counsel, or decree, conceived in the divine mind, concerning this matter: hence as the decree of election stands firm and sure, not upon the works of men, but upon the absolute, sovereign, and efficacious will of God; so the salvation of his chosen people is not precarious, but a most sure and certain thing.

Ver. 29. *And as Esaias said before*, &c.] In the beginning of his prophecy, in ch. i. 9. *Except the Lord of sabaoth had left us a seed*: the title and character the great God goes by here, is *Lord of sabaoth*, that is, *of hosts*, or *armies*; the Septuagint often leave the word untranslated, as here and elsewhere, as in 1 Sam. i. 11. and xvii. 45. He is Lord of the hosts of heaven, the sun, moon, and stars, whom he brings forth by number, calls by their names, and them to praise him; of the angels, the multitude of the heavenly host, that do his pleasure, fight under him, and for him; and of the hosts of nations, of the several kingdoms of the world, who are all under his government, and among whom he acts according to his sovereign will and pleasure. Kimchi on the place says, he is called so, "because of *the hosts above*, and because of *the* "*hosts below*, who are the Israelites, that are called "*hosts*; wherefore he would not consume us all, as "we deserved:" no, according to the council of his own will, he left them *a seed*; or as it is in Isaiah, *a very small remnant*: and so the Syriac here, שרכא, *a remnant*; both signify one and the same, namely, a few persons only: a *remnant* signifies a few, which remain out of a large number; and so does *seed*, which is reserved for sowing again, after the whole stock is sold off, or consumed: and the leaving of this small number designs God's gracious acts of reserving in election a people for himself; the calling them by his grace in time, and preserving them from general corruption; which if he had not done among the Jews, as Jarchi on the text says, "of himself, and by his "mercies, and not for our righteousnesses," *we had been as Sodoma, and been made like unto Gomorrha*; the cities which God destroyed with fire and brimstone from heaven, for their iniquities: had it not been for electing grace, they would have been like the inhabitants of these cities for wickedness; and the case would have been the same with us and with the whole world, had it not been for God's act of election, choosing some to holiness here, and happiness hereafter. The decree of election is so far from being a door to licentiousness, that it is the true spring and source of all real holiness, that has been, or is in the world; and had it not been for this, there would have been no such thing as holiness in the world; and consequently not only Judea, but the whole world, were it not for this, must have been long before now, like Sodom and Gomorrha, in their punishment.

Ver. 30. *What shall we say then?* &c.] To God's calling of a large number of the Gentiles, and only a very few of the Jews, according to his eternal purposes and decrees; what can be objected to it? is he chargeable with any unrighteousness? must it not be referred to his sovereign will and pleasure? is it not an instance of his grace and goodness, that he calls and saves some, when they were all so wicked, that he might in justice have destroyed every individual of them? or what is further to be said, concerning both Jews and Gentiles? or what can be objected to what may be further observed concerning them? as, *that the Gentiles which followed not after righteousness*: the very same persons among them, who are called by grace, and are vessels of mercy, before their calling were without a righteousness, stout-hearted, and far from one; being without Christ, and destitute of his spirit; they were ignorant of righteousness, of the righteousness of God, and of his law, and consequently of what true righteousness is; they were unconcerned about it, and did not labour after it, as the Jews did.

They did not pursue and improve the light of nature, about God and things of a moral kind, as they might have done; but held the light and truth they had in unrighteousness, and indeed were filled with nothing else: and yet these persons *have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith.* The righteousness they attained unto, was not a righteousness of their own, not the righteousness of works, or a righteousness by the deeds of the law, to which the righteousness which is of faith is always opposed; nor faith itself, which is distinguished from it; but the righteousness of Christ, so called, not because that faith is the cause or condition of it, but because the discovery of it is made to faith; that receives it, lays hold on it, and exercises itself on it; by it the soul renounces its own righteousness, looks to, and depends on Christ's, and rejoices in it. These Gentiles being called by grace, *attained, comprehended,* or *apprehended* this righteousness; not by the light of nature, which makes no discovery, nor gives the least hint of it; but by the light of faith they apprehended it, as revealed in the Gospel; which faith they had not of themselves, but of God; so that the whole of this account is a wonderful instance of the grace of God, and abundantly confirms the observation made before by the apostle, that *it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy;* since these persons had nothing in them, disposing and qualifying them for a justifying righteousness, and yet attained one; and the grace appears to be the more distinguishing, by what follows.

Ver. 31. *But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness,* &c.] The Israelites, the far greater part of the Jews, who were not called by the grace of God, were all very zealous of the law, called *the law of righteousness;* because the matter of it was righteous, it was so in its own nature; and because perfect obedience to it is righteousness; as also because they sought for righteousness by the deeds of it. They very violently and eagerly pursued after it, they tugged and toiled, and laboured with all their might, as persons in running a race, to get up to the law, and the righteousness of it; and yet Israel, with all the pains and labour taken, *hath not attained to the law of righteousness:* some of them fancied they had, supposing an external conformity to it, to be all that it insisted upon; not knowing the spirituality of it, that it required truth and holiness in the inward parts; and that he that offended in one point of it, was guilty of all, and therefore could not be justified by it.

Ver. 32. *Wherefore? because they sought it not by faith,* &c.] The question is asked, why they did not attain to that, which with so much diligence they pressed after? the answer is, because, as they did not seek for righteousness in a right place, or object, they sought for it in the law, and the works of it, where it is never to be found by a sinful creature, and not in Christ, in whom only are righteousness and strength; so they did not seek for it in a right way, by faith in Christ, without which it is impossible to please God, and by which only true righteousness is discerned and received: *but as it were by the works of the law;* not by works which looked like works of the law, and were not; but they sought it as if they expected their justification before God was to be by works of righteousness done by them; or as if it was partly by their own works, and partly by the goodness of God, accepting of them for a justifying righteousness. The Alexandrian copy, and some others, read only, *as it were by works;* and so does the Vulgate Latin version; another reason, or else a reason of the former is, *for they stumbled at that stumbling-stone;* meaning the word of the Gospel, at which Peter says they stumbled, and particularly the doctrine of justification by the righteousness of Christ; or rather Christ himself, who was *to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness.*

Ver. 33. *As it is written,* &c.] In Isa. viii. 14. and xxviii. 16. for the beginning and end of this citation are out of the latter, and the middle of it out of the former. This is an instance of מדלג, *skipping,* from place to place, concerning which the rules with the Jews were[r], that the reader "might skip from text "to text, but he might not skip from prophet to prophet, except only in the twelve prophets, only he "might not skip from the end of the book to the beginning; also they might skip in the prophets, but "not in the law;" which rules are exactly complied with by the apostle. The beginning of this citation is out of Isa. xxviii. 16. *behold I lay in Zion.* The *stone* said to be laid in Zion, is by the *Chaldee paraphrast* interpreted of a *king;* by R. David Kimchi, of King Hezekiah, and by Jarchi of the King Messiah; and is truly applied by the apostle to Jesus Christ: the layer of this stone is God the father, who laid him as the foundation-stone, in his eternal purposes and decrees, in his counsels and covenant, in promise and in prophecy, in the mission of him into this world, and in the preaching of the everlasting Gospel: the place where he is laid is Zion, meaning either literally Judea or Jerusalem, where the Messiah was to appear, whither he came, and from whence his Gospel went forth; or mystically the church, where he is laid as the foundation of it, and of the salvation of all the members thereof; though, through the sin and unbelief of others, he proves to be *a stumbling-stone, and rock of offence:* which phrases are to be seen in Isa. viii. 14. and are spoken of, and ascribed to a divine person, even to the Lord of hosts; and are by the Targumist thus paraphrased, *and if ye obey not,* מימריה, *his word shall be for revenge, and for a stone smiting, and a rock of offence:* and in the Talmud[s], it is said, that "the son of David "(the Messiah) shall not come until the two houses of "the fathers are destroyed out of Israel; and these "are the head of the captivity which is in Babylon, "and the prince in the land of Israel, as it is said, Isa. "viii. 14." So that, according to the ancient Jews, this passage belongs to the Messiah, and is properly made use of for this purpose by the apostle, who had seen the accomplishment of it in the Jews; who stumbled at the outward meanness of Jesus of Nazareth, at his parentage, the manner of his birth, his education, the mean appearance of himself and followers; at his company and audience, his ministry, miracles, death, and the manner of it; and so believed not in him, for

[r] T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 24. 1. Yoma, fol. 60. 2. Maimon. Tephilla, c. 12. sect. 14.

[s] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 38. 1.

righteousness, life, and salvation; and thus it came about that they did not attain, or come up to the law of righteousness, or the righteousness of the law: but *whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed*: that is, who believes in Christ unto righteousness, who builds his faith, and hope of eternal salvation on him, the foundation God has laid in Zion, and at which the unbelieving Jews stumbled and fell; he shall neither be ashamed here nor hereafter: he shall not be ashamed of his faith and hope in Christ; nor of Christ, as the Lord his righteousness; nor shall he be ashamed or confounded at his appearing, but shall be justified before men and angels, and be received into his kingdom and glory. There is some difference between the passage as here cited, and as it stands in Isa. xxviii. 16. where it is read, *he that believeth shall not make haste*: either to lay any other foundation, being fully satisfied with this, which is laid by God; or shall not make haste to flee away, through fear of any enemy, or of any danger, being safe as built on this foundation; and so shall never fall, be moved, or ashamed and confounded. Some have fancied a various reading, but without any reason. A very learned Oriental critic[*] of our own nation has observed, that the Arabic words *Hush* and *Hish* answer to the Hebrew word, יחיש, the prophet uses, and which have three significations in them, to *hasten*, to *fear*, and be *ashamed*; the first of these is retained here by the Jewish commentators and modern versions; the second by the *Chaldee paraphrast*, and Syriac translation; and the third by the Septuagint, and the apostle; and they may be all taken into one sense, for he that is afraid runs about here and there, and at length is put to shame and confusion.

CHAP. X.

IN this chapter are contained an account of the two righteousnesses of faith and works, a summary of the Gospel of Christ, a description of the grace of faith, in the nature, use, and means of it, and several testimonies concerning the calling of the Gentiles; and whereas the apostle knew that this, as well as what he had said in the latter part of the preceding chapter, that the Jews had not attained to the law of righteousness, but stumbled at the stumbling-stone, would be offensive to his countrymen the Jews; wherefore that it might appear that he said this not out of disaffection and ill will to them, he declares his sincere regard unto them, and the great respect he had for them, by calling them *brethren*, by expressing his good will to them, by praying for the salvation of them, ver. 1. by bearing testimony of their zeal for God, ver. 2. though he faithfully observes to them, that it was an ignorant zeal, of which ignorance he gives an instance, ver. 3. particularly in the attribute of God's righteousness; from which ignorance arose all their misconduct in religious things, especially in the article of justification; hence they sought to be justified by their own righteousness, and rejected the righteousness of Christ, and then points out to them the true end of the law, for righteousness which is Christ, ver. 4. which if they had known would have set them right, and which is another instance of their ignorant and misguided zeal: this leads him on to what he had in view, which was to give an account of the two righteousnesses he had suggested in the latter part of the former chapter, the righteousness of the law, which the Jews sought for and found not, and the righteousness of faith, which the Gentiles without seeking for enjoyed: and this account he gives in the words of Moses, for whom they had the greatest regard: the description of the former is given in his words, in ver. 5. which suggest the impossibility of keeping the law, and obtaining life by it, and therefore it is a vain thing to seek for righteousness by the works of it: the latter is described, ver. 6, 7. by the certainty of it, being wrought out by Christ, who came down from heaven, fulfilled the law, and died, and rose again from the dead; and by the plainness and evidence of it, as revealed in the Gospel, ver. 8. the sum of which Gospel is, that whoever believes in Christ and confesses him shall be saved, ver. 9. which faith and confession, when genuine, are with the heart and mouth agreeing together: the consequences of which are righteousness and salvation, comfortably apprehended and enjoyed, ver. 10. and that the above is the sum of the Gospel, and that there is such a connexion between faith and righteousness, and between confession and salvation, is confirmed, ver. 11. by a testimony from the prophet, Isa. chap. xxviii. 16. which being expressed in such a general manner, as to extend to every believer, whether Jew or Gentile, reasons are given, ver. 12. in support of such an explanation of that passage, taken from the equal condition of all, there being no difference between them naturally, from the universal dominion of God over them, and from his liberal communication of grace and goodness to all that call upon him; which last reason is confirmed, ver. 13. by a passage of Scripture in Joel ii. 32. on occasion of which, the apostle proceeds to treat of the calling of the Gentiles, and of the means of it, the preaching of the Gospel, which was necessary to it, which is made out by a train of reasoning after this manner; that seeing salvation is only of such that call upon the name of the Lord, and there could be no calling upon him without believing in him, and no believing without hearing, and no hearing without preaching, and no preaching without mission, which is proved by a citation out of Isa. lii. 7. and no success in preaching, when sent, without the exertions of efficacious grace, as appears from the case of the Jews, who had the ministration of the Gospel to them by Isaiah, and yet all did not believe it; as is evident from Isa. liii. 1. and seeing the conclusion of which is, that faith comes by preaching, and preaching by the order and command of God, ver. 14, 15, 16, 17. it follows, that it was proper that ministers should

[*] Pocock. Not. Miscell. in Port. Mosis, p. 10, 11.

be sent, and the Gospel preached to the Gentiles, and that attended with power, in order that they should believe in the Lord, and call upon his name and be saved; and which method God had taken, and which he had foretold he would take, in the prophecies of the Old Testament, and which were now fulfilling: that the Gospel was preached to them, and they heard it, were matters of fact, and were no other than what should be, or might be concluded, from Psal. xix. 4. cited, ver. 18. and that the Jews could not be ignorant of the calling of the Gentiles is clear, first from the words of Moses, Deut. xxxii. 21. which the apostle produces, ver. 19. and from a passage in the prophecy of Isaiah, ch. lxv. 1. So that this was no other than what Moses and the prophets said should be, ver. 20. and the chapter is closed, ver. 21. with another passage out of the same prophet in the next verse, shewing the rejection of Christ and his Gospel by the Jews, and which justifies their being cast off by him, of which the apostle treats largely in the next chapter.

Ver. 1. *Brethren, my heart's desire*, &c.] The apostle having suggested, that a few of the Jews only should be called and saved; that the far greater part should be rejected; that the Israelites who sought for righteousness did not attain it when the Gentiles did, but stumbled and fell at Christ, and would be ashamed and confounded; and knowing the prejudices of that people against him, therefore lest what he had said, or should say upon this subject, should be thought to arise from hatred and ill will to them, he judged it proper, as before, to express his trouble and sorrow on their account; so now his great love and affection to them, and which he signifies by calling them *brethren*: for not the Roman believers are here addressed, as if he was telling them how much he loved his own nation; but either the Jews in general, whom he looked upon and loved as his brethren, according to the flesh; and whatever they thought of him, he considered them in such a relation to him, which obliged him to a concern for their good and welfare; or rather the believing Jews, that were members of the church at Rome, whom, besides using the common style of the Jewish nation, who were wont to call all of their country brethren, he could speak to, as being such in a spiritual relation, being children of the same father, partakers of the same grace and privileges, and heirs of the same glory. Now he declares to these persons, that the *desire* of his *heart* was towards Israel, he bore a good will to them, his mind was well disposed and affected towards them, he had a cordial, sincere, and hearty respect for them; and so far was he from being their enemy, that he continually bore them upon his mind at the throne of grace: and his *prayer to God for Israel* was, *that they might be saved*: not only that they might be saved in a temporal sense, from these grievous calamities and sore judgments he saw were coming upon them, which he had reason to believe would issue in the destruction of them, as a nation and church; but that they might be spiritually converted, turned from their evil ways, and brought to believe in Christ, whom they had despised and rejected, and so be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation: this he might desire not only from a natural affection for them, but as a minister of the Gospel, who can't but wish that all that hear him might be converted and saved; and as a believer in Christ he might pray for this in submission to the will of God; and especially as he knew there was a seed, a remnant according to the election of grace, at that present time among them, that should be saved, though the larger number of them were cast off. The Alexandrian copy, and some others, read *for them*, instead of *for Israel*; not naming them, being easily understood; and so the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions.

Ver. 2. *For I bear them record, that they have a zeal of God*, &c.] A zeal for God; for the being and unity of God, against the polytheism and idolatry of the Gentiles; for the word of God, the writings of the Old Testament, of which they were zealous defenders and preservers, and which they diligently read and heard explained, and whereby they thought to obtain eternal life; for the law of God, moral and ceremonial, especially for the rituals of the Mosaic economy; and for the service and worship of God, they spared no pains, but compassed sea and land to bring in proselytes to their religion; all which the apostle could testify from his own knowledge, and by his own experience, who had been as great a zealot as any of them all. But now whilst the apostle is expressing his strong affection for this people, he is careful to act the faithful part to them, and points out their mistakes, and shews them their faults; which he does in this and the following verse, by observing, that they had a zeal of God indeed, *but not according to knowledge*: it was not well regulated, it proceeded on mistaken principles, and moved in a wrong way, in persecuting the church of God, in doing things contrary to the name of Christ, in putting to death his ministers and members, thinking that hereby they did God good service; which arose from their ignorance of their father, and of the son: though they had a zeal of God, they knew neither God nor Christ aright; they did not know God in Christ, nor Jesus to be the true Messiah; they understood neither law nor Gospel truly, and fancied the Gospel was contrary to the law, and an enemy to it; and therefore in their great zeal opposed it, and the professors of it; they were zealous of the law, and of doing the commands of it, but knew not the true nature, use, and end of the law; as appears by what follows.

Ver. 3. *For they being ignorant of God's righteousness*, &c.] Either of the righteousness of God revealed in the Gospel, which is no other than the righteousness of Christ, and which they knew nothing of, the whole Gospel being a sealed book, and wholly hidden from them; or of the righteousness of God required in the law, they imagining that only an external conformity to the commands of the law, was all that was necessary to attain to a justifying righteousness by it, not knowing the spirituality of it, and that it required conformity of heart and nature, as well as life and conversation; or rather of the attribute of God's righteousness, the strictness of his justice, the purity and holiness of his nature: for though they knew that he was holy, just, and righteous, yet did not think he was so strict as to insist upon every punctilio, and to take notice of every little default and defect in obedience; and especially that he had any regard to the heart and the thoughts of it, and required perfect purity there;

or that he would accept of nothing less than an absolutely perfect and complete righteousness; nor justify any without full satisfaction to his justice: hence they were *going about to establish their own righteousness;* which they would never have done, had they known the righteousness of God, in either of the above senses; the Alexandrian copy, and some others, omit the word *righteousness*, and only read, *their own*, leaving it to be understood, and which is easily done; and so reads the Vulgate Latin version: by *their own righteousness*, as opposed to God's, is meant the righteousness of works, their obedience to the law, an outward conformity to it, an observance of the rituals of it, and a little negative holiness. This they endeavoured to *establish* or *make to stand* in the sight of God, as their justifying righteousness, which is all one as setting chaff and stubble, briers and thorns, to a consuming fire; as the attempt expresses madness in them, the phrase suggests weakness in their righteousness, which they would fain make to stand, but could not, it being like a spider's web before the besom, or like a dead carcass, which men would set upon its feet to stand alone, but it cannot; than which nothing can be a greater instance of egregious folly: their *going about* or *seeking* to do this, shews their ignorant zeal, and the toil, the pains, the labour they used to effect it, but all in vain, and to no purpose; as appears by their hearing, reading, fasting, praying, giving alms to the poor, and tithes of all they possessed; all which they were very careful and studious of, and especially to have them done in the sight of men: and so it was that they *have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God;* that is, the righteousness of Christ, so called, because approved and accepted of by God, imputed by him to his people, and given them by him as a free gift, and which only justifies in his sight; and because it is wrought by Christ, who is truly and properly God, and revealed and applied by the spirit of God. This the Jews submitted not to, because they had no true humble sense of themselves as sinners, nor did they care to acknowledge themselves as such; which submission to Christ's righteousness requires and necessarily involves in it; no man will ever be subject to it, till he is made sensible of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and brought to an humble acknowledgment of it; the spirit of God first convinces of sin and then of righteousness; and because they had an overweening opinion of their own righteousness, which they trusted to, and depended upon, imagining it to be blameless, and to contain all that the law required, and therefore they stood in no need of any other; and as for the righteousness of Christ they had it in contempt, their carnal minds being enmity to him, were not subject to his righteousness, nor could they, nor can any be, without the powerful efficacious grace of God, making them willing in the day of his power. This phrase denotes the rebellion of their wills, against Christ and his righteousness, they acting as rebellious subjects against their sovereign prince.

Ver. 4. *For Christ is the end of the law*, &c.] The apostle here observes that to them which had they known, would have regulated their zeal, removed their ignorance and set them right, in that which they stumbled at, and fell. By the *law* here, is not meant the ceremonial law, of which, indeed, they were all very zealous, and of which Christ also was the end in many respects; he was the final cause of it, or that for the sake of which it was; it had not been given had it not been for him; all its institutions, ordinances, and sacrifices, were on his account: they were all shadows of him, and he the body and substance of them; he was the end or mark and scope at which they all aimed; every type looked to him, and every offering directed the worshipper to him; he was the terminus of it, to whom it was to reach, and beyond whom it was not to go; it was a schoolmaster for instruction and direction until Christ came, and no longer. He was the fulfilling end of it, every thing in it had its accomplishment in him; and then lastly, he put an end to it, he disanulled it because of its after-weakness and unprofitableness; he blotted out this hand-writing of ordinances, and entirely abolished this law of commandments; but then Christ was not the end of this law for righteousness; Christ's obedience to it is no part of justifying righteousness, especially not to every one that believes, not to the Gentiles who never were under any obligation to observe it: the moral law is here designed, and when Christ is said to be the *end* of it, the meaning is not that he was the end of its being given; for that was to be a rule of righteousness and life to men, and a ministration of death in case of disobedience: or that he was the scope of the law, though the Syriac version renders it מכר, *the scope* of the law is the Messiah, the mark at which it aimed, or which it directs persons to; for the law does not direct to Christ at all, in any way; it requires and insists upon a perfect righteousness, but gives not the least hint of the righteousness of Christ, nor does it in any form direct unto it; by it is the knowledge of sin, but no knowledge of a Saviour from sin; not the law, but the Gospel directs and encourages sensible sinners to believe in Christ and be saved; on the contrary, the law is a killing letter, and the ministration of condemnation and death; but Christ is either the consuming or consummating, the destroying or fulfilling end of the law. He is the destroying end of the law, not as to the nature, being, matter and substance of it, which is invariable and eternal, and is not, and cannot be made void by the doctrine of faith; nor as to the true use of it; but as a covenant of works, as to the ministry of it by Moses, and as to its curse and condemnation. Though I rather think the latter is here meant, namely, that Christ is the fulfilling end of the law, since it is added, *for righteousness;* for the bringing in an everlasting righteousness; a righteousness justifying in the sight of God; a righteousness sinners wanted, and could not obtain of themselves, and could never be obtained but by a perfect fulfilling of the law: this Christ has done partly by the conformity of his nature, being exactly like that, and what it requires holy, just, and good; and partly by perfect obedience of his life to all its precepts; and also by suffering the penalty of it, death, in the room and stead of all his people; and so the whole righteousness of the law is fulfilled by him, and he becomes the end of it, for a justifying righteousness before God, *to every one that believes:* not to him that works for life, and in order to obtain a righ-

ousness of his own; nor to the Jew only, but also to the Gentile, even to every one, be who he will, that has faith in Christ; not that faith is either the matter, cause, or condition of righteousness, but this righteousness is only revealed unto, and received by the believer, and can only be pleaded by him, as his justifying righteousness. Moreover, this phrase is descriptive of the persons to whom Christ is the end of the law for righteousness, and suggests that for whomsoever he has fulfilled the law, in order to bring in for them a justifying righteousness, faith in consequence is given to them, to receive and embrace it, and enjoy all the comfort and privileges of it.

Ver. 5. *For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, &c.*] In this, and some following verses, an account is given of the two righteousnesses before-mentioned, called their own and the righteousness of God; and that chiefly in the words of Moses, which is wisely done by the apostle, he and his writings being in great esteem among the Jews. The description he gives of the righteousness of the law, that is, of that righteousness which the law requires, and is done in obedience to its commands, is, *that the man which doth those things, shall live by them*, or *in them*; and which is to be seen in Lev. xviii. 5. *ye shall therefore keep my statutes and my judgments, which if a man do, he shall live in them*: from whence it appears, that by *those things* a man is to do, are meant the statutes and judgments of God, not the ordinances of the ceremonial, but the precepts of the moral law; and that the righteousness of the law lies in *doing* and keeping those statutes, not merely externally, but internally, with all the heart, and soul, and strength; the law requires love to God, fear of him, and faith in him, and an inward disposition of the mind towards him, and a conformity of heart and nature to his law, as well as outward obedience; and all this is to be done perfectly and completely in every punctilio the law requires, otherwise no life is to be expected, nor any righteousness to be had by it. The Jewish writers understand the life promised by the law, to be eternal life. The two Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan ben Uzziel paraphrase the words thus, *he shall live in them*, בחיי עלמא, *in eternal life*: in like manner Jarchi explains them, *he shall live*, לעולם הבא, *in the world to come*: to which agrees the note of R. Aben Ezra, who interprets it of life in both worlds; he says the statutes of the law are life to them that do them in both worlds, for if a man understands the secret of them, he shall live for ever, and shall never die. The life which the law promised to Adam in his state of perfection, who was the only mere man that ever was capable of perfectly fulfilling it, was the continuance of the happy life he enjoyed; the life it promised to the Israelites, at the renewing of it on Mount Sinai, was a long and prosperous life in the land of Canaan; as for the promise of eternal life, that was made before the world began, in the covenant of grace, and is a peculiar promise and blessing of that covenant, is an entire gift of God's grace, and never was designed to be enjoyed through men's obedience to the law of works, but through the righteousness and death of Christ, who is the fulfilling end of the law: hence it appears, that as the righteousness of the law is a righteousness of works done by men, it cannot be the righteousness God imputes, for that is without works, and by which a man can be justified before God; and since the law requires internal and perfect obedience to it, 'tis certain that it cannot be yielded by fallen creatures; hence it follows, that there can be no life, and so no righteousness by it, the consequence of which, when observed by sinful men, is horror, terror, and gloomy despair; the very reverse of which is the language of the righteousness of faith.

Ver. 6, 7. *But the righteousness which is of faith, &c.*] Or *with respect to the righteousness of faith*; the other righteousness before called the righteousness of God, because God is the author of it, here the righteousness of faith, because that receives it, *speaketh on this wise*; the self-same writer who describes the righteousness of the law in such a manner, that it gives no room to a fallen creature ever to expect life and salvation by it, gives such an account of the righteousness of faith, as forbids all doubting and despair: *say not in thine heart*; let not such a thought enter into thy mind, much less express it with thy lips; *who shall ascend into heaven? that is, to bring Christ down from above, or who shall descend into the deep? that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.* These words are not properly a citation of Deut. xxx. 12, 13. but the apostle makes use of some phrases which are there, with his own explications of them; though the difference between them, stripped, of these explications is not very material: in the first clause, *who shall ascend into heaven?* the apostle leaves out the phrase, *for us*; which as to the sense was not absolutely necessary to retain; the difficulty, indeed, seems greater in the latter clause, *who shall descend into the deep?* which in the text of Moses is, *who shall go over the sea for us?* but when it is considered that the sea is often called the deep, and that sailing on it and over it, is expressed by *going down to the sea in ships*, Psal. cvii. 23. and moreover, when 'tis observed that the Jerusalem Targum paraphrases it thus, "the law is not in heaven that it should "be said, oh that we had one of us, as Moses the pro-"phet, who could go up to heaven and bring it to us! nor "is it beyond the great sea, that it should be said, oh "that we had one of us, as Jonah the prophet דיירות "לעומקי ימא רבא, *who could descend into the depths of the* "*great sea*, and bring it to us;" the apostle is to be justified in his expressions. His sense, indeed, may seem to be different from that of Moses, and of the common interpretations of the Jewish writers, as in the above paraphrase, and in the following account of them from the Talmud, understanding them of the law *: "says "Abdimo bar Chama bar Dousa, what is the meaning "of that Scripture, *neither is it in heaven, nor is it be-"yond the sea?* it is not in heaven, for if it was in "heaven you must needs go up after it, and if it was "beyond the sea, you must needs go over after it; "Rabba says, not in heaven is it, you won't find it "in him that exalts his knowledge in himself as the "heavens, nor will you find it in him that enlarges his "knowledge in himself, as the sea; R. Jochanan says,

* T. Bab. Erubin, fol. 55. 1. Maimon. Talmud Tora, c. 3. sect. 8.

"not in heaven is it, you won't find it in those that are "of a haughty spirit, nor beyond the sea is it, you "won't find it among traders abroad, or merchants." Though the apostle's sense may be brought pretty near to this, after this manner; who shall go up to heaven, or down to the deep, either to bring us the knowledge of the law, and yield an obedience to it which that requires of us, or to give us a full account of the Gospel of the grace of God? there is no room, nor reason, for men to say this in their hearts, or to make a doubt of them, as if they were not done already; to do so, is to deny that Christ is come in the flesh, and risen from the dead, who has given the true sense and knowledge of the law, and has perfectly fulfilled it, in the room and stead of his people, and by whom the doctrine of grace and truth is come, particularly the doctrine of a sinner's justification before God; this is brought nigh in the ministration of the word, so that there is no need of such inquiries as these. Moreover, for the illustration of these words, let it be observed, that these phrases are proverbial, and often used to express things impossible, of which take the following instances; "it is a tradition of the Rabbins[x], if a "man says to his wife, lo, this is thy divorce, on con- "dition that *thou ascendest to the firmament*, on con- "dition *that thou descendest into the deep*: on condi- "tion that thou passest over the great sea on foot, this "is no divorce;" the reason is, שאי איפשר, *because it is impossible*. Again[y], "if a man says to a woman, if "thou wilt *ascend into the firmament*, or if thou wilt "*descend into the deep*, lo, thou art espoused to me by "this penny; but if thou wilt not go up into the fir- "mament, nor go down into the deep, thou shalt not "be espoused; and after that he puts the penny into "her hand, lo, the condition becomes void, and behold "she is espoused immediately, for the thing is known "שאי איפשר, *that it is impossible* for her to fulfil the "condition." So here are forbidden all such thoughts, words, or expressions which carry such a sense as this; who will go down to the deep to fetch such a wretch as I am out of the lowest hell, to deliver me from the curses of the law, and the wrath of God, and bring me out of this wretched miserable condition in which I am? or go up to heaven and carry me there, and put me in the possession of the undefiled inheritance? all this is as impossible to be done, as for a man to ascend to heaven, or go down into the deep: now though the righteousness of the law encourages such despondency and black despair, the righteousness of faith, or the doctrine of justification by faith in Christ's righteousness, forbids every thing of this kind; assuring the sinner, that Christ is come down from heaven in human nature, that he has fulfilled all the righteousness of the law by his obedience in life, and has bore the penalty of it in his sufferings and death, and is risen again for justification; so that such questions should not be put, nor such desparing thoughts encouraged: besides, to think and speak in this manner, is to set aside the whole scheme of the Gospel, and supposes the person to doubt whether Christ is come down from heaven; and therefore asks, who shall go up to bring him down? and that he is not risen from the dead; and therefore puts the question, who will go down to the deep to fetch him up? whereas he is already come, has obeyed, suffered, and died, and rose again, and is become the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes.

Ver. 8. *But what saith it*, &c.] The Scripture; so some copies, and the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic version read, *what saith the Scripture?* the Arabic version, *what dost thou say?* or *what saith he*, Moses? for what follow are manifestly his words, in Deut. xxx. 14. *the word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart*; which is to be understood not of the law, for Moses himself is not speaking of the law only, but either of the whole word of God, both law and Gospel; or particularly of the Gospel, which holds forth those special blessings and promises of grace, pardon of sin, and circumcision of the heart, which are mentioned in the context, as what should be bestowed upon the people of the Jews in the latter days; and so is rightly applied by the apostle to the then dispensation, and is to be understood of the Gospel; which was nigh both in the ministration of it, by the apostles, to Jews and Gentiles, and in the application and experience of it; it was not only *in the mouth* of the preachers, but also of the hearers of it, by a hearty and sincere confession; and *in their hearts*, being attended with the power of God, and received in the love of it, was truly believed in, and cordially embraced; *that is, the word of faith*. This phrase, מלה דמהימנותא, *the word of faith*, may be seen in the Jewish writings[z]; and this shews what word is here meant, even the Gospel so called, because it contains doctrines which are to be believed upon the testimony of God, and particularly the doctrine of justification by the righteousness of Christ received by faith; and because it proposes Christ as the object of faith, and encourages souls to believe in him for life and salvation; and is also the means of begetting and implanting faith in the heart, and without it the preaching of it is of no avail: and it is further described by the ministration of it, *which we preach*; being sent, commissioned, qualified, and assisted by Christ thereunto; which shews the agreement between Moses and the apostles of Christ; for the word which he spoke of, they preached, and indeed said no other things than what the prophets and Moses said should come, that Christ should suffer in the stead of his people, and rise again for their justification; the sum of which is delivered in the following verse.

Ver. 9. *That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus*, &c.] That is, if a man shall make a good, sincere, and hearty confession to God, before the church and people of God, and before the world, that Christ is his Lord and Saviour, whom he desires to serve, and to be saved by; and this as arising from a comfortable experience of the grace of God in his soul, and from a true faith in Christ in his heart, wherefore it follows, *and shall believe in thine heart, that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved*; for this article of Christ's resurrection includes the several other articles of faith: it supposes his death, and that supposes his

[x] T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 84. 1. & Bava Metzia, fol. 94. 1.

[y] Maimon. Hilchot Ishot. c. 6. sect. 7. Vid. Zohar in Exod. fol. 40. 4. & 43. 4.

[z] Zohar in Gen. fol. 45. 4.

life, and the obedience of it; and his life implies his being here on earth, and that his coming down from heaven to do the will of his father; and this is the rather mentioned, which is here ascribed to God the Father, though not to the exclusion of the Son and Spirit, because that Christ is risen again for our justification, with which true faith is principally concerned; for such a faith is intended, not which lies in a mere assent to the truth of this, or any other article of the Christian religion; but which is concerned with Christ for righteousness, life, and glory; and with such a faith salvation is certainly and inseparably connected.

Ver. 10. *For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness,* &c.] The apostle here explains the nature and use both of faith and confession; as true faith does not lie in the bare assent of the mind to the Gospel, or any truth contained in it, respecting the person and office of Christ, so neither does it lie, as not in the brain, so not in the tongue, but in the heart; it is not a notional knowledge of things to be believed; nor is it saying that a man believes; but it is heart-work, a believing with all the heart; such a faith in which all the powers of the soul, the understanding, will, and affections, are concerned, it is a seeing of the son, a beholding of the glory, fulness, suitableness, ability, and willingness of Christ as a Saviour, with the eye of the understanding spiritually enlightened; it is a going out of the soul to Christ, in various acts, such as venturing into his presence, prostrating itself at his feet, resolving if it perishes it will perish there; a giving up itself unto him, determining it will have no other Saviour, leaning and relying on him, and living upon him; which faith works by love to Christ, moves the affections, stirs up the desires of the soul to his name, and endears him and all that belong to him to it. The use of this grace is, *unto righteousness;* it is not instead of one, for faith is not our righteousness; nor is it in order to work out one, for this grace puts a soul on renouncing its own righteousness; but its use is to receive one, even the righteousness of Christ, which when it spies, it admires, receives, lays hold on, and rejoices in looking on itself as righteous through this righteousness, and so has peace with God through Christ: *and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.* This is to be understood not of confession of sin, though that is proper and requisite to be made, both with respect to the participation, and enjoyment of salvation, particularly pardoning grace and mercy, and to an admission to Gospel ordinances; but of confession of Christ, as appears from the preceding verse, which lies in a frank and open acknowledgment of what Christ is in himself, as that he is truly and properly God, the son of God, the true Messiah, the Mediator between God and man, and the only Saviour of lost sinners, and of our faith in him, with respect to ourselves, to our pardon, justification, acceptance and salvation in him and through him; in ascribing the whole of our salvation to him, and giving him the glory of it; in declaring to the churches of Christ what he has done for our souls, and in subjecting ourselves to his ordinances. This confession must be made both by words and facts, must be open, visible, and before men; and also real, hearty, and sincere, the words of the mouth agreeing with the experience of the heart; and such a good profession made before God, angels, and men, highly becomes all that believe with the heart. This was the practice of the primitive saints; yea, all nations own, acknowledge, and profess the God they worship; and should not we confess our God, Saviour and Redeemer? Christ himself confessed a good confession before Pontius Pilate, and is the Apostle and High-priest of our profession. So to *do,* makes both for the glory of God, and for our own real good and advantage. Yea, it is *unto salvation;* not as a cause of it, for Christ alone is the author of eternal salvation; but a sincere and well-made confession of Christ points out to all that know us where and from whom we expect to have salvation; it is what lies in the way, and is to be taken up by all that believe in Christ, and to be held fast without wavering until we receive the end of our faith, even the salvation of our souls.

Ver. 11. *For the Scripture saith,* &c.] Of this form of expression, or mode of speaking, see the note on chap. ix. 17. The passage referred to is Isa. xxviii. 16. cited before in ch. ix. 33. the view with which it is produced is to prove the certain connexion between faith and righteousness, and confession and salvation; or in other words, to observe that such who cordially believe in Christ, and make a sincere profession of their faith in him, shall be saved. There are some things somewhat different from, though agreeing in sense with, the words as they stand in the prophet: there it is indefinitely said, *he that believeth,* here an universal is made use of, *whosoever,* or *every one that believeth;* which phrases are equipollent, and a certain truth it is, that whosoever believes in Christ, whether Jew or Gentile, be he who he will, shall surely be saved: here the object believed in, is expressed *in him,* which is there implied, and may easily be understood of the stone laid in Zion for a foundation, which is Christ; for other foundation can no man lay, and whoever by faith builds on this foundation is safe: *and shall not be ashamed;* neither in this world, nor in that to come; in the Hebrew text it is, *shall not make haste;* how this may be reconciled, see the note on ch. ix. 33.

Ver. 12. *For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek,* &c.] Some reasons are here assigned, confirming the apostle's sense of the prophet's words, that every one that believes in Christ shall be saved; for there is no distinction of nations, no superiority on account of carnal descent, or fleshly privileges, no pre-eminence on the score of the laws and ordinances of the former dispensation, all which are now abolished; nor is there any difference in their state Godward, all being under sin, and without a righteousness, and all standing in need of the righteousness of Christ, and salvation by him; to which is added another reason, *for the same Lord over all,* or *is over all:* by whom is meant, either God the Father, who is the God of the Gentiles as well as of the Jews, chap. iii. 29, 30. or rather the Lord Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all; and is to be understood, not of his being so merely by creation, but redemption, he having bought with his blood all the elect of God, both among the Jews and among the Gentiles; so that he has the same equal propriety in one as another, and they the same claim to him, and the same encouragement to believe in him, for righteous-

ness and life: and moreover, he *is rich unto all that call upon him:* he is not only rich as God, being possessed of all divine perfections and glory, but as Mediator, having the riches of grace and glory in him; and is rich, beneficent, liberal and free in dispensing, pardoning, justifying, and sanctifying grace to all that come unto him, throw themselves at his feet, implore his grace and righteousness, and call upon him with faith and fervency. Such as these are here designed, and not all that make mention of his name, or are called by it; but who are the true worshippers of him in faith and fear; for the invocation of his name includes all worship of him, and exercise of grace upon him; hence this passage is no inconsiderable proof of his proper deity.

Ver. 13. *For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord,* &c.] This testimony is taken out of Joel ii. 32. and is brought to prove the truth of what the apostle had just suggested, that all that call upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, will find him rich and plenteous in mercy, and ready to dispense his grace and salvation to them: such *shall be saved:* be they who they will, whether Jews or Gentiles; not with a temporal salvation only, but with a spiritual and eternal one; for the words of the prophet refer to Gospel times, as the context shews, and is cited and applied thereunto by the Apostle Peter, Acts ii. 16—21. besides, the deliverance and salvation Joel speaks of, is of a *remnant whom the Lord shall call;* and designs the remnant according to the election of grace, whether among Jews or Gentiles, whom God calls by his efficacious grace; between which call and eternal glory, there is a certain and inseparable connexion.

Ver. 14. *How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed?* &c.] The apostle having observed, that whoever, Jew or Gentile, believe in the Lord and call upon his name, shall be saved; and that the same Lord was ready and willing to dispense his grace, without any difference to them; suggests, that it was therefore absolutely necessary, that the Gospel should be preached to the Gentiles, as well as to the Jews; that it was the will of God it should be; that what he and others did, was by a divine commission; that they were sent by the Lord to preach the Gospel to them; that hearing they might believe, and so call upon the name of the Lord, and be saved; and therefore the Jews ought not to blame them for so doing, for there was a real necessity for it, since there can be no true calling upon God without faith, no faith without hearing, no hearing without preaching, and no preaching without a divine mission. The first of these is signified by this interrogation. Every man calls upon the God he believes in, and him only; this has been the practice of all men, in all nations; such as have not believed in God and Christ, do not call upon them; 'tis true indeed, there may be an external invocation of them, where there is no true faith; but then this is not calling upon them in truth and sincerity; as is their faith, so is their calling upon them; as the one is historical, the other is only external; for there is no true invocation without faith, or any that is acceptable to God, or of any avail to men; for calling on the name of the Lord, as it ought to be practised in all religious worship, so it includes faith, and every part of worship as done in faith: *and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?* the meaning is, that there is no faith in Christ without hearing of him; as it is in human, so in divine faith, there may be believing without seeing, but not without hearing; so we believe that there were such men as Alexander and Julius Cæsar, and other persons now in being, though we never saw them, having heard of them, or had a report made of them, which we have reason to give credit to; so there may be, and is faith in Christ without seeing him with our bodily eyes, though not without hearing of him; for of an unheard-of person, there can be no faith in him, because no exercise of thought about him. This is to be understood of outward hearing of the word, and of adult persons only; for that infants may have the grace of regeneration, and so faith wrought in them by the spirit of God, without hearing the word, is not to be denied; since as they are capable of the principles of corruption, why not of grace? and also of such persons as have the right and free exercise of the faculties of hearing and speaking, and not of such who never could hear, and speak; for as the spirit works where, and how he pleases, so he can work faith in the hearts of such persons who never heard the word, and enable them to exercise it on the proper object, and cause them secretly to call upon the name of the Lord, with groans which cannot be uttered. Moreover, this is to be understood of the ordinary way and means of believing; for though God can, and sometimes does work by other means, and even without any, yet his usual way and method is, to bring men to faith and repentance by the hearing of the word: *and how shall they hear without a preacher?* or there's no hearing without preaching; there may be reading without it, and this ought to be where there is preaching, to see that what is preached is agreeably to the Scriptures; but there is no hearing the word explained without preaching; explaining the word is preaching. There is no hearing of Christ, and salvation by him, without the preaching of the Gospel; the usual and ordinary way of hearing from God, and of Christ, is by the ministry of the word: this shews not only the necessity and usefulness of the Gospel ministry, but also points out the subject-matter of it, which is Christ, and him crucified. They that preach ought to preach concerning the person of Christ, his offices, grace, righteousness, blood, sacrifice and satisfaction, otherwise men may hear the preacher, and not hear Christ.

Ver. 15. *And how shall they preach, except they be sent,* &c.] There's no proper, rightful, regular, and lawful preaching of the word without a mission, which is either extraordinary, or ordinary: extraordinary mission was such as the apostles themselves had; who, as they were called to extraordinary service, had extraordinary qualifications, and were sent forth in an extraordinary manner, with a power of doing miracles, and immediately by Christ himself. Ordinary mission is of men to be pastors and teachers, which includes qualifications for the ministerial work; for whom Christ sends forth into such service, he bestows gifts on them, fitting them for it, some more, some less, but all have some; and it also includes a call unto it, which is either internal, and by the spirit of God, and lies

partly in the furniture he gives, and the inclination of the heart to this good work which he forms; and which arises not from a vanity of mind, and a desire of popular applause, and worldly views, and sinister ends; but from a real concern for the good of souls, and the glory of Christ, being willing to deny themselves, and forsake all for Christ, to suffer reproach for his name's sake, and to forego all worldly interest, and secular views: or is external, which is given by the churches of Christ, after due trial and examination of gifts, and a serious consideration of the matter, and that in the most solemn manner; and this is what may be properly called a preacher's mission, and none but such who are in this way sent out ought to preach the Gospel: and to such well agrees, and may be applied, that passage in Isa. lii. 7. where *it is written, how beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things:* which words are not to be understood of the messengers that brought the tidings of deliverance from the Babylonish captivity, but of the ministers of the Gospel. In the text in Isaiah it is expressed in the singular number, *how beautiful are the feet of him,* &c. and is by some understood of Christ, as it is also by many Jewish writers: thus interpreting the *turtle's voice* in Cant. ii. 12. "this "(say they [a]) is the voice of the King Messiah, pro- "claiming and saying, *how beautiful on the mountains,* "&c." And elsewhere [b] it is observed, that the "Rabbins say, great is peace, for when the King Mes- "siah comes, he does not open but with peace, as it is "said, *how beautiful upon the mountains,* &c." And says [c] another, "one verse says, *how beautiful upon the moun- "tains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings,* "פירש המלך המשיח, *the explanation,* or meaning is, "*the King Messiah:*" and some of the more modern ones [d] of them, own these words are, מענין הגאולה וביאת המשיח, *concerning the redemption, and the coming of the Messiah:* and so the words, however they may principally regard the Messiah and his ministry, are properly applied to the apostles of Christ; and may be rightly understood of any minister of the Gospel, whose business it is to *preach the Gospel of peace:* which is so called from the subject-matter of it, peace made by the blood of Christ, which it proclaims; from the effect of it, producing peace and tranquillity in distressed minds, and making men of peaceable dispositions; and from the use of it, which is to direct men to the way of peace, to guide their feet in it, lead them to eternal peace: their work is also to *bring glad tidings of good things;* such as reconciliation, righteousness, pardon, life, and eternal salvation, by a crucified Christ; and the preaching of such a Gospel, and bringing such news, make their *feet beautiful:* one should have thought rather their lips than their feet would be took notice of; the reason of this is, partly because of the agreeableness of their walk and conversation to the doctrine they preach; and partly because of their readiness to preach it everywhere, though they run the utmost risk in so doing; and also because of their swiftness, particularly of the apostles, in going through the cities of Israel, and running over the Gentile world with the Gospel of peace, in so short a time as they did; and more especially because of the acceptableness of their message, with which they were sent and ran; see 2 Sam. xviii. 27. And so this passage is pertinently alleged to prove, that mission is necessary to preaching; since these words declare the character of Gospel ministers, as publishers of peace, and messengers of good tidings; and express the message itself, and the nature of it; both which suppose them to be sent by another, even the Lord, under whose authority, and by whose warrant they act; just as ambassadors, heralds, and messengers do, by virtue of a commission they receive from their prince.

Ver. 16. *But they have not all obeyed the Gospel,* &c.] Who hear it, and to whom it is preached; for though ministers may be regularly sent forth, and rightly preach the Gospel in the purity of it, yet there's no success, without the power of God attending it: ministers may preach, and men may hear, and yet not obey the Gospel; that is, cordially embrace the doctrines, and sincerely submit to the ordinances of it: for *Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report:* or *our hearing,* agreeably to the Hebrew word in Isa. liii. 1. שמעתנו, and which designs not the *hearing* with which the apostles heard Christ, though what they heard from him, they made known to men; but the hearing, or the word heard, which others had from them, namely, the report they made in their ministry, of the person and grace of Christ, which was disregarded, when the arm and power of the Lord were not revealed and exerted: this was the case of the Jews in Isaiah's time, and the same in the times of Christ and his apostles, and is always the case, when divine power does not attend the preaching of the Gospel.

Ver. 17. *So then faith comes by hearing,* &c.] That is, by preaching; for the word *hearing* is used in the same sense as in the preceding verse; and designs the report of the Gospel, or the preaching of the word, which is the means God makes use of, to convey faith into the hearts of his people; for preachers are ministers, or instruments, by whom others believe: *and hearing by the word of God:* or *of Christ,* as some copies read, and so do the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions; and intends either the holy Scriptures, which have God for their author, and Christ for the subject of them; and which furnish the men of God, or ministers of the Gospel, with proper materials to preach; and so hearing or preaching is by them: or else the command of God or Christ, which [illegible] more properly signifies; and the sense is, that men preach the Gospel, in obedience to the commandment of the everlasting God, and according to the orders, mission, and commission, warrant and authority, of the Lord Jesus Christ: and so these words are the conclusion, and sum of the whole; that as invocation is owing to faith, so faith to hearing, hearing to preaching, preaching to a mission; whence it follows, that it is the original will of God, to send forth his apostles and ministers, to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles, as well as to the

[a] Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 11. 4.
[b] Vajikra Rabba Parash, c. 9. fol. 153. 2. Perek Shalom, fol. 20. 1.
[c] Raziel, fol. 22. 2.
[d] Menasseh ben Israel Nishmath Chayim, fol. 41. 2.

Jews; that they hearing might believe, and believing call upon the Lord, and so be saved by him: it is a saying of the Jews, שמיעה בדבור תליא, *hearing depends upon the word*[e].

Ver. 18. *But I say, have they not heard?* &c.] ואני אומר, *but I say*, is a phrase frequently used by the Jewish doctors in disputation, either in forming or answering objections. The Ethiopic version confines these words to Israel, and reads, *have not Israel heard?* whereas they are to be understood both of Jews and Gentiles; the question refers to each, and the answer is, *yes, verily*: which the Arabic renders just the reverse, *no*, or *not at all*, *notwithstanding their sound went into all the earth*: and so makes this an aggravation of their stupidity, and obstinate rejection of the Gospel, that they would not hear it, though its sound reached every place; but the answer is in the affirmative, they did hear. The Jews heard the Gospel in the times of Isaiah, and other prophets, though they disbelieved the report of it; they heard it from John the Baptist, and were pleased with his ministry for a while; yea, they heard Christ himself preach it, who spake as never man did, with power and authority, as the Scribes did not, and wondered at his gracious words; they heard the apostles of Christ, who for some time were limited in their ministry to them only, and after their commission was enlarged, were ordered to preach first to them; so that they could not say they had not heard it, and they were left entirely inexcusable. The Gentiles also had heard it; the apostles were bid to go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature; and at a proper opportunity, they did as the Lord commanded them, and the Gentiles heard the Gospel with joy and pleasure; multitudes were converted everywhere, and churches raised through their ministry, according to the will of God; thus *their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world*: the passage referred to is Psal. xix. 4. which some here, as there, understand literally of the works of nature, the heavens, the firmament, the sun, moon and stars, proclaiming every where the being of God, his perfections, especially his wisdom, power, and goodness; so that the Gentiles were not without hearing of God, even whilst they were destitute of a divine revelation; which was a sort of a prelude of the after extensive spread of the Gospel among them: a voice, or sound, is ascribed to the inanimate creatures; and which is so loud, that it reaches to the end of the earth. There are three voices, the Jews say[f], which go *from one end of the world to the other*: and one of them is קול גלגל חמה, *the voice of the orb of the sun*: others understand these words of the law, of which many *encomiums* are given in the psalm from whence this passage is taken; and though it was delivered peculiarly to the people of the Jews, yet the fame of it reached the nations of the world, as Moses suggests it would, Deut. iv. 6. and the Jews say[g], "that when the law was given to Israel, קולו הולך "מסוף העולם ועד סופו, *its voice went from one end of "the world to the other*." Or as it is better expressed by Philo[h], and almost in the words of this text, "the "fame of the laws which Moses left, is gone through-"out all the world, unto the ends of the earth." But certain it is, that the apostle is speaking neither of the light of nature, nor the law of Moses, but of the preaching of the Gospel; and what the Psalmist, literally understood, says of the heavens, that the apostle in an allegorical and mystical sense, or by an argument from the lesser to the greater, or by way of allusion, applies to the apostles and ministers of the Gospel, the luminaries of the world, and stars of heaven; whose ministry, by this time, had reached the then known parts of the habitable world; as it was to do, before the destruction of Jerusalem, according to Christ's prediction, Matt. xxiv. 14. and as the Apostle Paul testifies it had, Col. i. 6. and in which he himself had a very considerable share, having preached the Gospel from Jerusalem, round about unto Illyricum. There is some little difference between the passage in the Psalms, and as cited or referred to by the apostle, who instead of *their line*, reads *their sound*: which have made some suspect a corruption of the present Hebrew text, or a various reading; and that the Septuagint, followed by the apostle, used a copy which had not, קום, *their line*, but קולם, *their voice*, and which was the true reading; but then how came the Chaldee paraphrase to render it by, מתח, *extension*, and Aquila by κανων, *a canon*, or *rule?* and besides, the Masora observes, that this word is no where else read, which is not true of קולם, for that often occurs; to which may be added, had this been the reading, the Septuagint would have rendered it most probably, as they do elsewhere, by *voice*, and not *sound*: but for the reconciliation of this let it be observed, that the Hebrew word signifies a rule, or plummet, or such a line as builders use in their work, as a direction to them, hence Kimchi[i] explains it by בנינם, *their building*: and so it may signify any rule, or direction, whether given by writing, and so Aben Ezra[k] interprets it by מכתב, *writing*, or by word of mouth; besides, the carpenter's line, when stretched out, and remitted upon the timber, makes a sound, and hence the word might be used for one: all this agrees with the ministry of the apostles, who were builders; and as they worked by a line and rule themselves, so they gave out rules and directions to others, both by writing and preaching, both which reached far and near: this the apostle seems to allude to, in 2 Cor. x. 13, 14, 15, 16. where he speaks of the measure, line, and rule of their ministry, which reached to Corinth and further, without going into another man's line: moreover, that great Oriental critic, and our countryman, Mr. Pocock[l], has shewn from the use of the word קוה, in the Arabic language, that the word in the Psalms may signify a loud cry, or noise, as well as a line, or rule; so that the psalmist and the apostle may be easily reconciled.

Ver. 19. *But I say, did not Israel know?* &c.] Some supply the word *God*, did not Israel know God? verily,

[e] Zohar in Deut. fol. 110. 3.
[f] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 20. 2.
[g] T. Bab. Zebachim, fol. 116. 1.
[h] De Vita Mosis, l. 2. p. 657.

[i] In Psal. xix. 4.
[k] In ib.
[l] Not. in Portam Mosis, c. 4. p. 49, &c.

they did; they knew the being and perfections of God, the unity of God, and the trinity of persons in the divine essence; they knew the will of God, and the right way of worshipping him; for they were favoured with a divine revelation; to them were committed the oracles of God, and to them belonged the giving of the law, and the service of God: others supply the word *Gospel*, did not Israel know the Gospel? yes, they did; they not only heard it, but knew it; not spiritually and experimentally, but notionally and speculatively, and, against the light and conviction of their own minds, obstinately rejected it with contempt: but I rather think this question refers to the calling of the Gentiles, and their own rejection; and the sense is, did not Israel know, that the Gentiles were to be called by the grace of God, and that they themselves were to be cast off? they did know this, at least something of it, though not so clearly as it is now revealed to the holy apostles and prophets by the spirit; but in some measure they could not but know it, since there were such strong hints of it in the writings of the Old Testament, some of which are hereafter produced: *first Moses saith*: not *Moses the first*, as if there was another, or a second Moses, but either Moses, who is the first of the inspired writers, and chief of the prophets; or rather this regards order of time, Moses in the first place says so and so, for other testimonies are after cited; the passage in Moses referred to, is Deut. xxxii. 21. *I will provoke you to jealously by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you.* The Gentiles are here designed by *them that are no people*: who before God, and in his sight, as all nations are, were as a drop of the bucket, as the small dust of the balance; nay, even as nothing, yea, less than nothing and vanity: likewise they were no people of any account, of any name; they were mean and contemptible, neglected and overlooked by God himself, and treated with contempt by the Jews, his professing people: and besides, they were not as yet openly and visibly the people of God; they neither called upon his name, nor were they called by his name; he had not as yet taken from among them a people for his name; these are also meant by *the foolish nation*; Jarchi[m] says, the Cuthites, or Samaritans, are intended; who were neighbours to the Jews, and greatly hated by them: but it may more rightly be applied to all the Gentiles in general, who notwithstanding their large pretensions to natural, civil, and moral wisdom, yet being without the true knowledge of God, Christ, and the Gospel, were a foolish people; and in nothing more did their folly appear, than in their idolatry and superstition. Now the Lord threatened by these people to provoke the Jews to jealousy, and to anger them; and this was but just, and by way of retaliation; for since they provoked him to jealousy and anger, by worshipping strange gods, which plainly declared their want of faith in him, affection for him, and their departure from him; it was a righteous thing in him to provoke them to jealousy of him, as if he had no affection for them, who had been so long, in some sense, an husband to them all; and as about to cast them off; and to anger them, by sending his Gospel among the Gentiles, and calling them by his grace, and making them partakers of his special favours; whereby this prophecy had its full accomplishment: for though the Jews rejected and despised the Gospel themselves, yet nothing more provoked them than that it should be carried among the Gentiles; see Acts xxii. 21, 22. 1 Thess. ii. 16. Now from these words of Moses, the Israelites must needs know, they could not but know that it was the will of God to call the Gentiles, and reject them.

Ver. 20. *But Esaias is very bold, and saith*, &c.] The apostle here produces another testimony in proof of this, that the Israelites must needs have some knowledge of this truth, the calling of the Gentiles; since a famous prophet of theirs, Isaiah, also spake it out with great freedom; he did not mince the matter, or cover it with dark sayings, but with all plainness and perspicuity, and with great courage and intrepidity declared it; though he knew he run the risk, not only of his fame and credit among the Jews, but of his life also, for so doing: the citation is made from Isa. lxv. 1. *I was found of them that sought me not, I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me*; here also the Gentiles are meant by *them that sought me not, and asked not after me*; the Messiah; and so R. Moses the priest says[n], that these words are to be understood, על אומות העולם, *concerning the nations of the world*. The common people among them sought after the things of the world; their philosophers sought after the wisdom of it; and the more devout and religious among them sought the observance of superstitious rites and ceremonies, and, at best and most, a little morality and external righteousness; but none sought after Christ, for they knew nothing of him, and therefore did not so much as ask after him; they did not ask counsel of him, nor ask concerning him, nor ask for him; not for his coming into the world, as the Jews did, nor for the preaching of the Gospel among them, for it came among them unasked for, unexpected, and undesired, as well as undeserved by them, nor for any blessing of his; and yet such was his grace and goodness, that he was *found* of these persons, in the preaching of the Gospel; which by his kind providence was brought among them, and they were brought under the hearing of it; and by the spirit of God directed to him in it, in whom they found life, peace, pardon, righteousness, food, and rest, and every valuable blessing; a pearl of great price they found, a finding which can never be lost: he is also said to be *made manifest* unto them, not in the flesh, but in the ministry of the word; in which his person, blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, are evidently set forth, and clearly manifested; and besides the outward manifestation of Christ to them by the Gospel, they had an internal revelation of him in their hearts by his spirit, setting forth to them his grace and fulness, and shewing them their interest therein: from this prophecy, also, the Jews could not but have some knowledge of this mystery of grace.

Ver. 21. *But to Israel he saith*, &c.] Or against Israel, or concerning Israel, he saith in the same prophecy in the next verse, ver. 2. *All day long I have stretched forth my hands, unto a disobedient and gainsay-*

[m] In Deut. xxxii. 21.

[n] In Aben Ezra in Isa. lxv. 1.

ing people; very rightly does the apostle apply these words to Israel, as he does the former to the Gentiles; and just in like manner does the above-mentioned Jewish writer, R. Moses the priest, interpret them. The Lord's *stretching out* his *hands all the day long* to them, designs the ministry of the prophets one after another to them, the preaching of John the Baptist, of Christ and his apostles among them: but they were a stiff-necked and rebellious people, uncircumcised in heart and ears; would have none of his counsel, and despised his reproof; contradicted and blasphemed the word; rejected the Messiah and his Gospel; killed the Prince of life, and persecuted his apostles; so that it was just with God to write a *Lo-ammi* upon them, and cast them off; and, to pave the way for the account of the rejection of these people in the next chapter, is all this said, and these testimonies produced.

CHAP. XI.

THE apostle having spoken of the calling of the Gentiles, and given a hint of the perverseness of the Jews in slighting the Gospel, proceeds in this chapter to treat of their rejection; in which he shews, that it was not universal, though of the greater part in his time; and which he confirms by some passages out of the Old Testament, and then points at the end and design of God in the casting them off; and exhorts the Gentiles not to insult them, but to learn to be humble and cautious by what was done to them; and foretels the conversion of the Jews in the latter day, which will be general, so that their rejection is not final; and resolves the whole dispensation of God, both with respect to Jews and Gentiles, into the unsearchable wisdom and sovereign will of God: he begins with an objection he saw would be made upon what he had said, concerning the calling of the Gentiles, and the unbelief of the Jews, that then God had wholly cast off his people, ver. 1. to which he answers with a *God forbid*, by way of detestation; and by instancing in himself, who was of the people of the Jews, and yet was called; and by distinguishing between some and others among them: there were some who were foreknown, loved, and chosen of God from everlasting: these were not cast off, but others who were not foreknown, ver. 2. and then he illustrates the present case of the Jews by observing how it was with them in the times of Elias; who though he complained of their apostacy and cruelty, and imagined that there were none left but himself that worshipped the true God, yet there were then seven thousand, which were preserved from the idolatry of Baal, ver. 2, 3, 4. and so the apostle observes it was now, ver. 5. there was a small number whom God of his free grace had chosen, and reserved for himself, and so were not all cast away, as the objection suggested; and having called this choice an election of grace, he argues the contrariety and inconsistency of grace and works in this affair, ver. 6. and since it appeared that there were two sorts of people among them, one that were chosen and the other not, hence it was, that though Israel did not obtain the righteousness they sought for, yet they that were chosen obtained it, and so were not cast away, when the rest were, ver. 7. and that so it should be, or that this should be the case of the greater part of the Jews, that they should be given up to blindness and hardness of heart, the apostle proves by some testimonies of Isaiah and David, which he produces, ver. 8, 9, 10. hence follows an objection, that if this be the case, then God had appointed them to stumble, that they might fall, even all of them, and always continue fallen; to which the apostle answers with a *God forbid*, as usual, when any thing is objected which is abhorred; and by observing the view, event, and order of things; shewing, that the fall of the Jews issued in the salvation of the Gentiles; and the salvation of the Gentiles was to provoke the Jews to seek the same mercy, ver. 11. and then follows an improvement and illustration of this end, or event of their fall, ver. 12. that if the fall and lessening of the Jews were the means of enriching the Gentiles with the riches of Christ and his grace, what a glory must be brought to them, when they should all of them be converted and join them! and that the rejection of the Jews was neither total nor final, the apostle argues from his office, even as an apostle of the Gentiles, whom he addresses as such, ver. 13. and from his view and end in executing that office, which was to provoke the Jews to emulate the Gentiles, and so save some of them, ver. 14. and then he repeats in other words, ver. 15. the argument he had used in ver. 12. and proves the future conversion of the Jews, from the instances of conversion and sanctification, which had been, and were then among them; which were as the first-fruits to the lump, and the root to the branches; and were pledges and tokens of a general conversion and sanctification of them hereafter, ver. 16. and by occasion of the metaphor of the root and branches before used, he expresses the rejection of the Jews, by the breaking off some of the branches, and the reception of the Gentiles by their ingrafture into a Gospel church-state among the converted Jews, enjoying the same privileges with them, ver. 17. and, since they were originally of a wild olive-tree, and merely of grace partook of the root and fatness of the good olive of the Gospel church-state, as consisting first of the Jews, they ought not to be haughty and insolent, and boast and brag over the Jews, since they were beholden to them, and not the Jews to them, ver. 18. and whereas an objection might be made, that the Jews were cast off, to make room for the Gentiles, ver. 19. and therefore the one must be more deserving than the other; the apostle replies to it, ver. 20. by granting, that the one were broken off, or rejected, that the other might be ingrafted, or taken in; but then as it was owing to unbelief in the Jews that they were cast off, in which the Gentiles were before conversion as well as they, so it was by faith they stood in their church-relation, which was the gift of God, and owing to his grace; so that their ingrafture and continuance in a Gospel church-state were not the effect of merit in them; wherefore he gives them

this good advice, not to be proud and lifted up with their privileges, as though they were of their own deserving, but to fear the Lord and his goodness, from whence they sprung; and suggests, that they should be so far from making such an use of the rejection of the Jews, that it ought rather to engage them to caution, care, and fear; for they were the natural branches in the olive-tree, and if these were not spared when behaving disagreeably, they must not expect to fare otherwise, who were originally of the wild olive-tree, should they act unworthy of the privileges they enjoyed, ver. 21. wherefore the apostle recommends to their serious consideration the severity of God in the casting off of the Jews, and his goodness in taking in them, the Gentiles; and threatens them with cutting off, should they slight, neglect, or misuse the goodness of God to them in his house and ordinances, ver. 22. and on the other hand, an intimation is given, that the Jews, though broken off, shall be grafted in again, should their unbelief discontinue, and faith in Christ be given them, which was not impossible with God; he is able both to remove their unbelief, give them faith, and reinstate them in a church-relation, ver. 23. and as it is without doubt he can do it, it looks very likely that he will; which may be argued from the ingrafture of the Gentiles, who were like the olive-tree, wild by nature; were cut out from thence, and, contrary to nature, grafted into the good olive-tree; wherefore by an argument from the lesser to the greater, much more may it be thought, that the Jews, the natural branches, will, in God's own time, be grafted in their former church-state, some of their ancestors were in, ver. 24. yea, the apostle argues the certainty of their conversion, and reinstatement into the Gospel church, from the design of Providence in suffering blindness in part to happen to them; which was not intended always to continue, only until all the elect of God are gathered in among the Gentiles; and this mystery of Providence and grace, he thought fit to acquaint the Gentiles with, lest they should be conceited of themselves, as if they only shared the favour of God, and were deserving of it, to the contempt of the Jews, ver. 25. Moreover, the apostle affirms that all Israel shall be saved, ver. 26. which is consequentially deduced from what he had said, and which he proves by a passage out of Isa. lix. 20. and by its being a principal part of the covenant, which God has made with them, which he will not break, but shall be fulfilled; when he shall make them sensible of their sins, and take them away by the application of his pardoning grace, ver. 27. and whereas the implacable enmity of the Jews to Christ and his Gospel might be objected to such a gracious procedure of God towards them, the apostle removes the objection, by granting that they were enemies to the Gospel on account of the Gentiles, to whom it was preached; but then there was a chosen people among them, who were beloved of God; which would be made manifest, because of the oath and promise made unto their fathers, ver. 28. wherefore as the purposes, promises, and covenant of God are immutable, so the gifts of his grace, and the calling of his people included in them, are things certain and irrevocable, ver. 29. and so the calling of the Jews, and the gifts of his grace designed for them, which is another proof of their vocation and conversion; and which is further argued, and made both more probable and certain, by comparing the case of the Jews and Gentiles together; as for the Gentiles, they were formerly infidels and obtained mercy, through the unbelief of the Jews, ver. 30. wherefore arguing from the less probable to that which is more so, the Jews, though for the present unbelievers, yet it may be thought, that through the mercy the Gentiles had received, they would some time or other be provoked to seek for, and so obtain the same mercy, ver. 31. and the rather this may be given into and received, not only because they both have been in a state of unbelief, but the end and design of God in concluding them in it, were to have mercy on each of them, ver. 32. which dispensation of God both to one and to the other by turns, in different ways, was so amazing and unaccountable to the apostle, that he breaks out into admiration at the wisdom and knowledge of God: which were so abundant, that they could not be searched out, conceived of, and expressed, ver. 33. the reasons of which lay in his own breast, and are only known to himself, no one having known his mind, or been his counsellor, ver. 34. nor is he obliged to give an account of his matters, and the reasons of his proceedings, to any of his creatures; he is not indebted to them for any thing, nor does he any injustice to any of them, by whatsoever steps he takes in Providence and grace; let that appear, and recompense will be made, ver. 35. every thing must be resolved into his sovereign will and pleasure, and so this of choosing some, and leaving others, of rejecting the Jews, and receiving the Gentiles, and also that of calling the Jews again; as it is reasonable every thing should, since all things are from him, through him, and to him, ver. 36. and so all glory is due unto him, and here ends the doctrinal part of this epistle.

Ver. 1. *I say then, hath God cast away his people?* &c.] The Alexandrian copy adds here, *whom he foreknew*, as in the next verse; upon the citation of the above passages out of Moses and Isaiah, relating to the calling of the Gentiles, and the rejection of the Jews, the apostle saw an objection would arise, which he here takes up from the mouth of an adversary, and proposes it; in which is suggested, that God has cast away all his people the Jews, according to this account; and if so, where's his covenant with Abraham? what's become of his promises? and how is his faithfulness to be accounted for? and what hope can any Israelite have of ever obtaining salvation? than which, nothing can be thought more injurious to God, and absurd in itself. This was an old prejudice of the Jewish nation, and still continues, that God never would, nor has he cast them away, even in their present condition; it is one of the articles of their creed, received by the Karaites*, a sect among them, that "the blessed God לא מאס לאנשי הגלות, *hath not cast* "*away the men of the captivity*, though they are under "the chastisements of God; but it is fit that they "should every day obtain salvation by the hands of "Messiah, the son of David." Now to this objection

* Apud Trigland. de Sect. Karæorum, c. 10. p. 151.

the apostle makes answer; *first*, in his usual way, *God forbid*, when any thing was objected which was displeasing to him, abhorred by him, which was not agreeable to the perfections of God, to the truth of his word, and promises, and could by no means be admitted of; and *next* by observing his own case, which was a standing instance to the contrary; for God had chosen him unto eternal salvation, Christ had redeemed him by his blood, and he was effectually called by grace; and as to his eternal state, he had no doubt or scruple about it; and besides, the Lord had made him a minister of the Gospel, had greatly qualified him for that work, had raised him to the high office of an apostle, and had made him very useful to the souls of many, both Jews and Gentiles; and yet he was one of the nation of the Jews, and therefore God had not cast them all away, as the objection insinuates: *for I also am an Israelite*; according to the flesh, by lineal descent from Jacob or Israel; see 2 Cor. xi. 22. Phil. iii. 5. as well as in a spiritual sense: *of the seed of Abraham*: *the grandfather* of *Israel*: the head of the Jewish nation he was, both of his natural and of his spiritual seed, who is the father of us all: *of the tribe of Benjamin*; a very little tribe, which in the time of the Judges was near being destroyed, and, upon the return from the captivity of Babylon, was very small, as it was at this time; and yet God had not cast away this, much less all the tribes of Israel.

Ver. 2. *God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew*, &c.] The apostle goes on with his answer to the objection, by distinguishing and explaining who he meant by the people God had not cast away, namely, which were *foreknown* by him; for all mankind are in a sense his people, being made, maintained, and supported in their beings by him, yet they are not all foreknown; for were they, they would be all predestinated, called, conformed to the image of Christ, justified and glorified; but some of them will be cast away, being bad and wicked, and will be sent into everlasting punishment: and though the people of the Jews in general were the people of God, being in a sense chose, known, and distinguished by him from the rest of the world, yet they were not all a *foreknown* people, in the sense the apostle uses the word; wherefore a great number of them were cast away, of which afterwards the apostle speaks largely in this chapter: but then there were a people among them, that were the people of God in a more special sense; they were chosen by him from everlasting to be his people; they were taken into the covenant of his grace as such; they were given to Christ as his people, and were redeemed and saved by him on that account; and were, or were to be called, with an holy calling, when they are openly declared to be the people of God, whom he foreknew: he not merely knew them before, by his general prescience and fore-knowledge, which extends to all persons and things; or foresaw their faith, holiness, and good works, and so chose them for himself; for faith, holiness, and good works, are fruits and effects of electing grace; but he so knew them before, even from all eternity, as that he approved of them, liked them, loved them, and took delight and complacency in them: now these his people he never did, nor never will cast away. Their numbers may be but very small in some periods of time, yet none of them are cast away; God may not immediately arise to their help and assistance in time of distress, or so soon as they desire and expect; he may withdraw his presence, hide himself, and stand at a distance from them; he may afflict them in a fatherly way, when they may think he has cast them off, or cast them away; whereas he never casts any of them away, nor out of his heart's love, nor out of his sight, nor out of the covenant of his grace, nor out of the hands of his son, nor out of his family, or so as that any of them shall perish eternally; so far from it, that he takes the utmost delight in them, grants them the greatest nearness to himself, bears the strongest affection for them, and takes the most diligent care of them; whoever casts them out of their affection and company, he will not; the reasons are, because his love to them is unchangeable, his purpose concerning their salvation stands firm and sure, his word and oath are unalterable, his gifts and calling are without repentance; and they are his jewels, portion, and inheritance; they are as the apple of his eye, and continually held by his right hand. The apostle next replies to this objection, by putting them in mind of the case and state of the church of God, in the times of Elijah; and what judgment that prophet formed of it, and in which he appeared to be mistaken: *wot ye not what the Scripture saith of Elias?* do ye not know? ye cannot be ignorant who have, and read the Scripture, what it says of Elias, or *in Elias*: that is, as the Arabic version renders it, *in the history of Elias*; in the account it gives of his life and times: *how he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying*; that is, how he spoke to God in prayer, concerning Israel; and instead of praying for them, as the prophets were wont to do, he was obliged to bring a complaint against them for their idolatry, contempt of the worship of God, and violent persecution of his true followers. The apostle chose to mention this instance because there was some likeness between his case and Elijah's; and the state of the people of Israel at the then present time, and as in the times of Elijah; for as the Jews in his time killed and persecuted the prophets of the Lord, so in the present time they had killed the Lord Jesus Christ, and persecuted his apostles; and as Elijah, though one of their own prophets, was obliged to make intercession against them, so the apostle, though one of their own countrymen, could not but speak against them, and of their just rejection by God: and this he observes, to soften their resentments against him, when so great a prophet had done so before him: and this the Jews themselves own [p], for they say that Elijah מדבר קטיגוריא על ישראל. *brought an accusation against Israel*: and it is observed by another [q], that "coals "are said of Isaiah and Elijah, because they delivered "*an accusation against Israel*: one called them a people "of unclean lips, and the other said, for they have for-"saken thy covenant:" which is the apostle's sense.

Ver. 3. *Lord, they have killed thy prophets*, &c.] By the order of Jezebel, wife of Ahab king of Israel, 1 Kings xviii. 4. This sin of slaying the prophets of the

[p] Laniado in 1 Kings xix. 14.

[q] Jarchi in Isa. vi. 6.

Lord is charged upon the Jews by Christ, Matt. xxiii. 31, 37. and by the apostle, 1 Thess. ii. 15. In the text in 1 Kings xix. 14. 'tis added, *with the sword*: which expresses the manner of death they were put to; and this clause is there put after the following, according to a rule of transposition among the Jews; see it in the note on Matt. xxvii. 10. *And digged down thine altars*: either the altars which the patriarchs had formerly built, and were still in being; and though not used, yet were kept and had in great veneration: wherefore the pulling of them down was done in contempt of them, and of the worship of God, which had been formerly performed there: or else such altars, which the religious among the ten tribes built, since the times of Jeroboam, who forbad them to go up to Jerusalem, but ordered them to go to Dan or Bethel; which they not choosing to do, erected altars in different places for divine service, and which the Jews[*] say were allowed; for from that time, the prohibition of altars at other places than at Jerusalem ceased: *and I am left alone*: meaning either as a prophet, not knowing that Obadiah had hid an hundred prophets by fifty in a cave, 1 Kings xviii. 4. or else as a worshipper of the true God, imagining that he was the only person in Israel, that had a true zeal for the Lord of hosts: *and they seek my life*: lay in wait for it, Jezebel by her emissaries being in quest of him; 'tis added in 1 Kings xix. 14. *to take it away*; for she had swore by her gods, that by the morrow about that time, his life should be as the life of one of the prophets of Baal he had slain; and in one copy it is added here.

Ver. 4. *But what saith the answer of God unto him?* &c.] The divine response, or oracle, the בת קול, *Bath Kol*, or voice from heaven; the still small voice of the Lord, which Elijah heard: *I have reserved to myself*; for his worship and service, to be partakers of his grace, inheritors of his kingdom, to shew forth his praise, and for his name's sake, for his honour and glory: these he reserved in eternal election, in the council and covenant of peace; separated them in time from others by his grace, and preserved them from the general defection and apostacy: even *seven thousand men*: meaning either that precise and exact number, which was but small in comparison of the very large multitude of persons that were in the ten tribes, or else a certain number for an uncertain: *who have not bowed the knee*: a sign of reverence and adoration: *to the image of Baal*: Jezebel's god, the god of the Zidonians; a name common to many of the *deities* of the Gentiles, and signifies *lord*, or *master*; we read of *Baalim* in the plural number, for there were *lords many* of this name: in the Greek text the article is of the feminine gender, wherefore our translators have supplied the word *image*. This word has, in the Septuagint version, sometimes a feminine article as here; see 2 Kings xxi. 3. Jer. ii. 8, 23, 28. and vii. 9. and xi. 13. and xii. 16. and xix. 5. and xxiii. 27. and xxxii. 29, 35. Hos. ii. 8. and xiii. 1. but in 1 Kings xix. 18. from whence this passage is taken, the article is masculine, as it is also in Judg. ii. 11, 13. and in other places. This deity being either of both sexes, or of no distinguished sex: or it may be, the reason it has so often a feminine article is, because it was a young heifer, or in the form of one; so in the history of Tobias, ch. i. 5. it is said, that *all the tribes which apostatized together sacrificed* τη Βααλ τη δαμαλει, *to Baal the heifer*. The apostle's view in mentioning this instance is to shew, that when the church and cause of God are at the lowest, God has always some true worshippers of him; and that he never casts away his foreknown people, whose numbers are generally more than they are thought to be by the saints themselves; good men, as Elijah, may be mistaken in this matter; all which he accommodates to the then present state of God's people, in the following verse.

Ver. 5. *Even so then at this present time also*, &c.] In which the apostle lived, the time of preaching the Gospel, the accepted time, the day of salvation, which then was, and also now is; at that time when the Gospel was sent unto the Gentiles, and God took out of them a people for his name; when multitudes of them were converted, and embraced the faith of Christ; and when the Jews in general had rejected the Messiah, killed the Lord Jesus, persecuted his apostles, and contradicted and blasphemed the Gospel; yet still God had made a reserve of some among them, for himself: *there is a remnant*: alluding either to Isa. x. 21, 22. or to the oracle delivered to Elijah, saying, *I have reserved*, or *left*, &c. that as God had reserved for himself, in Elijah's time, a number of persons, who had not gone into the idolatrous worship of Baal, when the greater part of the Israelites did, so he had taken care to make a like reserve in the apostle's time, when the bulk of the Jewish nation had refused the Messiah, and despised his Gospel. This is a further proof, that God had not cast away all the people of the Jews; and that as Elijah was not the only worshipper of the true God in his time, so the apostle was not the only instance of grace among that people now; there was a number of them; the number of the disciples after our Lord's ascension, was an hundred and twenty; upon the first sermon preached by Peter, three thousand were converted, and added to them; after that, they are said to be about five thousand, and still multitudes were added, both of men and women, and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith; so that before the dispersion of the church at Jerusalem by a persecution, there might be at least such a number called by grace, as God had reserved in Elijah's time; though these, when compared with the generality of the nation, which remained in unbelief, were but a few, and therefore called a *remnant*, or a *reserve*, as the word may be rendered; for these were a set of men, whom God had reserved and preserved in his son, and in the covenant of his grace, from everlasting; and had kept a watchful eye over them in time, reserved them in his providence, and saved them to be called; and by calling them, had reserved them by his grace, and preserved them by his power, from the general unbelief, impenitence, blindness, and ignorance, which prevailed over the people of the Jews: which reserve was not owing to their superior goodness, they being in no wise, with respect to nature, birth, and privileges, better than those who were not reserved;

[*] Kimchi in 1 Kings xviii. 30.

nor to the disposition of their minds and wills, their minds and consciences being defiled, and their wills naturally as obstinate and perverse as others: nor to any good works done by them, since works before calling are not properly good, and those after are the fruits of that grace: but this reverse was made, *according to the election of grace*: God's choice of these persons before the world was, which is the source and spring of all the blessings of grace, both in time and eternity: hence these persons were put into the hands of Christ, secured in an everlasting covenant, took special care of by divine Providence, were effectually called by grace, justified, sanctified, and at last glorified: and this choice is owing to grace, for not men's choice of God's grace, but God's choice, owing to his own grace, is here meant. The Pelagians would have it, that this election is the choice which man makes of the grace of God: whereas such is the enmity of man's nature, and will against God and his grace, that he would never make choice of that, if the grace of God did not first make choice of him, and lay hold upon him: grace here, does not design the object of the choice, but the cause, spring, and motive of it, which is not any habit or quality in men, as faith and holiness, for these are fruits and effects of electing grace, and so not causes, motives, or conditions of it, but the free love and favour of God in his own heart; and shews the sovereignty and freeness of election, which is no ways depending on the will and works of men, but upon the sovereign good will and pleasure of God.

Ver. 6. *And if by grace, then is it no more of works*, &c.] Upon election, being called *the election of grace*, the apostle forms an argument, shewing the contrariety and inconsistency of grace, and works, in that affair; proving, that it must be by the one or the other: and if by the one, then not by the other; and that these two cannot be mixed and blended together in this matter. If election is *by grace*, as it certainly is; for no other reason can be given why God has chose one, and not another, but his own sovereign pleasure, or that free favour and unmerited love, with which he loves one and not another; and not because they are better, or had done, or would do, better things than others; *then it is no more*, or not at all, for it never was *of works*, was not influenced by them, does not arise from them, for it passed before ever any were done; and those that are done aright spring from it, and therefore could never be the rule and measure, causes, motives, and conditions of it; *otherwise grace is no more grace*: for "grace (as Austin has long ago observed) is "not grace, unless it is altogether freed;" it will lose its nature, and ought to change its name, and be no more called or reckoned grace, but a due debt; and a choice of persons to salvation should be thought, not to be what God is free to make or not, but what he is obliged to, as a reward of debt to men's works: *but if it be of works, then it is no more grace*; if election springs from, and depends upon the works of men, let no man ascribe it to the grace of God; for there is nothing of grace in it, if this be the case: *otherwise work is no more work*; that will lose its nature, and ought to lose its name too, and not be called a debt, but a free gift: but these things are contrary to one another; and so unalienable and unalterable in their natures, that the one cannot pass into the other, or the one be joined with the other, in this or any other part of man's salvation; for what is here said of election, holds true of justification, pardon of sin, and the whole of salvation. The Ethiopic version applies it to justification.

Ver. 7. *What then?* &c.] What can be said to the point the apostle is upon? 'tis as clear as the sun, 'tis out of all question, that God has not cast away all the people of the Jews, nor any whom he foreknew, in any age or period of time; neither in the time of Elijah, nor in the apostle's, he always having a reserve of some for himself; which reserve is owing to a previous choice of them, and that previous choice to be ascribed not to any works of theirs, but to his free grace and sovereign pleasure. Indeed *Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for*: that is, carnal Israel, the body and bulk of that people; who sought for life and righteousness by their obedience to the law, and which they in general were in quest of, and pursuit after, but did not obtain, though some of them might imagine they did; for the thing was impracticable and impossible, no life nor righteousness are ever to be had by the law of works: they did not obtain life and righteousness, because they sought them in a wrong place, and in a wrong way: they sought them not by faith in Christ Jesus, where they are only to be had, but by their own works, which fall abundantly short of procuring them for them: *but the election hath obtained it*. The apostle divides Israel into two parts, *the election* and *the rest*: by *the election* he means, elect men, the remnant among them, whom God had reserved for himself; just as *circumcision* designs circumcised persons, and *uncircumcision* uncircumcised persons, and *calling* called ones, and *righteousness* righteous men and women; see Rom. iii. 30. 1 Cor. i. 26. 2 Pet. iii. 13. Now these chosen ones obtained mercy, grace, life, and righteousness in Christ, as the apostle himself did, who was one of them; and that by virtue, and in consequence of their election, for which reason the word is here used; hence mercy was shewn them, grace was bestowed upon them, the righteousness of Christ was imputed to them, faith was given them, holiness was wrought in them, and they entitled to, and made meet for eternal life: these among Israel then obtained such favours and blessings; and so God's elect, in all ages and nations, obtain the same things, and will obtain; for the purpose of God according to election stands sure, his word and oath are immutable, his covenant inviolable, his grace unalienable, and his power omnipotent: *and the rest were blinded*: the non-election, or those who were not chosen and reserved, to whom Christ was *a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence*; and who *stumbled at the word* of the Gospel, *being disobedient* to the divine revelation, *whereunto they were appointed*, 1 Pet. ii. 8. hence they obtained no mercy, grace, faith, life, righteousness, and eternal salvation, but were *blinded*; left in that native blindness and ignorance, in which they were born and brought up; were blinded by themselves wilfully more and more: as they knew not the Messiah, so neither would they understand; they sinned wilfully against light and knowledge; they shut their eyes against all that evidence and demonstration given, of Jesus of Nazareth

being the Messiah, by his doctrines and miracles; and they were blinded by Satan, the god of this world, by whom they were led captive; who wrought effectually in them, and stirred up the malice and enmity of their minds against Christ and his Gospel; for they were of their father the devil, and his lusts they would do; and they were also blinded by God himself, so that they could not believe; for after all this, it was but just with God to give them up to judicial blindness and hardness of heart.

Ver. 8. *According as it is written,* &c.] In Isa. xxix. 10. and vi. 10. which passages the apostle seems to refer to, though it is not exactly word for word as here, yet the sense is the same: *God hath given them the spirit of slumber;* of stupidity and insensibility, so that they were as persons in a deep sleep; their senses locked up, without any knowledge of, or concern about, the danger they were in; having no sense of sin, or of the need of a Saviour; or of their being upon the borders of eternal ruin and damnation, or of any ways and means to escape it: but careless and secure, as persons fast asleep in the midst of the sea, or upon the top of a mast, who, when stricken and beaten, feel it not; but if by jogging are awaked at all, immediately return to sleep again, and so sleep the sleep of eternal death: *eyes that they should not see;* which being closed by the deep sleep and stupidity of mind they were judicially given up to, could see no beauty in Christ, wherefore they should desire him; none of the glories and excellencies of his person, blood, righteousness, and sacrifice; nothing amiable and agreeable in his Gospel, and the truths of it; nor had they any light in the prophecies of the Old Testament, which were so remarkably fulfilled in him; their minds were blinded, a vail was upon their hearts, and which remains to this day: *and ears that they should not hear;* for persons in a sleep, as their eyes are closed that they cannot see, so their ears are stopped that they cannot hear: and thus it was with these Jews, the awful judgment being upon them; they were uncircumcised in heart and ears; they were like the deaf adder, stopping their ears to the charming voice of Christ in the Gospel; and being given up in a judicial way, could neither understand his speech, nor hear his word: and this spirit of stupidity and insensibility, as it appeared in the times of Isaiah, so it continued *unto this day:* the then present time, in which the apostle lived; and has continued ever since, at least in part, and will until the fulness of the Gentiles is brought in. These passages, with some others following, are produced by the apostle out of their own prophets, to take off their resentment against him; and lest he should be thought to be severe upon them, when he said no more of them, but what had been prophesied long before concerning them. So Jarchi on Isa. xxix. 10. says, that Isaiah prophesies על פושעי ישראל, *concerning the transgressors of Israel.*

Ver. 9. *And David saith,* &c.] That is, Christ by the mouth of David, or David in the person of Christ; for the psalm out of which the following words are taken is a prophecy of the Messiah, as appears from some passages cited out of it in the New Testament, and applied to Christ; compare ver. 4. with John xv. 25. and ver. 9. with John ii. 17. Rom. xv. 3. and ver. 21. with John xix. 28, 29. and what are here cited are not so much imprecations, as predictions of what should befall the Jews, by way of recompense for their ill usage of the Messiah, in giving him gall for meat, and vinegar for drink: *let their table be made a snare, and a trap and a stumbling-block.* By their *table* may be meant, the altar; see Mal. i. 7, 12. and the sacrifices offered up upon it, their meat-offerings and drink-offerings, and all others; likewise the laws concerning the difference of meats, and indeed the whole ceremonial law may be intended, which lay in meats and drinks, and such like things: now the Jews placing their justifying righteousness before God, in the observance of these rites and ceremonies, and imagining that by these sacrifices their sins were really expiated and atoned for, they neglected and submitted not to the righteousness of Christ, but went about to establish their own; so that that which should have led them to Christ, became an hand-writing of ordinances against them, and rendered Christ of no effect to them: moreover, the sacred writings, which are full of spiritual food and divine refreshment, the prophecies of the Old Testament, which clearly pointed out Christ, not being understood, but misapplied by them, proved a trap, a snare, and a stumbling-block to them; so that they rejected the true Messiah, which issued in their utter ruin and destruction: yea, the preaching of the Gospel, the salutary truths and wholesome words of our Lord Jesus Christ, were a stumbling-block to the Jews, nay, even the savour of death unto death. Though these words may be literally understood of their table-mercies, the necessary provisions of life, their common food and drink, of which they had great scarcity in their last wars; so that they not only by wicked methods stole it from one another, but ate what was forbidden by their law, and what was abhorrent to nature, as one is said to eat her own child; nor is it to be overlooked, what is suggested by some, that the passover may be meant by their *table:* which was their grand yearly feast, and which they were eating [t], when they were surrounded and taken by the Roman army, like birds in a net, or beasts in a trap: and all this as *a recompense to them;* a just judgment upon them, by way of retaliation for their ill treatment of Christ when on the cross, giving him gall and vinegar for his meat and drink.

Ver. 10. *Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see,* &c.] Which is to be understood not literally of their being struck with blindness, as the men of Sodom were by the angels, and as Elymas the sorcerer was by the Apostle Paul; but mystically, of the eyes of their understandings being darkened, as they were by themselves and by Satan, and judicially by God; so that they could not see into the true sense of the prophecies and promises concerning Christ; and how all the characters of the Messiah met in Jesus of Nazareth; their eyes were so blinded, that they could see no beauty nor comeliness in him; no excellency in his person, nothing wonderful in his works, nor amiable in his doctrine; nay, not only spiritual things, the things of the Gospel, were hid from the most wise and prudent

[t] Josephus de Bello Jud. l. 6. c. 9.

among them, from their doctors and Rabbins, but also the things which regarded their temporal peace and happiness were hid from their eyes; their eyes were not only darkened with respect to things spiritual and evangelical, but even with regard to things natural and civil: never did a people act more imprudently for their temporal safety and welfare, or appear so infatuated in all their conduct, as they did, as the history of their wars does abundantly declare: *and bow down their back alway*: which may denote their subjection and bondage to the Romans, when taken and carried captive by them; who laid very heavy burdens on them, which bowed down their backs indeed, multitudes of them being condemned to the mines; or this may design the general disposition of the minds of these people, which are bowed to the earth, for they mind nothing but earth and earthly things; the acquiring of which they are bent upon at any rate, and are infamous for their earthly-mindedness, covetousness, extortion, usury, tricking, and over-reaching: or this phrase may be expressive of that trembling, distress, horror, and despair, which shall seize them; especially when the son of man comes in the clouds of heaven, and they that have pierced him shall behold him, and wail because of him: for in the Psalms the words are, *make their loins continually to shake.*

Ver. 11. *I say then, have they stumbled that they should fall? &c.*] This is an objection, which the apostle takes from the mouth of an adversary; and the purport of it is, you say that the people of the Jews being blind, have stumbled at Christ and his Gospel, as was prophesied of them, and to which they were appointed; pray what were God's view and end in this? was it that they should fall and perish eternally? if it be so, is not this doing himself, what he forbids others, namely, *to put a stumbling-block before the blind?* and can he be excused from cruelty, and rejoicing at the misery of others? or is their stumbling permitted, that they should *all* fall through unbelief, and be cast away? and so it is an objection of the same kind with ver. 1. or since they have stumbled, and have thereby fell into a forlorn and miserable condition, are they *always* to continue in it, as the last clause in the above-cited passage suggests? To which the apostle answers, *God forbid*: neither of these are to be admitted of. The end which God had in view, in suffering the Jews to stumble and fall, was not their destruction, but rather the salvation of the Gentiles; and especially not the destruction of *all* of them, blindness had only happened *in part* to them; for there was a remnant among them according to the election of grace, which should be saved; a chosen number, which obtained life and righteousness by Christ; yea, a fulness of them, how small soever their number might be now, which should be brought in; and still less that they should always continue in this sad condition, their unbelief had brought them into; for the time would come, when there would be a receiving of them as life from the dead, when all Israel should be saved. And at present there appeared nothing ill in view, *but rather through their fall, salvation is come unto the Gentiles.* That is, the Gospel; which is sometimes called *salvation*, the Gospel of our salvation, the word of salvation; because it is a declaration of salvation by Christ, and is the power of God unto it; or a means made effectual by the power of God to convince persons, both of their need, and of the worth of it, and also a means of the application of it to them, by the spirit of God: now this came to the Gentiles by the ministry of the apostles, according to the orders and command of Christ; and that through the fall of the Jews, their unbelief and rejection of the Messiah; for the Gospel was first preached to them, but they contradicting and blaspheming it, the apostles turned to the Gentiles, and preached it to them, as the Lord had commanded them: and thus they came to be acquainted with the doctrine of salvation by a crucified Christ, and to have it powerfully applied to their souls by the spirit of God; when salvation might be said to *come* to them, in such sense as our Lord says it did to Zaccheus and his house: and another end is to be answered hereby, which is *for to provoke them to jealousy*: that is, to provoke the Jews to jealousy; not in an ill sense, as in ch. x. 19. and as they were provoked upon the first sending of the Gospel to the Gentiles, and the calling of them, when they discovered a great deal of envy, wrath, and bitterness; but in a good sense, as will appear in the latter day, when being convinced of their sin in rejecting the Messiah, and observing the many advantages the Gentiles have received by embracing him, and they have lost by their contempt of him, will be provoked to an holy emulation of them, and be stirred up through their means to seek the Lord their God, and David their King; and thus things will wind about in Providence. The fall of the Jews makes way for the Gospel among the Gentiles; and this having had its effects with them, will be a means of putting the Jews upon serious thoughts about, and a studious inquiry after, the true Messiah, and salvation by him; all which is a full answer to the question, and the objection contained in it.

Ver. 12. *Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, &c.*] By *the world*, as is clear from the next clause, is meant the Gentiles; who were frequently called so by the Jews, who reckoned themselves to be *the church*, and all the nations round about them, *the world*: which observation may serve to illustrate other passages of Scripture; see John iii. 16. 2 Cor. v. 19. 1 John ii. 2. now the fall of the Jews, which was a lessening of them, was the riches of the Gentiles; *and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles*: the number of the true believers in Christ among them were very few, the generality of them received him not, but stumbled at him, and fell through unbelief; but the few that did believe were the means of carrying and spreading the Gospel, which is, *the unsearchable riches of Christ*, in the Gentile world: thus at first a persecution being raised against the church at Jerusalem, the ministers of the Gospel were scattered abroad, and went everywhere preaching the word; and afterwards the Jews behaving in a very indecent manner towards the apostles of Christ, they turned in a manner wholly to the Gentiles; and thus by the means of a few, a diminutive company, of which the Apostle Paul was one, the Gospel, the pearl of great price, treasure hid in a field, and put into earthen vessels, was carried into the Heathen world, and by it they were enriched. This handful of men that went out

of Judea, were the means of converting vast numbers, large multitudes of souls among the Gentiles, which may be also designed by *riches*; this word sometimes signifying plenty, see ch. ii. 4. and also of enriching them with the gifts and graces of the spirit, and of directing them to Christ, who has durable riches, treasures of wisdom and knowledge, riches of grace, and riches of glory. Now the apostle argues, that if such a small number of the Jews who embraced Christ, were of so much advantage to the Gentiles, *how much more their fulness?* when converts to Christ among them will be as the sand of the sea, a nation of them shall be born again at once, and all Israel be saved. This will be a great accession to the Gentile church, bring much glory to it, contribute greatly to its welfare, and be a means of establishing their faith, and of putting fresh life and vigour into them, and of inspiring them with more zeal for Christ, and for his honour and glory.

Ver. 13. *For I speak to you Gentiles*, &c.] The church at Rome, as the primitive churches for the most part did, consisted of Jews and Gentiles; hence the apostle sometimes addresses the one, as in ch. ii. 17, 25. and vii. 1. and sometimes the other, as here; and this he does to observe unto them the grace and goodness of God, in enriching them with the Gospel of salvation; and that they might not despise the Jews, from whom it first came out, and through whose fall it came to them, and was preached among them by some of that nation: *in as much as I am the apostle of the Gentiles.* He was ordained and set apart by God, in his eternal purposes, to be a teacher of the Gentiles; he was sent immediately by Christ to bear his name among them, though not among them only, to the exclusion of the people of Israel; he chiefly preached the Gospel to them, though sometimes to the Jews also; and the success of his ministry was mostly among the uncircumcision, though he sought by all ways and means to gain both Jews and Gentiles: hence he addresses the Gentiles with greater freedom and boldness, because he was their apostle, and had been so useful among them; and is a reason why we Gentiles should have a special regard to his writings; for though every word of God is pure, and all Scripture is divinely inspired, and is profitable on one account or other; nor is any part of it to be slighted and neglected; yet as Paul's epistles are written chiefly to the Gentile churches, excepting that to the Hebrews, and which some question whether it is his, they ought especially to be attended to by us; though, alas, of all the inspired writings they are had in the least esteem: *I magnify mine office*: not himself, for he was not of a self-exalting spirit, but humble and lowly-minded, ready at all times to own himself to be less than the least of saints and the chief of sinners; but his office, which he had received from Christ, as an instance of his grace and favour. This was magnified partly by the miracles, signs, and wonders done by him, in proof, and for the confirmation of his apostleship; and partly by his constant, diligent, and faithful preaching of the Gospel; as also by the unwearied pains he took to spread it far and near; and likewise by the numbers of souls he was the means of bringing to the knowledge of Christ; and it was no small accession of glory to his office, as an apostle of the Gentiles, that he was an instrument of the conversion of many among the Jews.

Ver. 14. *If by any means I may provoke to emulation*, &c.] What he had in view, even in discharging his office among the Gentiles with so much labour, assiduity, and indefatigableness, was, that if possible he might stir up the Jews to emulate and imitate the Gentiles, in seeking after Christ; for these he means when he says, *them which are my flesh*; they being his brethren and kinsmen according to the flesh, for it was common with the eastern nations to call such persons their flesh; see Gen. xxix. 14. and xxxvii. 27. Isa. lviii. 7. and carries in it a reason why he was so solicitous for their welfare, because of the relation of them to him, and the natural affection he bore towards them; and his hope was, that they seeing the nations of the earth blessed in the promised seed, through his preaching the Gospel to them, great gatherings of the people to Shiloh, and the Gentiles seeking to the root of Jesse, set up for an ensign to the people, might be provoked to an emulation of them; and likewise seek the Lord their God, and David their King, and thereby have his end he so much wished for and desired: *and might save some of them*: he says *some*, not all, for he knew the bulk of the people was rejected, only a seed was left among them, a remnant according to the election of grace that should be saved, and which did obtain righteousness and life, while the rest were blinded. The ministers of the Gospel may be said to save souls, not efficiently, for the author or efficient cause of salvation is God only; the father has chose unto it, the son has effected it, and the spirit applies it; but instrumentally, as the word preached by them is the means of regeneration, faith, and conversion, with which salvation is connected: and as they shew unto men the way of salvation, and encourage souls to believe in Christ, in whom alone it is. Now the apostle argues from his office, and the usefulness of it, to some among the Jews, to saving purposes, to prove that their rejection was not total.

Ver. 15. *For if the casting away of them*, &c.] This argument, as before, in ver. 12. is from the lesser to the greater, shewing that as the Gentiles received present advantage through the rejection of the Jews, they would receive far greater at their future recovery, and which proves that their rejection is not final; for by *the casting away of them*, is meant the rejection of the Jews, and refers to God's writing a *Lo-ammi* upon them, and his taking away the Gospel from them, and which were the occasion of *the reconciling of the world*, the Gentiles; not of God's drawing the scheme of their reconciliation in his son; nor of the actual reconciliation of them by his sufferings and death; but of the Gospel, the word of reconciliation being carried among them upon the Jews' disbelief and contempt of it, which was made effectual by the power of divine grace, to the reconciling of them to God, to the way of salvation by Christ; to be willing to serve him, and be saved by him; to lay down their arms, surrender to his victorious grace, and become obedient to him both by word and deed; and if this was the case then, as it was, he asks, *what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?* By *the receiving of them* is meant the conversion of the Jews in the latter day,

when they will be received by Christ, on whom they will look with an eye of faith, and mourn in an evangelical manner for their sins against him; who casts out none that come unto him, but receives them into his arms in the most kind and tender manner; and when they will be also openly received into the house and family of God, into the visible church of Christ; and as the apostle afterwards says, *be grafted into their own olive-tree*: and this their restoration will be as *life from the dead*: which regards not so much the quickening of the Jews themselves, though their conversion will be, as the conversion of every sinner is, a resurrection from the death of sin to a life of grace, and is so represented in Ezek. xxxvii. but rather the reviving the work of God among the Gentile churches, who having lain long in a dead, lifeless, lukewarm, and indifferent frame of spirit, will be aroused and quickened, at this wonderful work of grace upon the Jews; and besides it will be as unexpected by them, and as surprising to them, as a person's being raised from the dead would be; yea as joyful, and as welcome to them, as if a man received his nearest relation and friend from the dead: add to this, and which some of the ancients make to be the sense of the place, quickly after the conversion of the Jews, the fulness of the Gentiles being brought in, and nothing more to be done in a way of grace, the first resurrection from the dead will follow, and happy is he that will have part in it.

Ver. 16. *For if the first-fruit be holy, &c.*] Some by *the first-fruit* and *root* understand Christ, who is sometimes called, *the first-fruits of them that slept*, and *the root of Jesse and David*, and indeed of all the righteous; and certain it is, that since he is holy, has all the holiness of his people in him, and is sanctification unto them, they shall be holy likewise; have it imparted to them in this life, and perfected in them in another: but this does not seem to agree with the apostle's argument. Others think that by them are meant the Jewish ancestors, and particularly Abraham, and dream of a holiness derived from him to his natural seed; but if no such holiness was derived from him to his immediate offspring, Ishmael, it can hardly be thought any should be communicated by him to his remote posterity; and to these here designed, at the distance of four or five thousand years from him: but by them are intended the first converts among the Jews, under the Gospel dispensation; it being usual with the apostle to call those persons, that were first converted in any place, the first-fruits of it; see Rom. xvi. 5. 1 Cor. xvi. 15. These were they who received the first-fruits of the spirit in Judea, and who first among the Jews hoped and believed in Christ; these were but few in number, as the *first-fruit* is but small in comparison of *the lump*, and mean, abject, and despicable, as the *root* under, and in a dry ground is; but yet were pledges and presages of a larger number of souls among that people, to be converted in the latter day; now the apostle's argument is, *if the first-fruit be holy, the lump is also holy, and if the root be holy, so are the branches*; that is, that whereas those persons who were converted among the Jews, however few in number, and despicable in appearance they might be, yet were truly sanctified by the spirit of God; and as they were, so should the whole body of that people be in the last days, when *holiness shall be upon the horses' bells*, and *every pot in Judah and Jerusalem shall be holiness unto the Lord of hosts*, Zech. xiv. 20, 21. by which metaphorical expressions is meant, that holiness should be common to the whole nation, and all the inhabitants of it, of which the call of some few among them was a pledge and presage. The allusion in the former clause is to the holy offerings of first-fruits to the Lord, the two wave-loaves, Lev. xxiii. 14, 17. whereby the whole lump was sanctified, for after-use throughout the year following; and that in the latter clause, to the holiness of trees; that is, to trees devoted to sacred use, or that were planted in a field appropriated thereunto: hence we read[w], that the men of Jericho permitted, or as other exemplars read it, cut down נבזיות של הקדש, *branches of holiness*, or *holy branches*; and eat fallen fruit on the sabbath-day. [x] Bartenora explains these branches, of such that grow upon a tree devoted to holy uses; and Maimonides [y], observes, that they thought it lawful to eat what grew in a holy field.

Ver. 17. *And if some of the branches be broken off, &c.*] This is to be understood, not of the exclusion of the Jews from their national church; for the persons designed by the *branches*, were the principal members of it, as the civil and ecclesiastical rulers, the priests, Scribes, and Pharisees, and the far greater part of the people; and on the other hand, the apostles and followers of Christ were put out of their synagogues, and deemed by them heretics and apostates: nor of the destruction of the Jewish nation, city, and temple; for as yet they existed as a nation, their city of Jerusalem was in being, and their temple standing: but of their being left out of the Gospel church, gathered among them, they not believing in the Messiah, but rejected and crucified him; and though afterwards the Gospel was preached to them, they despised, contradicted, and blasphemed it; so that it pleased God to take it wholly away from them, when they might be truly said to be, *as branches broken off*: which phrase seems to be borrowed from Jer. xi. 16. they were withered, lifeless, and hopeless, being cast off by God, and neglected by his ministers, the Gospel being removed from them, and they without the means of grace and salvation; and this was the case of the generality of the people; for though the apostle only says *some*, making the best of it in their favour against the Gentiles, and speaking in the softest terms; yet they were only a few, a seed, a remnant, that were taken into the Gospel church, and the rest were blinded, hardened, rejected, and left out for their unbelief: *and thou being a wild olive-tree*; speaking to the Gentiles, to some, not to all of them; for not a whole tree, but a part of one, what is cut out of it, a scion from it is grafted into another; and so they were a certain number which God took out from among the Gentiles, to be a people for his name and glory, and who before conversion were

[w] Misn. Pesachim, c. 4. sect. 8.

[x] In Misn. Pesachim. c. 4. sect. 8.

[y] In ib.

comparable to a wild olive-tree; for though they might have some shew of morality, religion, and worship, yet lived in gross ignorance, superstition, idolatry, and profaneness; were destitute of a divine revelation, of all spiritual light and knowledge, of true righteousness and the grace of God; were barren and unfruitful in good works, were without hope, God and Christ in the world. This metaphor rather regards their character, case, and manners, than their original; in respect of which they and the Jews were on a level, being by nature equally corrupt, and children of wrath; and yet though a wild olive-tree, *were grafted in amongst them*; meaning either the broken branches, in whose stead they were grafted; the Syriac version favours this sense, reading it בדוכתהון, *in their place*; as also in ver. 19. and so the Ethiopic version: or rather the believing Jews, of whom the first Gospel church and churches consisted; for the Jews first trusted in Christ, received the first-fruits of the spirit, and were first incorporated into a Gospel church-state; and then the Gentiles which believed were received among them. The first coalition of Jews and Gentiles, or the ingrafture of the Gentiles in among the Jews that believed, was at Antioch, when dropping their distinctive names of Jews and Gentiles, they took the common name of Christians, Acts xi. 19, 20, 21, 26. So that this is not to be understood of an ingrafture into Christ, unless by a visible profession, but of being received into a Gospel church-state; which is signified by *the olive-tree* in the next clause: *and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive-tree*; the Gospel church is so called for its excellency, the olive-tree being a choice tree, as they were a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; for its fruitfulness, bringing forth berries that are wholesome, delightful, and useful, so the saints are filled with the fruits of grace, and good works, which are by Christ to the praise and glory of God; for its beauty when laden with fruit, so a Gospel church is beautiful, maintaining the purity of Gospel doctrine, discipline, worship and conversation; *his beauty shall be as the olive-tree*, Hos. xiv. 6. see Jer. xi. 16. and for its verdure and durableness, and growing on the mountains, all which may denote the continuance and firmness of the church of Christ. Now the Gentiles being grafted into a Gospel church-state with the believing Jews, partook of the same root and fatness as they did, being built upon the same *foundation of the apostles and prophets*; rooted, grounded, and built up in the same church-state, they enjoyed the same privileges, had the doctrines of Christ and his apostles preached to them, communicated with them in the ordinances of the Gospel, and were satisfied with the goodness and fatness of the house of God; for they became *fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the Gospel*, Ephes. iii. 5. the apostle speaks according to the nature of the olive-tree, which is unctuous, from whence an oil is taken, which makes the face of man to shine, the fruit of which fattens those that are lean; and hence it loses not its leaves, δια το θερμον και λιπαρον, *because of its heat and fatness*, as Plutarch[a] says.

Ver. 18. *Boast not against the branches*, &c.] Those that were broken off: the apostle would not have them vaunt it over them, despise them, and trample upon them; but pity them, and pray for them, and be abundantly thankful and humbled before God, under a sense of his sovereign and distinguishing grace, who had settled them in a Gospel church-state, who were before comparable to a wild olive-tree; and much less should they glory over the believing Jews, among whom they were, there being no difference between them, for they were all one in Christ Jesus: *but if thou boast*; but if such a vain temper of mind should prevail, he suggests they would do well to sit down and consider what little reason they had on their side to glory; and if such glorying and boasting, one against another was lawful, the Jews had the greatest reason for it; for, adds the apostle, *thou bearest not the root, but the root thee*. The Jews received no advantages from the Gentiles, but on the contrary the Gentiles from the Jews, to whom were committed the oracles of God, and by whom they were faithfully kept and transmitted to the Gentiles; the Gospel itself came out first from among them; the first preachers of it were Jews, who carried it into the Gentile world, where it was greatly succeeded to the conversion of many, who by this means were brought into a Gospel church-state, and so enjoyed all the privileges they did: yea, Christ himself, according to the flesh, came of them, was sent unto them, was the minister of them, lived and died among them, and wrought out the great salvation for his people; hence *salvation* itself is said to be *of the Jews*, John iv. 22. so that the root and foundation of all their enjoyments were from the Jews, and not those of the Jews from them; hence there was no room, nor reason, for boasting against them, and vaunting it over them.

Ver. 19. *Thou wilt say then*, &c.] This is an objection which the apostle foresaw the Gentiles would make against what he had said, and in favour of their boasting; *the branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in*. The sense of which is, that the Jews were rejected and left out of the Gospel church, on purpose to make way for the Gentiles, that they might be put in their room; and consequently the Jews must be more vile and unworthy, and the Gentiles more deserving of such favours and privileges, or God would never have taken such a step, to leave out one to make room for the other.

Ver. 20. *Well*, &c.] To this the apostle answers, by approving and granting in part what was said, that the unbelieving Jews were broken off and rejected, and that the Gentiles that believed in Christ were grafted in among the Jews that professed his name; but then he tacitly denies that it was for their sakes, and on their account, they were broken off, but for their own incredulity: *because of unbelief they were broken off*; because of their disbelief and contempt of the Messiah, they were rejected of God, and died in their sins; that which excluded their forefathers from the land of Canaan, shut them out of the Gospel church-state, and the kingdom of heaven: *and thou standest by faith*; which is not of a man's self, but the gift of God: so that it was not by their merits, and better deservings,

[a] Sympos. l. 2. qu. 10.

but by the grace of God, that they were in the situation they were: they were blessed with faith in Christ, and having made a profession of it, were admitted to Gospel ordinances, and into a Gospel church; and being helped hitherto to hold the profession of their faith in a becoming manner, they stood their ground, and continued in their church-relation; and therefore ought not to give way to a vain boasting spirit, but to be humble, modest, and dependent; wherefore he gives them this proper, pertinent, and wholesome advice, *be not high-minded, but fear.* The apostle would have them not be elated with their gifts, privileges, and enjoyments, and look over others, or down upon them with contempt and disdain, considering that all they had and enjoyed were owing to the goodness of God, and not to any deserts of theirs; and therefore should fear the Lord and his goodness; for not a fear of hell and damnation, or a distrust of the grace of God, is here meant; but a fear of offending him, and that not from a dread of punishment, but from a sense of his grace and goodness; and also designs humility of soul, in opposition to pride, haughtiness, and elation of mind, a lowly carriage and behaviour to others, and an humble dependence on grace and strength from above, to enable to persevere and hold out to the end; for *let him that thinks he stands take heed lest he fall* into sin, 1 Cor. x. 12. so as to dishonour God and Christ, grieve the Holy Spirit, wound his own conscience, and bring himself under the censure of the church, and to be cut off from the good olive-tree, the root and fatness of which he now partakes.

Ver. 21. *For if God spared not the natural branches,* &c.] That is, executed his righteous judgments, inflicted due punishment upon the Jews, unchurched them, and stripped them of these privileges they enjoyed in a church-state; who were the natural descendants of Abraham; were naturally, and as born into the world, in a national church-state, and in that national covenant God made with that people; to whom belonged a national adoption, in which sense they were the sons of God, his first-born; they were chosen by him as a special and peculiar people, to very great favours and privileges; they were Christ's own, he came of them according to the flesh, and was particularly sent unto them, and ministered among them; wherefore, if, at last, God did not spare this people, though he had for a long time done it, but stirred up all his wrath against them, they disbelieving his son, rejecting and despising the Messiah, and salvation by him, this should awaken the fear, care, and caution of the Gentiles in a church-state, lest if they behave not well, he should deal in like manner with them: *take heed lest he also spare not thee;* for whatever was done to the Jews in former or latter times, are written for the instruction and admonition of Gentiles; and the use they are to make thereof is, to be careful and cautious, lest by imbibing principles derogatory from the grace of God and glory of Christ, or by an unbecoming walk and conversation, they provoke the Lord to unchurch them, as he has done the Jews before them; and which they may the rather fear, since the Jews were the natural branches, and they formerly strangers and aliens.

Ver. 22. *Behold therefore the goodness, and severity of God,* &c.] The consideration of both the grace and kindness of God to some, and his severity or strict justice towards others, is recommended by the apostle as very proper to abate pride, vain glory, and haughtiness of spirit; and to engage to humility, fear, care, and caution: *on them which fell, severity:* the Jews who stumbled at Christ and his Gospel, and fell by unbelief, God in strict justice and righteous judgment not only destroyed, as afterwards their nation, city, and temple, and scattered them abroad in the world to be a reproach, a proverb, a taunt, and a curse in all places; but cast them off as his people, broke his covenant with them, took away his Gospel from them, left them out of a Gospel church-state, except a few, and gave up the generality of them to blindness and hardness of heart; so that wrath is come upon them to the uttermost, both with respect to things civil and religious, and they continue as living standing monuments of God's severity and justice, to be beheld by us Gentiles with pity and concern, and to excite in us the fear of God, and caution as to our conduct and behaviour in the world, and in the church: *but towards thee, goodness:* the Gentiles, who not only share in the goodness and grace of God, displayed in the election of many of them to eternal life, in their redemption by Christ, and the effectual vocation of them by the grace of God: but in their church-state, they being made fellow-citizens with the saints, fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and having a place and a name in God's house, better than that of sons and daughters; and therefore under great obligation to fear the Lord, and his goodness, and to walk worthy of the vocation wherein they are called, in all humility and lowliness of mind: *if thou continue in his goodness:* meaning not the love, grace, and free favour of God, or the grace of the spirit, a continuance in which no *if* is to be put upon; for such who are interested in the love of God always continue in it, and nothing can separate them from it; and such as have the graces of the spirit implanted in them, as faith, hope, and love, can never lose them; these always remain in them, and they in the possession of them, though not always in the exercise of them; but the goodness of God in a church-state is here meant, as the means of grace and comfort, the ministration of the word and ordinances: and the sense is, if thou dost not despise the riches of divine goodness in a church-relation, if thou dost not abuse it, or walk unworthy of it, if thou abidest by it, and retainest a value for it, thou wilt still share the advantages of it: *otherwise thou also shalt be cut off:* from the good olive-tree, the Gospel church-state, into which the Gentiles were taken; and which, with respect to particular persons, may intend the act of excommunication by the church, expressed in Scripture by purging the old leaven, putting away the wicked person, withdrawing from such that are disorderly, and rejecting heretics, that is, from the communion of the church; and with respect to whole bodies and societies, an entire unchurching of them by removing the Gospel, and the ordinances of it; which threatening has been awfully fulfilled in many Gentile churches, in Asia, Africa, and Europe; and therefore may serve to awaken our fear, care, and caution, lest we should be treated in like manner.

Ver. 23. *And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief,* &c.] The apostle suggests that the Jews also might be recovered and brought into a Gospel church-state, provided they did not continue in infidelity; but inasmuch as they seem to lie under invincible ignorance, obstinacy, and unbelief, and were such bitter enemies to the Gospel, and abhorrers of Gospel ordinances, and a Gospel church-state; yea, that they must and will abide in unbelief, unless the spirit of God convinces them of it, and it is given to them to believe in Christ, and they are powerfully drawn by the father to come to the son, there is no possibility or likelihood that they *shall be grafted in*, or taken into a Gospel church-state; to which the apostle answers, and argues for their ingrafture, and the possibility of it from the power of God: *for God is able to graft them in again;* as many of them were in the times of the apostles, and some since, for nothing is impossible with God; he can remove their unbelief, knock off the shackles and fetters in which they are held, and bring them out of the prison of infidelity, in which they are shut up; he is able to take away the blindness of their minds, and the hardness of their hearts, the veil that is over them, and turn them to the Lord; he can by his mighty power work faith in them, and cause them to look on him whom they have pierced, and mourn in an evangelical manner; he can bring them to Christ, and into his churches, and among his people, and fold them with the rest of his sheep; so that there may be one fold of Jew and Gentile, under one shepherd, Jesus Christ.

Ver. 24. *For if thou wert cut out of the olive-tree,* &c.] As the apostle argues the possibility of bringing the Jews into a Gospel church-state, from the power of God; so here the probability of it, or the easiness and likelihood of its being performed, from the ingrafture of the Gentiles; who were originally like an olive-tree, *which is wild by nature*, grows in the field, bears no fruit, and is useless and unprofitable; so they by nature were sinners of the Gentiles, children of wrath, full of unrighteousness, without any fruit of holiness; being not within the pale of the Jewish church and commonwealth; but in the wide field of the world, worthless, and of no account; and yet many were *cut out of* this wild olive-tree; were, through the ministration of the Gospel, by the power of divine grace separated from the rest of the world; were effectually called and brought into a Gospel church-state; God took out from among them a people for his name. This their being cut out of the wild olive, as it expresses the power and grace of God towards them, so it might teach them humility, as it led them to observe their original state and condition: *and wert grafted, contrary to nature, into a good olive-tree:* for an olive-tree being full of fatness, will not admit of ingrafture; nor was it ever usual to ingraft upon olives; hence the Jews say[y], זתים אין בהן הרכבה, *there is no ingrafture on olives:* besides, 'tis contrary to nature, use, and custom, to ingraft wild scions, or grafts of any sort into a good stock; but always good scions or grafts into a wild stock, for in wild hungry stocks grafts grow best: but in the ingrafture of the Gentiles into a Gospel church-state, just such a method was taken, as if a wild graft were let into a good stock; so that this ingrafture was not of nature, it was contrary to it; but of pure grace, and sovereign good will and pleasure; and the apostle's argument is this, that if the Gentiles, who were originally as a wild olive-tree; if some as grafts were taken out from among them, and, quite contrary to their own nature, and the nature of things, were, by the goodness and grace of God, grafted into a good olive, the Gospel church-state; *how much more shall these which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive-tree?* that is, there is a greater likelihood, and more easily may it be, according to all appearance of things, that the Jews, the natural branches or descendants of Abraham, should be brought into a Gospel church-state, which first began among them, and which at first only consisted of some of their nation. The Gospel church is called *their own olive-tree*, in allusion to Israel, or the Jewish church, which is often so called in their writings. "Says[z] R. Joshua ben Levi, to what are "the Israelites like? לזית, *to an olive-tree:* to teach "them that as the leaves of an olive-tree do not fall, "neither on sunshine days, nor on rainy days; so the "Israelites will never cease, neither in this world, nor "in the world to come; and says R. Jochanan, to "what are the Israelites like? *to an olive:* to teach "thee that as an olive does not send forth its oil, but "by the means of pressing, so the Israelites don't re-"turn to do good, but by the means of chastisement:" and says another[a] of their writers, "as oil ascendeth "above all liquids, and is not mixed with them; so "the Israelites ascend above all nations, and are not "mixed with them; and there is an intimation that "they are even like לזית, *to an olive*, that is pressed "or squeezed; for so the Israelites are bruised and "afflicted, and yet, notwithstanding all this, they "ascend by virtue of the law, which is called *oil olive*." It is easy to see from whence this simile is borrowed.

Ver. 25. *For I would not, brethren,* &c.] The apostle, in order to raise the attention of the Gentiles to what he was about to deliver to them, not only styles them *brethren*, expressing his affection for them, and their relation to him and other believing Jews, and to one another, being all one in Christ Jesus, partakers of the same grace, and heirs of the same glory; but also tells them, that what he had to acquaint them with was a *mystery*, a thing secret and hidden, which had not been heard of and known, at least not so fully and clearly as he was about to reveal it; and because of his great respect for them, he was unwilling, as he says, *that ye should be ignorant of this mystery:* he was desirous that they should abound and improve in all spiritual knowledge and judgment, and, among the rest, be better informed of this particular article, the call of the Jews: and his view in apprizing them of it is expressed in the following clause, *lest ye should be wise in your own conceits;* lest they should imagine that they were the only wise and knowing persons, and be elated in their minds with their knowledge and

[y] T. Hieros. Celaim, c. 1. fol. 27. 2.
[z] T. Bab. Menachot, fol. 53. 2.

[a] R. Abraham Seba, Tzeror Hammor, fol. 53. 4.

understanding, and look with contempt upon the poor, blind, ignorant Jews, as if they were always to remain in such a state of darkness and infidelity. The thing he had to inform them of is, *that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in:* by Israel is meant the Jews, the descendants of Jacob, whose name was Israel. Philo the Jew observes[b], that this name signifies ὁρασις Θεοῦ, *the vision of God*: indeed, Jacob had it given him when he wrestled with the angel, and saw God face to face, though it does not seem to be for that reason; however, blindness had now befallen the Jews, who had been favoured with a divine revelation, with the knowledge of God, his will and worship; and none were more blind than those who were called the servants and messengers of the Lord of hosts, as the Scribes and Pharisees, the priests and princes of the Jewish world. This *blindness* designs their unbelief, the hardness of their hearts, and darkness of their understandings with respect to God himself, whom they knew not in Christ; not as the father of Christ; nor even the perfections of his nature, particularly his righteousness; which was the reason of their setting up their own righteousness, and of their non-submission to the righteousness of Christ: they were blind as to the Messiah; they knew him not, when he came; they saw no beauty and comeliness in him; could not discern the characters of him in Jesus, though they were so manifest; and rejected him notwithstanding the clear evidence of his ministry and miracles. They were in the dark about the sense of the prophecies of the Old Testament; a vail was upon their hearts when they read them, so that they understood them not, and could not see their accomplishment in Christ; they were even ignorant of the law, the spiritual nature, true use, and right end and scope of it; and it is no wonder that the Gospel should be hidden from them. This blindness *happened* to them not by chance, but befell them by the decree, and according to the will of God, who hardens whom he pleases; and according to various predictions in the Old Testament, cited in Matt. xiii. 14, 15. John xii. 39, 40. Rom. xi. 8, 9, 10. and in righteous judgment, for since they liked not to retain God and his Christ in their knowledge, it was but just in God to give them up to reprobate minds, to judicial blindness, and hardness of heart: but then this blindness only happened to them *in part;* not that it was only in some measure or some degree, for it was total, they were darkness itself, and had no spiritual and evangelic light at all on whom it fell; but that this blindness was not general with respect to persons, there were some few, a seed, a remnant, that were delivered from it, though the far greater part of the nation were involved in it, and continue in it to this day; and will do, *until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in:* that is, till the whole number of God's elect among them, be called and brought into the Gospel church-state, which in the latter day will be very great; when the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea; when the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ; and the abundance of the sea shall be converted, and the forces of the Gentiles shall come to the church, and multitudes of them shall flock thither, as doves to their windows: and since the blindness of the Jews is not yet removed, it seems plain that the full number of God's chosen ones among the Gentiles is not yet completed in regeneration; for as soon as ever they are all called and brought in, the vail will be taken away from the Jews, and they will be turned unto the Lord.

Ver. 26. *And so all Israel shall be saved,* &c.] Meaning not the mystical spiritual Israel of God, consisting both of Jews and Gentiles, who shall appear to be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation, when all God's elect among the latter are gathered in, which is the sense many give into; but the people of the Jews, the generality of them, the body of that nation, called *the fulness* of them, ver. 12. and relates to the latter day, when a nation of them shall be born again at once; when, their number being as the sand of the sea, they shall come up out of the lands where they are dispersed, and appoint them one head, Christ, and great shall be the day of Jezreel; when they as a body, even the far greater part of them that shall be in being, shall return and seek the Lord their God, and David their King; shall acknowledge Jesus to be the true Messiah, and shall look to him, believe on him, and be saved by him from wrath to come. There is a common saying among them[c], כל ישראל יש להם חלק לעולם הבא, *all Israel shall have a part,* or portion *in the world to come;* and in support of this they usually produce the passage in Isa. lx. 21. *thy people also shall be all righteous:* yea, they even go so far as to say[d], "that hell-fire will have no power over the transgressors "of Israel;" fancying, that every individual person of their nation will be saved; though they sometimes except such who deny the resurrection of the dead, and that the law is from heaven, or is an epicure, and he that reads foreign books, or is an enchanter, or pronounces the ineffable name: but the apostle is not to be understood with such a latitude; he refers to the last times, and to a very general conversion of them to the Messiah: *as it is written,* Isa. lix. 20. *there shall come out of Zion the Deliverer:* the words of the prophet are, *and the Redeemer shall come to Zion:* by the *Redeemer,* or *Deliverer,* words of the same signification, is meant the Messiah, as the Jews[e] themselves own, and apply this passage to him; who is the *Goel,* or near kinsman of his people, to whom the right of their redemption belongs as man; and who as God was able to effect it, and, as God-man and Mediator, was every way qualified for it, and has obtained it for them: and whereas, in the prophet Isaiah, he is said to *come to,* and by the apostle, *out of Zion,* this may be reconciled by observing, that the servile letter ל sometimes signifies *from,* as well as *to,* when it is put in the room of מ; of which instances may be given, as Exod. xvi. 1. and xix. 1. Numb. xxxiii. 38. Ezra iii. 8. 1 Kings xii. 24. compared with 2 Chron. xi. 4. Besides, the Messiah was to come out of Zion, as well as to come to it, according to Psal. xiv. 7. so that the apostle fitly

[b] De Temulentia, p. 251. & De Sacrificiis Abel & Cain, p. 131.
[c] Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 11. sect. 1.
[d] T. Bab. Erubin, fol. 19. 1. & Chagiga, fol. 27. 1.
[e] Aben Ezra in loc. T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 98. 1.

expresses the faith and expectation of the old Jewish church in this citation: *and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob*: in the prophet it is, *and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob*. The apostle follows the translation of the Septuagint, and which is favoured by the Chaldee paraphrase, which runs thus; *the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and to turn the rebellious ones of the house of Jacob to the law*; so that the Jew[f] has no reason to charge the apostle with a perversion of the prophet's words, when they are cited so agreeably to their own Targumist: and the sense of them relates not to what Christ did on the cross, when the iniquities of his people were laid on him, and he bore them, and removed them all in one day from them; but to what he will do to the Jews in the latter day, in consequence thereof; he'll convince them of their ungodliness, give them repentance for it, and remission of it.

Ver. 27. *For this is my covenant unto them*, &c.] This is what God has promised to them in covenant, and he'll be as good as his word; his covenant will never be broken, it will always remain sure and inviolable; so that there is not only a possibility, and a probability, but even a certainty, of the call and conversion of the Jews; which promise and covenant will have their accomplishment, *when I*, saith the Lord, *shall take away their sins*: some think that the apostle alludes to Jer. xxxi. 34. others, that he takes this passage out of Isa. xxvii. 9. where in the Septuagint version the self-same phrase is used; though it may be no citation, or reference, but the apostle's own words, explaining what is meant by *turning away ungodliness from Jacob*: and as before, regards not the taking away of their sins by the sacrifice of Christ, which is done already, and is what the blood of bulls and goats could not do; but of the removing of their sins from themselves, from their consciences, by the application of the blood of Christ, and the imputation of his righteousness.

Ver. 28. *As concerning the Gospel*, &c.] Whereas it might be objected to the call and conversion of the Jews, their implacable enmity to the Gospel, the apostle replies, by granting, that with respect to that, they were *enemies* to God and Christ, to the Gospel, and the ministers of it, and particularly to the apostle: *for your sakes*; the Gentiles, to whom it was preached, and by whom it was received, and which greatly irritated and provoked the Jews; or the sense is, that they were suffered to reject the Gospel, and treat it with hatred and virulence, that by this means it might be taken away from them, and carried to the Gentiles; so that the present enmity of the Jews to the Gospel, turned to the advantage of the Gentiles, and should not hinder the future conversion of God's elect among them in the latter day: *but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes*: as many of them as belong to the election of grace, are beloved of God; and will appear to be so, when they are called by grace, as they will be, for the confirming of the promises, concerning their future restoration made unto their fathers; not one of which shall ever fall to the ground, or they be deprived of any gifts and blessings of grace, which God has purposed for them, or promised to them, as is clear from what follows.

Ver. 29. *For the gifts and calling of God*, &c.] By *gifts* are meant, not the gifts of nature and providence, as life, health, strength, riches, and honour, which God sometimes gives, and repents of, and takes away; as he repented that he had made man upon earth, and Saul king of Israel; which must be understood by an *anthropopathy*, after the manner of men, and that not of a change of the counsel of his mind, but of the course of his providence: nor do gifts here design external gifts of grace, or such gifts of the spirit, which qualify men for ministerial work, for public service in the church; for these may be taken away, as the *parable* of the *talents* shews; see 1 Cor. xiii. 8. but the special and spiritual gifts of God's free grace, which relate to the spiritual and eternal welfare of the souls of men, even that *grace* which was *given* to God's elect in Christ before the world was, and all those spiritual blessings wherewith they were then blessed in him: these *are without repentance*; that is, they are immutable and unalterable; God never revokes them, or calls them in again, or takes them away from the persons to whom he has made such a previous donation: the reasons are, because that his love from whence they spring is always the same; it admits of no distinction, nor of any degrees, nor of any alteration; and electing grace, according to which these gifts are bestowed, stands sure and immovable; not upon the foot of works, but of the sovereign will of God, and always has its sure and certain effect; and the covenant of grace, in which they are secured, remains firm and inviolable; and indeed, these gifts are no other than the promises of it, which are all yea and *amen* in Christ, and the blessings of it, which are the sure mercies of David. Whatever God purposes, or promises to give, or really does give to his people, whether into the hands of Christ for them, or into their own, he never repents of or reverses. Agreeably to these words of the apostle, the Jews say[g], "that the holy blessed "God, after שנתן המתנה, *that he hath given a gift*, "לא יקתנה המקבל, *never takes it away from the receiver*; and this is the *Gemara*, or doctrine of the "Rabbins[h], דמיהב יהבי משקל לא שקלי, *that giving "they give, but taking away they do not take away*; "the gloss upon it is, בתר דיהבי, *after it is given*;" the meaning is, that what is once given to men from heaven, is never taken away from them up into heaven: and elsewhere[i] they ask, "is there any servant "to whom his master gives a gift, and returns and "takes it away from him?" Moreover, the apostle here says the same of the *calling of God*, as of gifts; by which is meant, not a bare external call by the ministry of the word, which oftentimes is without effect, and may be where persons are neither chosen, nor converted, nor saved; but an internal effectual call, by special, powerful, and efficacious grace; and designs either actual vocation, to which are inseparably annexed final perseverance in grace, and eternal glorification; or rather the purpose of God from eternity,

[f] R. Isaac, Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 31.
[g] R. Sephorno apud R. Juda Muscato in Sepher. Cosri, fol. 43.

[h] T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 25. 1.
[i] T. Bab. Erachin, fol. 15. 1.

to call his people in time, and which is never repented of, or changed. The apostle's argument here is this, that since there are a number of people among the Jews whom God has loved, and has chosen to everlasting salvation, and has in covenant promised to them, and secured and laid up gifts for them, and has determined to call them by his grace; and since all these are unchangeable and irreversible, the future call and conversion of these persons must be sure and certain.

Ver. 30. *For as ye in times past have not believed God,* &c.] The times referred to, are the times of ignorance, idolatry, and superstition; when God suffered the Gentiles, for many hundreds of years, to walk in their own ways; while the Jews were his favourite people, were chosen by him above all people, separated from them, and distinguished by his goodness; had his word and oracles, his judgments and his statutes to direct them, and many other valuable blessings: the times before the coming of the Messiah are here meant, when these people sat in darkness, and in the region of the shadow of death; till Christ, who came to lighten the Gentiles, sent his Gospel among them, and which has been attended with great success; in these times they were in a state of incredulity: they either, as some of them, did not believe there was a God, or that there was but one God, at least but very few believed it; and these did not know who he was; nor did they glorify him as God, or perform any true spiritual worship to him: the far greater part believed there were more gods, and did service to them which by nature were no gods, and fell down to idols of gold, and silver, and wood, and stone: *and yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief:* that is, they were regenerated, effectually called and converted, through the rich and abundant mercy of God; repentance unto life was granted to them; and faith in our Lord Jesus, as a free-grace gift, was bestowed upon them; and they had an application of pardoning grace and mercy, through the blood of Christ, made unto them; and all this through the unbelief of the Jews: not that their unbelief could be the cause of their obtaining mercy; but the Jews not believing in the Messiah, but rejecting him, and contradicting and blaspheming his Gospel, it was taken away from them, and carried to the Gentiles; which was the means of their believing in Christ, and obtaining mercy; so that the unbelief of the Jews was the occasion and means, in Providence, of bringing the Gospel to the Gentiles, whereby faith came; see ver. 11. This mercy they are said to enjoy *now*; for the present time of the Gospel is the dispensation of mercy to the Gentiles.

Ver. 31. *Even so have these also now not believed,* &c.] Now is the time of the Jews' unbelief, blindness has happened to them, the vail is over their hearts; as the Gentiles formerly did not believe God, so the Jews do not now; though they believe there is a God, and that there is but one God, yet they don't believe God in Christ; nor that he is the father of Christ; or that Christ is the son of God, the true Messiah, and Saviour of the world: they do not believe, as some read the words, connecting them with the next clause, and so they stand in the original text, *in your mercy;* meaning either Christ, in whom the Gentiles obtained mercy; or the Gospel, the means of it; or the sense is, that they do not believe that mercy belongs to the Gentiles, having entertained a notion, that the Messiah, and the blessings of mercy and goodness by him, are peculiar to Israel: but our version after Beza, who follows Theophylact, connects the clause with the following, *that through your mercy they may obtain mercy;* not through the mercy the Gentiles shew to others, but which they have received of God; and principally intends faith, which springs from the mercy of God, and is a gift of his pure, free, rich grace; and stands opposed to the unbelief of the Jews, through which the Gentiles are said to obtain mercy; and the meaning is, that in time to come, the Jews, observing the mercy obtained and enjoyed by the Gentiles, will be provoked to jealousy, and stirred up to an emulation of them, to seek for the same mercy at the same hands, and in the same way, they have had it; see ver. 11. The apostle's argument in favour of the call and conversion of the Jews, upon the whole is this, that since the unbelief of the Gentiles was no bar to their obtaining mercy, and that through the infidelity of the Jews; then it can't be thought, that the present blindness, hardness of heart, enmity, and unbelief, which now attend the Jews, can be any obstacle to their obtaining mercy in the same way the Gentiles have; but as the one has been, the other also will be.

Ver. 32. *For God hath concluded them all in unbelief,* &c.] Both Jews and Gentiles, particularly God's elect among them: some think the metaphor is taken from the binding up of sheaves in bands; and that Jews and Gentiles are the sheaves, and unbelief the band, in which they are bound together; but the apostle is not speaking of their being together in unbelief, but as separate, first the Gentiles, and now the Jews: rather it seems to be taken from a prison, and Jews and Gentiles are represented as prisoners, and unbelief the prison, in which they are shut up by God: not that God is the author of unbelief, or of any other sin in men; he does not put it into them, or them into that, but finding them in unbelief, concludes them in it, or leaves them in such a state, and does not as yet however deliver out of it, or say to the prisoners, go forth: moreover, to be *concluded in unbelief,* is the same as to be *concluded under sin,* Gal. iii. 22. that is, to be thoroughly convinced of it; and to be held and bound down by such a sense of it in the conscience, as to see no way to escape deserved punishment, or to obtain salvation, but by fleeing to the mercy of God in Christ: *that he might have mercy upon all:* not upon all the individuals of Jews and Gentiles; for all are not concluded in, or convinced of the sin of unbelief, but only such who are eventually believers, as appears from the parallel text, Gal. iii. 22. and designs all God's elect among the Jews, called *their fulness,* ver. 12. and all God's elect among the Gentiles, called *the fulness of the Gentiles,* ver. 25. for whom he has mercy in store, and will bestow it on them; and in order to bring them to a sense of their need of it, and that he may the more illustriously display the riches of it, he leaves them for a while in a state of unbelief, and then by his spirit thoroughly convinces them of it, and gives them faith to look to, and believe in, the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, unto eternal life.

Ver. 33. *O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!* &c.] These words are the epilogue, or conclusion of the doctrinal part of this epistle, and relate to what is said throughout the whole of it hitherto; particularly to the doctrines of salvation by Christ, justification by his righteousness, predestination, the calling of the Gentiles, the rejection of the Jews, and their restoration in the latter day; upon the whole of which, the apostle breaks forth into this pathetic exclamation; the design of which is to shew, how much of the wisdom and knowledge of God is displayed in these doctrines, and how small a part of it is known by the best of men, and therefore ought not to be cavilled at and objected to, because of some difficulties attending them, but to be received upon the testimony of divine revelation: and if there was a depth in these things unsearchable and past finding out by so great a man as the apostle, who had by revelation such knowledge in the mysteries of grace, and who had been caught up into the third heaven, and heard things unutterable, how much less is it to be fathomed by others, and therefore should be silent: by *the wisdom and knowledge of God*, one and the same thing is meant; and design not so much the perfections of the divine nature, which are infinite and unsearchable, the understanding of which is too high for creatures, and not be attained to by them; nor the display of them in the works of creation and providence, in which there are most glorious and amazing instances; but rather the effects of them, the counsels and decrees of God: which are so wisely formed and laid, as not to fail of their accomplishment, or to be frustrated of their end; and the doctrines of grace relating to them, in which are treasures, *riches*, that is, an abundance of wisdom and knowledge; and a *depth*, not to be reached to the bottom of, in this imperfect state, and in which the knowledge and wisdom of God are wonderfully displayed: thus in the doctrine of redemption and salvation by Christ, wherein God has abounded in all wisdom and prudence; in the person fixed upon to be the Saviour, his own son; who by the assumption of human nature, being God and man in one person, was very fit and proper to be a Mediator between God and man, to transact the affair of salvation; was every way qualified for it, and able to do it: so likewise in the manner in which it is accomplished, being done in a way which glorifies all the divine perfections; in which the rights of God's justice and the honour of his holiness are secured, as well as his love, grace, and mercy, displayed: in which Satan is most mortified, sin condemned, and the sinner saved; and also in the persons, the subjects of it, ungodly sinners, enemies, the chief of sinners, whereby the grace of God is the more illustrated, and all boasting in the creature excluded. The wisdom of God manifestly appears, in the doctrine of a sinner's justification; which though it proceeds from grace, yet upon the foot of redemption and satisfaction, in a way of strict justice; so that God is just, whilst he is the justifier; it is of persons ungodly, and without a righteousness in themselves, and yet by a perfect and complete righteousness, answerable to all the demands of law and justice; and the grace of faith is wisely made the recipient of this blessing, that it might appear to be of free grace, and not of works, and that the justified ones might have solid peace, joy, and comfort, from it. The doctrine of predestination is full of the wisdom and knowledge of God: his choice of some to everlasting life in his son, through sanctification of the spirit, and belief of the truth, for the glorifying of his grace and mercy, in a way of righteousness; and his passing by others, leaving them to themselves, and in their sins, justly to perish for them, for the glorifying of his justice, are acts of the highest wisdom, and done according to the counsel of his will. The account just given of the call of the Gentiles, and the rejection of the Jews, is an astonishing scheme of infinite wisdom; that, on the one hand salvation should come to the Gentiles, through the fall of the Jews, and they should obtain mercy through their unbelief; and on the other hand that the restoration of the Jews should be as life from the dead to the Gentiles; and the Jews, through their mercy, obtain mercy; and that both, in their turns, should be shut up in unbelief by God, that he might have mercy on them all, *O the depth*, &c. To which is added, *how unsearchable are his judgments!* which are not to be understood of his awful judgments on wicked men in particular, nor of the administrations of his providence in general; though these are a great deep, and in many instances are unsearchable, and can't be accounted for in the present state, but will hereafter be made manifest; nor of the commands of God, sometimes called his judgments, which are all plain, and may be easily searched out in his word; but rather of the counsels and purposes of God, and the doctrines of grace relating thereunto; which are the deep things of God, and are only searched out by the spirit of God, who reveals them to us: *and his ways past finding out!* not the methods and course of his providence, though his way in this respect is often in the deep, his footsteps are not to be known, discerned, and traced, by finite creatures; but rather the goings-forth and steps of his wisdom from everlasting, in his purposes and decrees, council and covenant, which are higher than the ways of men, even as the heavens are higher than the earth; and which are all mercy and truth to his chosen people, and strict justice to others, and not to be found out by any; particularly his ways and methods, and dealings, with both Jews and Gentiles; that he should for so many hundred years leave the Gentiles in blindness and unbelief; and now for as many years his favourite people the Jews in the same, and yet gather in his elect out of them both; these are things out of our reach and comprehension.

Ver. 34. *For who hath known the mind of the Lord?* &c.] The intentions of his mind, the thoughts of his heart, and the counsels of his will: these could never have been known, if he had not revealed them; nor can the doctrines relating to them, though externally revealed, be known by the natural man, or by the mere dint of nature, but only by the light of the spirit of God; who searches them, and makes them known in a spiritual manner to spiritual men, who have a spiritual discerning of them; and yet even by these they are not known perfectly, only in part, and are seen through a glass darkly: *or who hath been his counsellor?* or was of his council, when all things were fixed ac-

cording to his sovereign will: when the scheme of man's salvation was consulted and agreed upon between the eternal Three, there was no creature, angel, or man there; no created angel, only the increated One, *the Counsellor*, Isa. ix. 6. or as the Septuagint there style him, αγγελος μεγαλης βουλης, *the angel of the great council*: none but Father, Son, and Spirit, were present, when the book of life was made, when the names of God's elect were put into it, and others left out; when all things relating to his chosen ones, both for time and eternity, whether among Jews or Gentiles, were determined, ordered, and settled; and as there was no creature that assisted, or could give any advice about these matters, so there were none that were privy to the resolutions, determinations, and counsels of his will; which were purposed in himself and in his Son, and were known only to them and his Spirit, which is in him: from the whole it appears, that predestination is not according to men's works, or the foresight of them; for then these things would be plain and easy, they would not be unsearchable and past finding out; there would not be an unfathomable depth in them; the mind and counsels of God, and the springs of them, would be obvious; but it is according to his secret, sovereign, and unchangeable will.

Ver. 35. *Or who hath first given to him*, &c.] See Job xli. 11. and xxxv. 7. no man can give God any thing, which he has not first given him, or which he has not a prior right to, or a claim upon him for; Adam, in innocence, was not able to give God any thing, nor are the angels in heaven, much less sinful men on earth; their bodies and souls, and all their enjoyments, all that is good in them, or done by them, are from the Lord; men by all their good works, best duties and services, give nothing to God, nor lay him under any manner of obligation to them: hence no man can merit any thing at the hands of God, if he could, *it shall be recompenced to him again*; but it is impossible there should be merit in a creature, who has nothing but what he has from God, and does nothing but what he is obliged to do; and that not by his own strength, but by the grace and strength of God; and therefore there's no retribution made by God as of debt, but of grace: hence it follows, that God is indebted to, and obliged by none, and may do what he will with his own; love Jacob and hate Esau; choose one and not another; reject the Jews, and call the Gentiles; save and justify some, and not others; none can call him to account, or say unto him, what dost thou? or why dost thou thus?

Ver. 36. *For of him, and through him, and to him are all things*, &c.] Not only all things in nature and providence, he being the Maker and efficient cause of all things, and the preserver and supporter of them in their beings, and to whose glory they are all designed and directed; but all things in grace owe their original to him, as their first cause; they are produced by him, and make for his glory; they all spring from his sovereign will, are brought about by his almighty power, and tend to the glory of his grace; as does every thing in election, redemption, and regeneration: particularly the counsels and purposes of God respecting men may be here meant; which all rise out of his own heart, without any motive or inducement to them in the creature; are accomplished by his divine power, notwithstanding all the opposition of men and devils; and all issue in his glory, even such of them as may seem to carry in them severity to some of his creatures: and since this is the case, the following doxology, or ascription of glory to God, is justly and pertinently made, *to whom be glory for ever*; and which will be given to him by angels and men to all eternity, for the perfection of his being, the counsels of his will, and the works of his hands, both of nature and grace: to which the apostle annexes his *amen*, so be it, assenting to it, wishing for it, and believing of it.

CHAP. XII.

THE doctrines concerning predestination, justification, &c. being established, the duties of religion are built upon them, and enforced by them in this and the following chapters. The apostle first exhorts all the members of the church in common to a regard to the worship of God, in opposition to the things of the world; and then the officers of the church particularly, to the discharge of their duty; and next all of them, both officers and members, to the performance of various duties respecting God, themselves, one another, and the men of the world. The duty of attending public worship is first mentioned, signified by a presentation of their bodies to the Lord, ver. 1. to which they are moved, partly by the plenteous mercy and goodness of God to them; and partly by the acceptableness of it to God; as also by the reasonableness of the thing: then follows a dehortation from conformity to the world, the men and manners of it, in superstition and will-worship, or in acts of immorality, ver. 2. and also an exhortation to a different course of life, in seeking to please God; which is proposed upon a principle of grace in them, being renewed in the spirit of their mind; and with this end and view, that they might the better prove, try, and discern, and come at, a greater knowledge of the mind and will of God: and whereas gifts are apt to swell men with pride and vanity, such as qualify men to bear any office in the church, the apostle cautions against this spirit and conduct, and exhorts to sobriety and humility; by observing, that what gifts they have, are such that God has given them, and which they have not of themselves; and what they have is only in part and in measure, some one and some another; and none have all gifts, ver. 3. this he illustrates, ver. 4. by an human body and the members of it, which being many, have not the same office, but some one and some another; which he accommodates to the body of Christ the church, ver. 5. which though but one in Christ, has many members; and these are members one of another, and are designed mutually to serve and help each other, for which the gifts among them were bestowed: and then the apostle proceeds to take notice of the particular officers in the church,

and exhorts them to the function of their offices, according to their different gifts; as, first, the preacher to preach according to the rule of faith, and the measure of gifts bestowed, ver. 6. and then the deacon, the other officer, to attend to his deaconship, ver. 7. and inasmuch as these officers, according to their different gifts, may be distinguished, some having a talent for stating, explaining, and defending doctrines, and may be called doctors, or teachers, let them attend to the doctrinal part of the word; and others having a talent in the practical way of preaching, whether by way of exhortation or comfort, and may be called exhorters or comforters, let them attend to that branch of the ministry, ver. 8. and as for the deacon, the performance of his office, whether it be by distributing to the poor, let him do it impartially and faithfully; or by assisting in the government of the church, let it be done with all diligence; or by shewing mercy to the poor in distress, besides what they usually receive, let it be done with a cheerful countenance: next follow various duties which are mentioned, not in an exact order or method, but may be reduced to these heads; such as concern God, an unfeigned love of him, abhorrence of all evil, and a close attachment to whatsoever is good, ver. 9. and also the worship of him, which is to be performed with diligence and fervency, ver. 11. the exercise of the grace of hope with joy, patience in the midst of tribulations, and perseverance in prayer, ver. 12. then such duties as concern one another, as Christians and brethren in a church-relation; as to exercise an affectionate brotherly love to each other, and to honour one another; and even to give each other the preference, who may be equal or superior, both in spiritual gifts, and in temporal things, ver. 10. and with respect to poor saints, to communicate cheerfully to their necessities; and with respect to strangers, to entertain them hospitably, ver. 13. and as to every member, whether in prosperous or adverse circumstances, to bear a part with them, rejoicing with the one, weeping with the other, ver. 15. and to behave with humility, modesty, and sobriety, towards all, ver. 16. and next such duties as concern the men of the world, particularly to bless, and not curse persecutors, ver. 14. not to retaliate evil for evil, but to do every thing that is of good report in the sight of men, ver. 17. to study, if possible, to live peaceably with all men, ver. 18. to bridle passion and refrain from wrath, and not seek private revenge, but leave it with the Lord to take vengeance, ver. 19. on the other hand, to be kind and beneficent to enemies, by giving them food and drink when hungry and thirsty, expressed in the words of Solomon, Prov. xxv. 21, 22. the reasons for which are, because hereby an enemy may be wrought upon, and be brought either to shame or repentance, and become a friend, ver. 20. and because by doing otherwise, resenting and returning the evil, a man is conquered by it; whereas, by the other method, the enemy is conquered by good, ver. 21. and it is much more commendable and honourable to be a conqueror, than to be conquered.

Ver. 1. *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, &c.*] The apostle having finished the doctrinal part of this epistle, proceeds to that which is more practical; and enforces the several duties of religion, upon the principles he had before laid down, a method generally observed by him in all his epistles. The illative particle *therefore*, shews that the following exhortations are so many conclusions, consequences, and inferences, deduced from what had been said in the latter part of the preceding chapter; that since all things are of God, and by him and to him, then the saints ought to present their bodies to him, and to know, approve, and do his will; and since they have nothing but what they have received from him, they ought not to think too highly of, or glory in their attainments. The introduction to these exhortations, is in a very kind and affectionate manner; the saints are addressed as *brethren*, and very appositely; since this expresses the relation they stood in to the apostle, for whom he had an hearty love and concern; and therefore what he pressed them to was out of a sincere regard to their good, as well as to the glory of God; also their relation to each other, and which several of the duties he urges had a connexion with; likewise their relation to God, being of his family, having one and the same father, and so under obligation to regard his will, honour and reverence him: moreover, these things are moved, not in an imperious way, in an authoritative manner, but by way of entreaty, *I beseech you*; as an ambassador of Christ, and as though in his stead: nor are they enforced by terrors, threats, and menaces, but *by the mercies of God*; that is, the abundant mercy of God, displayed in their election, regeneration, and vocation; than which, nothing can have a greater influence on a believer, to engage him to holiness of life and conversation; and shews, that the doctrines of grace are no licentious ones, nor do they render useless precepts, exhortations, entreaties, cautions, and advice, particularly such as follow; *that ye present your bodies*; not barely that part of them commonly so called, for this is not to be understood of a mere presentation of the body in public worship: for though this ought to be, yet not without the heart engaged therein, otherwise bodily exercise will be of no avail; nor of a bare abstinence from grosser sins done in the body, and against it, and which defile and dishonour it; much less of a maceration, and keeping under the body, by watchings, fasting, &c. and still less of an offering of the body at death in a way of martyrdom, though this ought to be cheerfully complied with when called for: but by their bodies are meant, themselves, their whole souls and bodies, all the powers and faculties of their souls, and members of their bodies; and the presenting of them, designs a devoting of them, with all readiness and willingness, to the service of God for his honour and glory, without putting any confidence in, or placing any dependence upon them; which would be sacrificing to their own net, and burning incense to their drag; it includes the whole of their service, conversation, and religion, internal and external. So the Jews [k] say, "worthy is the portion of the righteous, "who offer every day this offering before the Lord; "and what is it? גרמיהו ונפשיהו, *their bodies and* "*their souls*, which they offer before him." The al-

[k] Zohar in Lev. fol. 4. 2.

lusion is to the rite of sacrificing, to the bringing of the slain beast, and laying it on the altar, and there presenting and offering it to the Lord. Under the Gospel dispensation all believers are priests; and the sacrifices they bring are not the bodies of slain beasts, but their own bodies, their whole selves; and these *a living sacrifice*, in opposition to the bodies of slain beasts offered under the legal dispensation, and to the dead works of such as are destitute of faith in Christ, and to the lifeless performances of the saints themselves at certain times; and designs such a presentation of themselves in the performance of religious duties, as springs from a principle of life under the quickening influences of the spirit of God, with faith and fervency; though without any view to obtain life hereby, for that is only by the offering up of the body of Christ once for all. Another epithet of this sacrifice of our bodies to God is *holy*, in allusion to the sacrifices under the law, which were separated from common use, and devoted to God, and were not to have the least spot and blemish in them; and regards men sanctified by the spirit of God, and whose actions flow from a principle of holiness, and are performed under the influence of the Holy Spirit; and such sacrifices as are both living and holy, cannot but be *acceptable* to God through the mediation of his son, by whom, as the persons, the souls and bodies of his people, so their spiritual sacrifices, whether of prayer or praise, are only acceptable to him: *which is your reasonable service*; it is agreeably to reason, and especially as sanctified, that men who have their beings from God, and are upheld in them by him, and are followed with the bounties of Providence; and especially who are made new creatures, and are blessed by him with all spiritual blessings in Christ, that they should give up themselves to him, and cheerfully serve him in their day and generation; such service is also agreeably to the Scriptures of truth, the standard of faith and practice, and contain and enforce nothing but what is highly reasonable to be complied with; 'tis such service as lies not in the slaying of irrational creatures, but in the presenting of men endued with rational powers unto God; and is of a spiritual nature, performed by spiritual men, under the influence of the spirit of God: and is suitable to the nature and perfections of God, and stands opposed to the corporeal and carnal service of the Jews.

Ver. 2. *And be not conformed to this world*, &c.] By *this world* is meant, either the Mosaic dispensation, and Jewish church-state, so called in opposition to עלם הבא, *the world to come*, the Gospel dispensation; in which there were a worldly sanctuary, and the rites and ceremonies of which are styled the rudiments and elements of the world; to which believers in the present state are by no means to conform, there being sacrifices and ordinances of another nature, it is the will of God they should observe and attend unto: or else the men of the world are designed, carnal and unregenerate men, among whom they formerly had their conversation, from among whom they were chosen, called, and separated, and who lie and live in wickedness, and therefore should not be conformed unto them: which is to be understood, not in a civil sense of conformity to them in garb and apparel, provided that pride and luxury are guarded against, and decency and sobriety observed, and the different abilities of persons and stations in life are attended to; or to any other civil usages and customs which are not contrary to natural and revealed religion; but of a conformity in a moral sense to the evil manners of men, to walk vainly, as other Gentiles do, to go into the same excess of riot with them; for this is contrary both to the principle and doctrine of grace, which teach men to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts; and of a compliance with the men of the world in a religious sense, by joining with them in acts of idolatry, superstition, and will-worship, and in any thing that is contrary to the order, ordinances, and truths of the Gospel. *But be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind*; which regards not the first work of conversion and renovation; for in this sense these persons were transformed, metamorphosed, changed, and renewed already; but the after-progress and carrying on the work of renovation, the renewing of them day by day in the spirit of their minds; see Eph. iv. 23. 2 Cor. iv. 16. which believers should be desirous of, and pray for, and make use of those means which the spirit of God owns for this purpose, attending to the spiritual exercises of religion, as reading, meditation, prayer, conference, the ministration of the word and ordinances, which is the reverse of conformity to the world: and the end to be attained hereby is, *that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God*; by which is meant not the secret will of God, which can't be searched into, proved, and known, till time and facts discover it: but the revealed will of God, both in the law, as in the hands of Christ, which contains nothing but what is good; and which when done in faith, from a principle of love, and to the glory of God, is acceptable through Christ; and is perfect as a law of liberty, and rule of walk and conversation; and which is to be proved and approved of by all the saints, who delight in it after the inward man: and also that which is contained in the Gospel; as that all that the father hath given to Christ should be redeemed by him, that these should be sanctified, and persevere to the end, and be glorified; all which is the good will of God, an acceptable saying to sensible sinners, and such a scheme of salvation as is perfect and complete, and needs nothing to be added to it; and is, by such who are daily renewed in the spirit of their minds, more and more proved, tried, discerned, and approved of, even by all such who have their spiritual senses exercised to discern things that differ.

Ver. 3. *For I say, through the grace given unto me*, &c.] The Ethiopic version reads, *the grace of God*; and so two of Stephens's copies. By which the apostle intends, not that internal grace which was wrought in his soul; nor the Gospel of the grace of God, which he preached; nor the gifts of grace, which qualified him for that service; but the grace of apostleship, or that authoritative power, which he, as an apostle, received from Christ to say, command, give orders and instructions to churches, and particular persons: *to every man that is among you*: every member of the church, in whatsoever state or condition, whether in office or not; of whatsoever abilities or capacity, having gifts, whether more or less; the manifestation of the spirit

being given to every one to profit with, for his own and the good of others: *not to think* of himself *more highly than he ought to think;* that is, either not to arrogate to himself what does not belong to him, and detract from others, who may have equal, if not superior, abilities to him; or not to glory in what he has, as if he had not received it, and as if it was altogether owing to his own sagacity, penetration, diligence, and industry; or not to search into things too high for him that are out of his reach, and beyond his capacity; though this is not to be understood as discouraging a search into the Scriptures of truth, the more difficult parts of it, and the more knotty points of controversy; but as forbidding inquiry into things not lawful to be searched into, or, if lawful, as requiring such a scrutiny to be made with modesty, and an humble dependence on superior light and assistance, and a discovery of it with humility and lowliness of mind; *but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith;* such ought to consider that what gifts, abilities, light, and knowledge they have, they have them not of themselves, but from God; that they have not all faith, and all knowledge, or don't know the whole of the faith of the Gospel, only a measure of it, which is dealt out, divided, and parted to every man, some having a greater degree of evangelical light than others; and that all have some, but none all. The Syriac version renders it, *faith in measure;* one of Stephens's copies reads, the *measure of grace;* see Eph. iv. 7.

Ver. 4. *For as we have many members in one body,* &c.] The apostle illustrates what he said last concerning God's dealing to every man the measure of faith, by comparing the church of Christ to an human body, which is but one, and has many members in union with it, and one another; and which are placed in an exact symmetry and proportion, and in proper subserviency to each other, and for the good of the whole: *and all members have not the same office,* or *action;* they don't exercise the same function, and perform the same operation, but each that which is peculiar to itself: the eye only sees, but does not hear, nor taste, nor smell; the ear only hears, but neither sees, or does any of the aforesaid things; the palate tastes, the nose smells, the hand handles, the foot walks, and the same may be observed of the other members of the body, which have not the same, but their particular offices, and all and each of them their usefulness.

Ver. 5. *So we being many are one body in Christ,* &c.] This is the application of the above simile. The chosen of God, the redeemed of Christ, and those that are justified by his righteousness, and sanctified by his spirit; though they are but few in comparison of the men of the world, but considered in themselves are many, and yet make up but one body, the church, of which Christ is the head: and though this general assembly, or church universal, may be distinguished into several congregational churches, and distinct communities, yet each community, consisting of divers persons, is but one body *in Christ,* united and knit together by joints and bands, under him their head, Lord, and King; in him, and not in Cæsar, or any earthly monarch, to distinguish this body from bodies politic, or any civil community among men: *and every one members one of another;* as in union with Christ their head, so to one another in love, walking in holy fellowship together, sympathizing with, and serving each other.

Ver. 6. *Having then gifts, differing,* &c.] As in a natural body, the various members of it have not the same office, and do not perform the same actions, thus they have not the same, but different faculties: one has one faculty, another another; the eye has the faculty of seeing, the ear of hearing, &c. thus in the spiritual body the church, as there are different members, these members have not the same work and business assigned them; some are employed one way, and some another; also they have diversities of gifts for their different administrations and operations, and all from Christ their head, by the same spirit, and for the service of the whole body, *according to the grace that is given unto us;* for all these gifts are not the effects of nature, the fruits of human power, diligence, and industry, but flow from the grace of God, who dispenses them when, where, and to whom he pleases in a free and sovereign manner; and therefore to be acknowledged as such, and used to his glory, and for the good of his church and people. Wherefore *whether prophecy,* let us prophesy *according to the proportion of faith.* The offices here, and hereafter mentioned, are not of an extraordinary, but ordinary kind, such as are lasting, and will continue in the church unto the end of time: and are divided into two parts, which are after subdivided into other branches. The division is into *prophesying* and *ministering.* By *prophesying* is meant, not foretelling things to come, though this gift was bestowed upon some, as Agabus, and others in the Christian church; but this, as it is of an extraordinary nature, so it is not stinted and limited according to the proportion of faith; but preaching the Gospel is here designed, which is the sense of the word in many places of Scripture, particularly in 1 Cor. xiii. and xiv. Now such who have this gift of prophecy, or of opening and explaining the Scriptures, ought to make use of it, and constantly attend to it: *let us prophesy;* diligently prepare for it by prayer, reading and meditation, and continually exercise it as opportunity offers; nor should any difficulty and discouragement deter from it: or whereas this last clause is not in the original text, it may be supplied from ver. 3. thus, *let us think soberly,* who have this gift, and not be elated with it, or carry it haughtily to those who attend on the exercise of it: but behave with sobriety, modesty, and humility, in the discharge thereof: *according to the proportion of faith.* There must be faith, or no prophesying: a man must believe, and therefore speak, or speak not at all; a Gospel minister ought not to be a sceptic, or in doubt about the main principles of religion; such as concern the three divine persons, the office, grace, and righteousness of Christ, and the way of salvation by him: he should be at a point in these things, should firmly believe, and with assurance assert them, nor fear to be called dogmatical on that account: he is to preach according to his faith, the proportion of it, which may be the same with the measure of it, ver. 3. And so the Syriac version reads it, איך משוחתא דהימנותה, *according to the measure of his faith:* to which the Arabic version agrees; that is, according to the measure of the gift of

Christ he has received; according to the abilities bestowed on him; according to that light, knowledge, faith, and experience he has; he ought to preach up unto it, and not in the least come short of it; or by *the proportion*, or *analogy of faith*, may be meant a scheme of Gospel truths, a form of sound words, a set of principles upon the plan of the Scriptures, deduced from them, and agreeably to them; and which are all of a piece, and consistent with themselves, from which the prophesier or preacher should never swerve: or the Scriptures themselves, the sure word of prophecy, the rule and standard of faith and practice: the scope of the text is to be attended to, its connection with the preceding or following verses, or both; and it is to be compared with other passages of Scripture, and accordingly to be explained: and this is to follow the rule directed to.

Ver. 7. *Or ministry*, let us wait *on our ministry*, &c.] The word διακονια sometimes signifies the whole ecclesiastical ministry, even the office of apostleship, as well as the ordinary ministration of the Gospel; see Acts i. 17. and vi. 4. but here *deaconship*, or the office of ministering to the poor saints, as in Acts vi. 1. 1 Cor. xvi. 15. being a distinct office from prophesying or preaching the word, and should be used, exercised, and attended to with diligence, care, and constancy: for such who are appointed to this office, are chosen not only to a place of honour, but of service and business, in which they should behave with prudence, sobriety, and humility: *or he that teacheth, on teaching*. The gift of prophesying or preaching is subdivided into *teaching* and *exhorting*; the one belongs to *teachers* or doctors, the other to *pastors*; as the distinction is in Ephes. iv. 11. not that different officers and offices are intended, but different branches of the same office; and one man's talent may lie more in the one, and another man's in the other; and accordingly each should in his preaching attend to the gift which is most peculiar to him: if his gift lies in teaching, let him constantly employ himself in that with all sobriety and humility: *teaching* does not design an office in the school, but in the church; it is not teaching divinity as men teach logic, rhetoric, and other arts and sciences, in the schools; but an instructing of churches and the members thereof in the doctrines of the Gospel, in order to establish and build them up in their most holy faith; see 1 Cor. xii. 28. Ephes. iv. 11, 12. it chiefly lies in a doctrinal way of preaching, in opening, explaining, and defending the doctrines of Christ, as distinct from the practical part of the ministry of the word, and the administration of ordinances, in which the pastor is employed as well as in this.

Ver. 8. *Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation*, &c.] This is the other branch of prophesying or preaching, and which is more practical, and lies in giving a word of exhortation to the saints, as their particular cases call for; for as prophets were teachers, Acts xiii. 1. so also exhorters, Acts xv. 32. and one considerable branch of the ministry, and which is more principally the pastor's work, as well as to teach, is to exhort all sorts of persons, young and old, rich and poor, high and low, bond and free, under his care, with all long-suffering and doctrine. The words will bear to be read, *he that comforteth, on consolation*; and so the Syriac version renders them, ואית דמביאנא הו בבויאה, *and another who is a comforter, in his consolation*. Though all the ministers of the Gospel are to speak comfortably to the saints, by preaching the doctrines of free justification by Christ's righteousness, and remission of sins by his blood, by bringing the good news of salvation by him, and by opening the exceeding great and precious promises of the Gospel; yet some have a greater talent this way than others; some are *Boanergeses*, sons of thunder, and others *Barnabases*, sons of consolation; and each should attend to that with all diligence and humility, he is best qualified for. *He that giveth*, let him do it *with simplicity*. Here begins the subdivision of the deacon's office into its several branches, *giving*, *ruling*, and *shewing mercy*: by *giving* is meant, not giving of his own, or performing acts of charity, which is common to all the members of the church, who ought liberally to contribute to the relief of the poor; but imparting or distributing the church's money to proper objects, which is to be done *with simplicity*; with all faithfulness and integrity, without fraud or embezzling the church's stock, with impartiality, and without respect of persons, and liberally and bountifully, as the word here used signifies; see 2 Cor. viii. 2. and ix. 13. *he that ruleth, with diligence*; deacons are the *helps, governments*, mentioned in 1 Cor. xii. 28. who are assisting to the pastor in the government of the church; their business is, to observe the conversations of the members of the church, and to warn them that are unruly and walk disorderly, to compose differences, and prepare matters to lay before the church; a deacon is προϊσταμενος, *one that goes before*; and leads on others by way of example in his conduct and conversation; or as the Syriac renders it, דקאם ברישא, *that stands at the head* of affairs in the church; in the management of which he ought to use all study, thoughtfulness, care and diligence: *he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness*; which is not to be understood of shewing compassion to miserable objects in common, or of giving alms to necessitous persons, and which ought to be done according to the Jewish[1] canons, בסבר פנים יפות, *with a cheerful countenance*; and is what is highly pleasing to God, who *loves a cheerful giver*; but of a branch of the deacon's office, whose work, among other things, is to visit the sick and distressed, and communicate to them as their wants require; all which should be done, not in a morose and frowning manner, but with a pleasant look and cheerful countenance, which makes the visit and the gift more welcome, acceptable, and useful.

Ver. 9. *Let love be without dissimulation*, &c.] The apostle having given out suitable exhortations to the officers of this church, ministers and deacons, proceeds to stir up to the exercise of grace, and the discharge of such duties as were common to all the members of the church; and begins with *love*, which is the cement of saints, and the bond of perfectness, without which all the gifts that men have, the profession they make, and works they do are of no avail, and they themselves nothing. Here it is to be taken, in the largest and most comprehensive sense, for love to God, Christ, the

[1] Maimon. Hilch. Mattanot Anayim, c. 10. sect. 4. 13.

saints, and fellow-creatures, and ought, with respect to each, to *be without dissimulation;* or *hypocrisy:* love to God should be with all the heart, soul, and mind, otherwise the fear of him, and obedience to him, will be only outward, formal, customary, and hypocritical; love to Christ should be with sincerity, and so it is where 'tis right, hearty, and genuine; such can appeal to him as the searcher of hearts, that from the heart they love him; and love to one another should be not in word, and in tongue only, but in deed and in truth; yea, the love professed to fellow-creatures, ought never to be through fear of men or mercenary views, but honest, upright, and sincere. *Abhor that which is evil;* sin, both in its principle and in its actings; it being hateful to God, Father, Son, and Spirit, contrary to the nature, being, and perfections of God, a transgression of his righteous law, exceeding sinful in itself, and pernicious in its effects and consequences; for all which it is to be abhorred by the saints: the word αποστυγουντες, here used, designs the greatest aversation imaginable, a turning away from it, as what is the most loathsome, detestable, and abominable; and such an hatred of it with horror, as of the Stygian lake, or hell itself: *cleave to that which is good;* to God, who is originally, infinitely, and immutably good; who is good in his nature, and works, and to all his creatures, and especially his chosen people, and therefore should be cleaved unto; to his will, his ways, and worship; and to Christ the good shepherd of the sheep, the Lamb that is to be followed and cleaved unto, whithersoever he goes; and to the good spirit of God, after whom we should walk, and not after the flesh; and to the good people of God, assembling with whom should not be forsaken; and to the good Gospel of Christ, and the truths of it, which should be held fast; and to the ordinances of the Gospel, which ought to be constantly attended on; and to every good work, to which we should be ready, careful to maintain, and ever follow, both among ourselves and all men: they should even be glued unto it, as the word here signifies.

Ver. 10. *Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love, &c.*] This is one branch of that love, before advised to, which should be unfeigned, and without guile and deceit. The objects of this grace are *brethren*, not in such sense as all the descendants of Adam are, or men of the same country be, or as such who are born of the same parents in a natural sense are; to each of whom love is due under their respective characters and relations: but such who are so in a spiritual sense, who are born of God, are of his household, belong to his family, are the brethren of Christ, and one another; and are either members of the same church, incorporated together in the same church-state, or at least members of Christ, and of the church universal. Now love to these should be kind, tender, and affectionate, reciprocal and mutual; such should love one another; there should be no love wanting on either side; and it ought to be universal, and reach to all the saints, though of different gifts, light, knowledge and experience, or whether high or low, rich or poor; and should shew itself by bearing one another's burdens, bearing with, and forbearing each other, forgiving one another, and by edifying one another in their most holy faith, and praying with, and for one another. *In honour preferring one another;* saints should think honourably of one another, and entertain an honourable esteem of each other; yea, should esteem each other better than themselves; and not indulge evil surmises, and groundless jealousies of one another, which is contrary to that love that thinks no evil. They should speak honourably of each other in Christian company, and discourage that evil practice of whisperings, backbitings, and innuendos; they should treat each other with honour and respect in their common conversation, and especially when met together as a church of Christ. They should go before each other in giving honour, and shewing respect, as the word προηγουμενοι signifies: they should set each other an example; and which also may be taken into the sense of the word, should prevent one another, not waiting until respect is shewn on one side to return it again. Nor does this rule at all break in upon that order that should subsist, and be maintained in bodies civil and ecclesiastical, which requires superior honour to be given to persons according to their character, office, and station in which they are.

Ver. 11. *Not slothful in business, &c.*] Meaning not worldly business, or the affairs of life; though slothfulness in this respect is scandalous to human nature, and especially in persons under a profession of religion; men should diligently pursue their lawful callings for the support of themselves and families, and the interest of Christ: but spiritual business, the affairs of piety and religion, the service of God, private and public, to which we should not be backward, nor slothful in the performance of; such as preaching, hearing, reading, praying, and other ordinances of God; yea, we should be ready and forward to every good work, and particularly, and which may be here greatly designed, ministering to the poor saints in their necessity; in doing which we shew that kind, tender, affectionate, brotherly love, and give that honour and respect, at least that part of it, which is relief, required in the foregoing verse; see Heb. vi. 10, 11, 12. Remarkable is that saying of R. Tarphon[*]. "The "day is short, and the work great, והפועלים עצלים, "*and workmen slothful*, and the reward much, and "the master of the house is urgent." *Fervent in spirit;* in their own spirits, for the glory of God, the honour of Christ, and the cause of religion, in imitation of Christ himself, and as Phinehas and Elijah were; which fervency of spirit is opposed to that lukewarmness of soul, that coldness of affection, and leaving of the first love, so much complained of, and resented by Christ in his people: or else in the spirit of God; for there may be fervency in men's spirits, which comes not from the spirit of God, as in the Jews, and particularly Saul, before his conversion, who had a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge; but when the love of God is shed abroad in the heart by the spirit of God, this will make a man's spirit fervent in the service of God, for which the apostle would have these believers concerned. A disciple of the wise men among the Jews is[*] said to be

[*] Pirke Abot, c. 2. sect. 15.

[*] T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 4. 1.

רתח, *fervent*, because the law is as a boiling pot unto him; much more should a disciple of Christ be fervent, who has the Gospel of Christ, the love of God, and the grace of the Spirit to inflame his soul with true zeal and fervour. *Serving the Lord*: some copies read, *serving time*: the likeness of the words, καιρῳ and κυριῳ, especially in an abbreviation, may have occasioned this different reading; which should it be followed, is not to be understood in an ill sense, of temporizing, or time-serving, of men's accommodating themselves, their sentiments and conduct, according to the times in which they live, in order to escape reproach and persecution; but of redeeming the time, improving every season to do good, and taking every opportunity of serving God. But as the reading our version follows is confirmed by authentic copies, and by the Syriac, and other Oriental versions, 'tis best to adhere to it: by *the Lord* is here meant either God, Father, Son, and Spirit, who are the alone object of divine service and religious worship; or the Lord Jesus Christ, who most frequently goes by the name of *Lord* in the New Testament; and who is the one Lord, whose we are and whom we should continually serve, being under the greatest obligations to him, not only as our Creator, but as our head, husband, and Redeemer. Very rightly does the apostle premise fervency in spirit to serving the Lord; for without the spirit of God there's no true worshipping and serving of him, and which ought to be done with fervency as well as with constancy. The Syriac version renders it, *serve your Lord*.

Ver. 12. *Rejoicing in hope*, &c.] Of the glory of God, than the hope of which nothing can make a believer more cheerful in this world; the saints' joy is therefore called the *rejoicing of the hope*, Heb. iii. 6. This is placed between serving the Lord, and being patient in tribulation; for nothing tends more to animate the people of God to a cheerful serving of him, or to make them more patient under afflictions, than a hope of being for ever with the Lord: *patient in tribulation*; whilst the saints are in this world they must expect tribulation; their way to heaven lies through it; and it becomes them to be patient under it, not murmuring against God, on the one hand, nor reviling of men, on the other. *Continuing instant in prayer*: prayer is needful at all times, but especially in a time of tribulation and distress, whether inward or outward. This should be made without ceasing; saints should watch unto it with all perseverance; men should pray always, and not faint; never give out and over, or be discouraged. This advice is rightly given and placed here, to teach us that we are to go to the throne of grace continually for fresh supplies of grace, and strength to enable us to exercise the grace, and perform the duties exhorted to both in the preceding and following verses.

Ver. 13. *Distributing to the necessity of saints*, &c.] Or *communicating*, as many versions render the word: distributing more properly belongs to the officers of the church, the deacons, and communicating to the members of it in common. All men in general are to be relieved that are in want, even our very enemies, and particularly such as are our own flesh and blood, nearly related to us, aged parents, *&c.* and especially they that are of the household of faith, here called *saints*; and indeed, such only come under the care and notice of a church: and they are such, whom God has set apart for himself, has chosen in his son, that they should be holy; whom Christ has sanctified, or whose sins he has expiated by his blood; and to whom he is made sanctification; and in whose hearts a work of grace and holiness is wrought by the spirit of God, which is the sanctification of the spirit they are chosen through, as a mean to eternal salvation by Christ; and in consequence of this, they live soberly, righteously, and godly, and have their conversations as become the Gospel of Christ: and such as these, being in necessitous circumstances, are to be communicated to; for not all, or any of the saints, but only such as are in *necessity*, are here pointed at; it is not communicating to the saints, but to their necessity, which is recommended. It is the will and pleasure of God, that some of his dear children should be in strait circumstances of life, be reduced to want and distress, partly to try their own graces, their faith and trust in God, and dependence on him; and partly the graces of others, the charity, liberality, and beneficence of those who have of this world's goods; and who are the persons that are to *communicate*, not words only, saying, be warmed and filled, and give nothing; but their substance, they are to deal their bread to the hungry, clothe the naked, and give a portion to as many as are in need: and these acts of giving and receiving, are one way by which the saints have communication with each other, and which is suggested by the word *communicating* here used; for fellowship does not lie merely in private conversation, and in sitting down together at the Lord's table, but in communicating to one another such things as are needful, as for the soul, so for the body. Some copies read, *communicating to the memories of the saints*; not making images of them, and praying to them, but speaking well and honourably of them, and imitating them in what they did well; see Prov. x. 7. *Given to hospitality*; or, as it may be rendered, *pursuing*, or *following after love to strangers*; which is properly hospitality: respect is to be shewn not to such only who are members of the same community with us, but also to such of the people of God, that may be of another country, or of some distant parts of our own, not before known by us; who by persecution, and distress of some sort or another, or by some providence or another, are obliged to remove from their native place. These we are to love, and shew our love to, not only by directing and advising, but, if need be, by giving them food and raiment, and lodging them: this is a duty incumbent on ministers of the Gospel, and on private members, and on all who are in any capacity to perform it; and which should be done cheerfully, and without grudging; and what persons should use, inure, and give themselves to, yea, should seek after, and call to objects of it; as Abraham and Lot did, who thereby entertained angels unawares, and is what the apostle here means by pursuing and following after it.

Ver. 14. *Bless them which persecute you*, &c.] It is the lot of God's people in this world to be persecuted by the men of it, in some shape or another, either by words or deeds; either by reviling and reproaching

them, and speaking all manner of evil of them; or by hindering them the free exercise of religious worship, by confiscation of their goods, imprisonment of their persons, by violently torturing their bodies, and taking away their lives; under all which circumstances they are taught to *bless* them; that is, to pray for them, that God would shew them their evil, give repentance to them, and the remission of their sins; which is the order Christ gave to his disciples, Matt. v. 44. and encouraged to an observance of, by his own example, Luke xxiii. 34. and has been followed herein by his disciples and apostles, Acts vii. 60. 1 Cor. iv. 12, 13. Moreover, by *blessing* may be meant, giving them good words, mild and soft answers, not rendering evil for evil, railing for railing; but, on the contrary, blessing, in imitation of Christ, who, when he was reviled, reviled not again: *bless, and curse not:* to have a mouth full of cursing and bitterness, is the character of an unregenerate man, and what by no means suits one who names the name of Christ; for blessing and cursing to proceed out of the same mouth, is as absurd and unnatural, as if it should be supposed that a fountain should send forth sweet water and bitter, or salt and fresh. The imprecations upon wicked men, used by David and other good men, are no contradictions to this rule; since they were made under the inspiration of the spirit of God, and were predictions of God's vengeance, which in righteous judgment should fall on them, and are not to be drawn into an example by us.

Ver. 15. *Rejoice with them that do rejoice,* &c.] Not in any thing sinful and criminal, in a thing of nought, in men's own boastings; all such rejoicing is evil, and not to be joined in: but in things good and laudable, as in outward prosperity; and to rejoice with such, is a very difficult task; for unless persons have a near concern in the prosperity of others, they are very apt to envy it, or to murmur and repine, that they are not in equal, or superior circumstances; and also in things spiritual, with such who rejoice in the discoveries of God's love to their souls, in the views of interest in Christ, and of peace, pardon, and righteousness by him, and in hope of the glory of God; when such souls make their boast in the Lord, the humble hearing thereof will be glad, and will, as they ought to do, join with them in magnifying the Lord, and will exalt his name together: *and weep with them that weep:* so Christ, as he rejoiced with them that rejoiced, at the marriage in Cana of Galilee, wept with them that wept, with Mary at the grave of Lazarus. The design of these rules is to excite and encourage sympathy in the saints with each other, in all conditions inward and outward, and with respect to things temporal and spiritual; in imitation of Christ their great high-priest, who cannot but be touched with the infirmities of his people; and as founded upon, and arising from, their relation to each other, as members of the same body; see 1 Cor. xii. 26.

Ver. 16. *Be of the same mind one towards another,* &c.] Which is not to be understood of the sameness of their judgment, or of their agreement in sentiments, espousing the same doctrines, observing the same ordinances, and in the same manner, and attending to the same form of discipline; but of their having the same love, and being of the same accord and affection to one another, entertaining the same good opinion, or a better, of others than of themselves; and so the Syriac version renders the passage, *what ye think of yourselves, think also of your brethren:* think of one another, as equally interested in the love of God, redeemed by the blood of Christ, blessed with the same spiritual blessings in him, and called in the same hope of your calling; and don't think of one another, as being one richer or wiser than another, don't value yourselves upon that: *mind not high things;* be not high-minded, don't think too highly of yourselves, and despise others; meddle not with, nor grasp at things too high for you, that are out of your reach, and beyond your capacity; nor seek great things for yourselves, as riches, honours, *&c.* nor covet great company: *but condescend to men of low estate;* or *to low things;* be content with mean and low things in life, and disdain not to take notice of, and converse with, men in a low condition, whether in things temporal or spiritual; who may be poor in this world, be very ignorant and illiterate, as to general knowledge and learning; be men of mean parts and abilities, of very small gifts, and be weak in faith and experience; condescend to their weaknesses, bear their infirmities, and become all things to them for their good, and God's glory: consider the apostle is writing to citizens of Rome, who might be tempted to look upon themselves above others, and to look disdainfully upon others, as citizens too often do on country-people, as if they were below them, as persons of low life to them: *be not wise in your own conceits;* see Prov. iii. 7. This is attended with bad consequences, spoils a man's usefulness, prevents his improvement in knowledge, tempts him to reject all counsel and advice given him, and to treat his fellow creatures and Christians with haughtiness and insolence, and exposes him to the scorn and contempt of men: or *be not wise by or with yourselves;* imagining you have all the wisdom, and others have none; or keeping it to yourselves, what wisdom you have communicate it to others; the Ethiopic version reads, *say not, we are wise;* see Job xii. 2, 3.

Ver. 17. *Recompence to no man evil for evil,* &c.] Neither evil words for evil words, railing for railing; nor evil deeds for evil deeds, one ill turn for another; nor the evil of punishment for the evil of fault, unless it be by persons, who under God have an authority to inflict it; as the civil magistrate, who *is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doth evil;* but private revenge is what is here forbidden: *providing things honest in the sight of all men.* The Vulgate Latin reads, *not only in the sight of God, but also in the sight of all men;* and the Alexandrian copy reads, *in the sight of God and in the sight of men;* which clause seems to have crept in here, out of 2 Cor. viii. 21. The words are not to be understood of a man's providing things honest, decent, and commendable, as suitable food and raiment for his family, in the sight of all men, to the honour of religion, and the credit of his profession, which is right to be done; but of a provident, thoughtful, and studious concern, to do every thing that is laudable and of good report among men. The Syriac version renders the words after this manner, אלא נתבטל לכון דתעבדון טבתא, *but be careful*

to do well, or exercise beneficence before all men; either restraining it to acts of beneficence, even to them that do us ill, in opposition to rendering evil to them; or applying it to all offices of humanity, and every good work, which are to be done in the sight of men; not merely to be seen of them, and in a vain-glorious way, in order to obtain their esteem and applause, as did the Pharisees; but to avoid offence: to put, to silence, by well-doing, the ignorance of wicked men; and to shame them that falsely accuse the good conversation of the saints; and to recommend the Gospel and true religion, and win men over to it thereby, and give an occasion to them of glorifying God.

Ver. 18. *If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably*, &c.] Or *be at peace*, seek after peace, pursue it, and cultivate it: *with all men*: with those that we are immediately concerned with, in a natural relation; so husbands should live peaceably with their wives, and wives with their husbands; parents with their children, and children with their parents; masters with their servants, and servants with their masters; and one brother, relation, and friend, with another: and so with all we are concerned with in a spiritual relation, as members of Christ, and in the same church-state; such should be at peace among themselves; peace should rule in their hearts, and they should study to keep the unity of the spirit, in the bond of peace: yea, with all we are concerned in a civil sense; saints should live peaceably in the neighbourhood, towns, cities, and countries, where they dwell, and shew themselves to be the quiet in the land; should pray for the peace of the place where they are; and do all that in them lies to promote it, by living themselves peaceably and quietly, in all godliness and honesty; yea, they should live peaceably with their very enemies, *if it be possible*; which is rightly put, for there are some persons of such tempers and dispositions, that it is impossible to live peaceably with; for when others are for peace, they are for war; and in some cases it is not only impracticable, but would be unlawful; as when it can't be done consistent with holiness of life and conversation, with the edification of others, the truths of the Gospel, the interest of religion, and the glory of God; these are things that are never to be sacrificed for the sake of peace with men: the apostle adds another limitation of this rule, *as much as lieth in you*; for more than this is not required of us; nothing should be wanting on our parts; every step should be taken to cultivate and maintain peace; the blame should lie wholly on the other side; it becomes the saints to live peaceably themselves, if others will not with them.

Ver. 19. *Dearly beloved*, &c.] This affectionate appellation the apostle makes use of, expressing his great love to them, the rather to work upon them, and move them to an attention to what he is about to say; which they might assure themselves was in great tenderness to them, for their good, as well as the glory of God: moreover, he may hereby suggest to them, not only that they were dear to him, but that they were greatly beloved of God, that they were high in his favour and affection; and this he might hint unto them, in order to melt them into love to their fellow Christians and fellow-creatures, and even to their enemies, and never think of private revenge: *avenge not yourselves*: this is no ways contrary to that revenge, a believer has upon sin, and the actings of it, which follows on true evangelical repentance for it, 2 Cor. vii. 11. and lies in a displicency at it, and himself for it, and in abstaining from it, and fighting against it; nor to that revenge a church may take of the disobedience of impenitent and incorrigible offenders, by laying censures on them, withdrawing from them, and rejecting them from their communion; nor to that revenge which civil magistrates may execute upon them that do evil; but this only forbids and condemns private revenge in private persons, for private injuries done, and affronts given: *but rather give place to wrath*; either to a man's own wrath, stirred up by the provocations given him; let him not rush upon revenge immediately; let him sit down and breathe upon it; let him *give* ארוחא, *space* unto it, as the Syriac, which may signify time as well as place; and by taking time his wrath will subside, he'll cool and come to himself, and think better on't: or to the wrath of the injurious person, by declining him, as Jacob did Esau, till his wrath was over; or by patiently bearing without resistance the evil done, according to the advice of Christ, Matt. v. 39, 40. or to the wrath of God, leave all with him, and to the day of his wrath and righteous judgment, who will render to every man according to his works; commit yourselves to him that judgeth righteously, and never think of avenging your own wrongs; and this sense the following words incline to, *for it is written*, Deut. xxxii. 35. *vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord*; vengeance belongs to God, and to him only; it is proper and peculiar to him, not to Heathen deities, one of which they call *δικη*, *vengeance*: see Acts xxviii. 4. nor to Satan, who is of a revengeful spirit, and is styled the enemy and the avenger; nor to men, unless to magistrates under God, who are revengers and executioners of his wrath on wicked men; otherwise it solely belongs to God the lawgiver, whose law is broken, and against whom sin is committed: and there is reason to believe he will *repay* it, from the holiness of his nature, the strictness of his justice, his power and faithfulness, his conduct towards his own people, even to his son, as their surety; nor will he neglect, but in his own time will avenge his elect, which cry unto him day and night; and who therefore should never once think of avenging themselves, but leave it with their God, to whom it belongs.

Ver. 20. *Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him*, &c.] These words are taken from Prov. xxv. 21, 22. and to be understood, as a Jewish * writer observes, כמשמעו, according to *their literal sense*: though some of the Rabbins explain them in an allegorical way, of the corruption of nature. The Alexandrian copy and some others, and the Vulgate Latin version, read *but if*: so far should the saints be from meditating revenge upon their enemies, that they should do good unto them, as Christ directs, Matt. v. 44. by feeding them when hungry, and giving drink unto them when thirsty: *if he thirst give him drink*: which includes all offices of humanity and beneficence to be performed

* Jarchi in Prov. xxv. 21.

unto them: the reason, or argument inducing hereunto is, *for in so doing, thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head*: not to do him hurt, not to aggravate his condemnation, as if this would be a means of bringing down the wrath of God the more fiercely on him, which is a sense given by some; as if this would be an inducement to the saints to do such acts of kindness; which is just the reverse of the spirit and temper of mind the apostle is here cultivating; but rather the sense is, that by so doing, his conscience would be stung with a sense of former injuries done to his benefactor, and he be filled with shame on account of them, and be brought to repentance for them, and to love the person he before hated, and be careful of doing him any wrong for the future; all which may be considered as a prevailing motive to God's people to act the generous part they are here moved to: in the passage referred to, Prov. xxv. 21, 22. *bread* and *water* are mentioned as to be given, which include all the necessaries of life: and it is added for encouragement, *and the Lord shall reward thee*. The sense given of this passage by some of the Jewish commentators on it agrees with what has been observed in some measure; says one[f] of them, "when he remembers the food and "drink thou hast given him, thou shalt burn him, as "if thou puttest coals upon his head to burn him, "וישמור מעשות לך רע, *and he'll take care of doing thee* "*any ill*:" that is, for the time to come: and another of them observes[g], that "this matter will be hard "unto him, as if thou heapest coals on his head to "burn him, מרוב בשתו, *because of the greatness of his* "*shame*, on account of the good that he shall receive "from thee, for the evil which he hath rendered to "thee." This advice of shewing kindness to enemies, and against private revenge, is very contrary to the dictates of human nature, as corrupted by sin. The former of these Julian the emperor represents[r] as a *paradox*, though he owns it to be lawful, and a good action, to give clothes and food to enemies in war; and the latter, to revenge an injury, he says[s], is a law common to all men, Greeks and Barbarians; but the Gospel and the grace of God teach us another lesson.

Ver. 21. *Be not overcome of evil, &c.*] Neither of the evil one, Satan, who is very busy to stir up the corruption of nature to an hatred of enemies, and to seek revenge; but give no place nor heed unto him, resist him, and he'll flee from you; put on the whole armour of God, whereby you may defend yourselves, that he cannot touch you: nor of the evil of sin that dwells in you; for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage; nor of the evil of the man that has done you an injury, as you will be, if you return evil for evil, or take any steps and measures to avenge yourselves; for then not you, but he that has done you the wrong, will be the conqueror: *but overcome evil with good*; overcome the evil man, and the evil he has done you, by doing good to him, by feeding him when hungry, by giving him drink when thirsty, by clothing him when naked, and by doing other offices of kindness and humanity to him; which is most likely to win upon him, and of an enemy to make him your friend: and if not, however it will shew that you are conquerors, yea, more than conquerors, through the grace and strength of him that has loved you, over Satan, over the corruptions of your own hearts, and over the malice and wickedness of your enemies.

CHAP. XIII.

THE principal things contained in this chapter, enjoined the saints, are the duties of subjection to magistrates, love to one another, and to all men, and temperance and chastity in themselves: it begins with duties relating to the civil magistrates, requiring obedience of every one unto them, ver. 1. and that for these reasons, because the civil magistracy, or government, is by divine appointment: wherefore to obey them in things of a civil nature, is to obey God; and to resist them is to resist God; and also because of the pernicious consequence of such resistance, damnation to themselves, ver. 2. for the magistrate not only causes terror by penal laws, but he inflicts punishment on delinquents, and is the executioner of God's wrath and vengeance on such, ver. 3, 4. and likewise because of the profit and advantage to obedient subjects; such not only have the good will and esteem of their rulers, and are commended by them, but are defended and protected in their persons and properties, ver. 3, 4. moreover, the apostle enforces the necessity of subjection to them, not only in order to avoid punishment, but to answer a good conscience; this duty being according to the light of nature, and the dictates of a natural conscience; which if awake, must be uneasy with a contrary behaviour, ver. 5. and for the same reason he urges the payment of tribute to them, as well as on account of the reasonableness of it, taken from magistrates spending their time, and using their talents, in an attendance on the service of the public, ver. 6. and which is further confirmed by the general rule of justice and equity, or of doing that which is just and right to every one, of which particulars are given, ver. 7. and then after a general exhortation to pay all sorts of debts owing to superiors, inferiors, or equals, the apostle passes to the debt of love owing to one another, and to all mankind; which is exhorted to on this consideration, that the performance of it is a fulfilling the law, ver. 8. which is proved, by shewing that the several precepts of the law, of which an enumeration is given, are reducible to, and are included in love to our neighbours as ourselves, ver. 9. and since it is the nature of love not to work ill, but to do good to the neighbour, the conclusion follows, that it must be as asserted, that love is the fulfilment of the law,

[f] R. Aben Ezra in loc.
[g] R. Levi ben Gersom in loc. Vid. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 147. 2.

[r] Fragment. inter opera, par. 1. p. 533.
[s] Ad Atheniens. p. 201.

and ought by all means to be attended to, as a principal duty of religion, ver. 10. next the apostle proceeds to exhort the saints to a watchful, chaste, sober, and temperate course of life; as being perfectly agreeable to the privileges they enjoyed, to the present condition they were in, and to that future state of happiness they were in expectation of: he exhorts to be watchful and sober, and not indulge sleep and slothfulness, in consideration of the time in which they were, and with which they were acquainted, it being not night, but day; at least the one was wearing off, and the other coming on; the time of life being short, and the day of salvation approaching nearer and nearer, ver. 11, 12. wherefore such actions should be done, as are agreeable to the day, and not the night, to light, and not darkness; and particularly such works of darkness are dissuaded from, which are contrary to temperance and sobriety, as rioting, and drunkenness; and to chastity, as chambering and wantonness; and to peace and concord, as strife and envying, which frequently follow upon the former: and the chapter is concluded with an exhortation to faith in Christ, and an imitation of him, expressed in a figurative way by a metaphor, taken from the putting on of garments; and with a dehortation from an immoderate provision for the flesh, so as to promote, excite, and cherish, the lusts of it, ver. 13.

Ver. 1. *Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers,* &c.] The apostle having finished his exhortations to this church, in relation to the several duties incumbent upon both officers and private Christians, as members of a church, and with reference to each other, and their moral conduct in the world; proceeds to advise, direct, and exhort them to such duties as were relative to them as members of a civil society; the former chapter contains his Christian Ethics, and this his Christian Politics. There was the greater reason to insist upon the latter, as well as on the former, since the primitive saints greatly lay under the imputation of being seditious persons and enemies to the commonwealth; which might arise from a very great number of them being Jews, who scrupled subjection to the Heathen magistrates, because they were the seed of Abraham, and by a law were not to set one as king over them, that was a stranger, and not their own brother, and very unwillingly bore the Roman yoke, and paid tribute to Cæsar: hence the Christians in common were suspected to be of the same principles; and of all the Jews none were more averse to the payment of taxes to the Roman magistrates than the Galileans; see Acts v. 37. Luke xiii. 1. And this being the name by which Christ and his followers were commonly called, might serve to strengthen the above suspicion of them, and charge against them. Moreover, some Christians might be tempted to think that they should not be subject to Heathen magistrates; since they were generally wicked men, and violent persecutors of them; and that it was one branch of their Christian liberty to be freed from subjection to them: and certain it is, that there were a set of loose and licentious persons, who bore the name of Christians, that despised dominion, and spoke evil of dignities; wherefore the apostle judged it advisable especially to exhort the church of Rome, and the members who dwelt there, where was the seat of power and civil government, so to behave towards their superiors, that they might set a good example to the Christians in the several parts of the empire, and wipe off the aspersion that was cast upon them, as if they were enemies to magistracy and civil power. By *the higher powers,* he means not angels, sometimes called principalities and powers; for unto these God hath not put in subjection his people under the Gospel dispensation; nor ecclesiastical officers, or those who are in church-power and authority; for they don't bear the temporal sword, nor have any power to inflict corporeal punishment: but civil magistrates are intended, see Tit. iii. 1. and these not only supreme magistrates, as emperors and kings, but all inferior and subordinate ones, acting in commission under them, as appears from 1 Pet. ii. 13, 14. which are called *powers,* because they are invested with power and authority over others, and have a right to exercise it in a proper way, and in proper cases; and the *higher* or super-eminent ones, because they are set in high places, and have superior dignity and authority to others. The persons that are to be subject to them are *every soul;* not that the souls of men, distinct from their bodies, are under subjection to civil magistrates; for of all things they have the least to do with them, their power and jurisdiction not reaching to the souls, the hearts, and consciences of men, especially in matters of religion, but chiefly to their bodies, and outward civil concerns of life: but the meaning is, that every man that has a soul, every rational creature, ought to be subject to civil government. This is but his reasonable service, and which he should from his heart, and with all his soul, cheerfully perform. In short, the sense is, that every man should be subject: this is an Hebraism, a common way of speaking among the Jews, who sometimes denominate men from one part, and sometimes from another; sometimes from the body or flesh, thus *all flesh is grass,* that is, all men are frail; and sometimes from the soul, *all souls are mine,* all belong to me; as here, *every soul,* that is, every man, all the individuals of mankind, of whatsoever sex, age, state, or condition, ecclesiastics not excepted: the pope, and his clergy, are not exempted from civil jurisdiction; nor any of the true ministers of the Gospel; the priests under the law were under the civil government; and so was Christ himself, and his apostles, who paid tribute to Cæsar: yea, even Peter particularly, whose successor the pope of Rome pretends to be. *Subjection* to the civil magistrates designs and includes all duties relative to them: such as shewing them respect, honour, and reverence suitable to their stations; speaking well of them, and their administration; using them with candour, not bearing hard upon them for little matters, and allowing for ignorance of the secret springs of many of their actions and conduct, which if known might greatly justify them; wishing well to them, and praying constantly, earnestly, and heartily for them; observing their laws and injunctions; obeying their lawful commands, which do not contradict the laws of God, nature, and right reason; and paying them their just dues and lawful tribute, to support them in their office and dignity: *for there is no power but of God:* God is the fountain of all power and authority; the streams of

power among creatures flow from him; the power that man has over all the creatures, the fowls of the air, the beasts of the field, and the fishes of the sea, is originally of God, and by a grant from him; the lesser powers, and the exercises of them, in the several relations men stand in to one another, are of God, as the power the husband has over the wife, parents over their children, and masters over their servants; and so the higher power that princes have over their subjects: for it is the God of heaven that sets up kings, as well as pulls them down; he is the King of kings, from whom they derive their power and authority, from whom they have the right of government, and all the qualifications for it; it is by him that kings reign, and princes decree justice. *The powers that be are ordained of God.* The order of magistracy is of God; it is of his ordination and appointment, and of his ordering, disposing, and fixing in its proper bounds and limits. The several forms of government are of human will and pleasure; but government itself is an order of God. There may be men in power who assume it of themselves, and are of themselves, and not of God; and others that abuse the power that is lodged in them; who, though they are by divine permission, yet not of God's approbation and good will. And it is observable, that the apostle speaks of powers, and not persons, at least, not of persons, but under the name of powers, to shew that he means not this, or the other particular prince or magistrate, but the thing itself, the office and dignity of magistracy itself; for there may be some persons, who may of themselves usurp this office, or exercise it in a very illegal way, who are not of God, nor to be subject to by men. The apostle here both uses the language, and speaks the sentiments of his countrymen the Jews, who are wont to call magistrates, *powers;* hence those sayings were used among them; says Shemaiah[t], "אל תתודע לרשות, *be not too familiar with the power;*" that is, with a magistrate, which oftentimes is dangerous. Again, " says[u] Rabban Gamaliel, הוו זהירין "ברשות, *take heed of the power* (*i. e.* of magistrates), " for they don't suffer a man to come near them, but " in necessity, and then they appear as friends for " their own advantage, but won't stand by a man in " the time of distress." Moreover, after this manner they explain[w] Prov. v. 8. " *remove thy way far from* " *her*, this is heresy; *and come not nigh* the door of " her house, זו הרשות, *this is the power.* The gloss " on it is, magistrates, because they set their eyes " upon rich men to kill them, and take away their " substance." And a little after 'tis observed, that " *the horse-leech hath two daughters, crying, give, give:* " 'tis asked, what is the meaning of *give, give?* Says " Mar Ukba, there are two daughters which cry out " of hell, and say in this world, give, give, and they " are heresy, והרשות, *and the civil power.*" The gloss on this place is, " Heresy cries, bring a sacrifice to the " idol; *Civil Power* cries, bring money, and gifts, and " revenues, and tribute to the king." Nevertheless, they look upon civil government to be of divine appointment. They say[x], that " no man is made a " governor below, except they proclaim him above;" *i. e.* unless he is ordained of God: yea, they allow[y] the Roman empire to be of God, than which no government was more disagreeable to them. " When R. Jose " ben Kisma was sick, R. Chanina ben Tradion went " to visit him; he said unto him, Chanina, my bro- " ther, my brother, knowest thou not that this nation, " (the Romans) מן השמים המליכוה, *have received their* " *empire* from God? for it hath laid waste his house, " and hath burnt his temple, and has slain his saints, " and destroyed his good men, and yet it endures." Nay, they frequently affirm[z], that the meanest office of power among men was of divine appointment. This is the apostle's first argument for subjection to the civil magistrate.

Ver. 2. *Whosoever therefore resisteth the power,* &c.] The office of magistracy, and such as are lawfully placed in it, and rightly exercise it; who denies that there is, or ought to be any such order among men, despises it, and opposes it, and withdraws himself from it, and will not be subject to it in any form: *resisteth the ordinance of God;* the will and appointment of God, whose pleasure it is that there should be such an office, and that men should be subject to it. This is not to be understood, as if magistrates were above the laws, and had a lawless power to do as they will without opposition; for they are under the law, and liable to the penalty of it, in case of disobedience, as others; and when they make their own will a law, or exercise a lawless tyrannical power, in defiance of the laws of God, and of the land, to the endangering of the lives, liberties, and properties of subjects, they may be resisted, as Saul was by the people of Israel, when he would have took away the life of Jonathan for the breach of an arbitrary law of his own, and that too without the knowledge of it, 1 Sam. xiv. 45. but the apostle is speaking of resisting magistrates in the right discharge of their office, and in the exercise of legal power and authority: *and they that resist* them, in this sense, *shall receive to themselves damnation:* that is, punishment; either temporal, and that either by the hand of the magistrate himself, who has it in his power to punish mutiny, sedition, and insurrection, and any opposition to him in the just discharge of his duty; or at the hand of God, in righteous judgment, for their disobedience to an ordinance of his: as in the case of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, who opposed themselves both to the civil and sacred government of the people of Israel; and were swallowed up alive in the earth: or eternal punishment, unless the grace of God prevents; for *the blackness of darkness is reserved for ever,* for such persons, who, among other of their characters, are said *to despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities,* Jude v. 8. 13. This is another argument persuading to subjection to magistrates.

Ver. 3. *For rulers are not a terror to good works,* &c.] That is, to them that do good works in a civil sense; who behave well in the neighbourhoods, towns, cities,

[t] Pirke Abot, c. 1. sect. 10.
[u] Ib. c. 2. sect. 3.
[w] T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 17. 1.
[x] In Buxtorf. Florileg. Heb. p. 172.

[y] T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 18. 1.
[z] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 58. 1. Bava Bathra, fol. 91. 2. Jarchi in 1 Chron. xxix. 11.

and countries where they dwell. The apostle seems to anticipate an objection made against governors, as if there was something very terrible and formidable in them; and which might be taken up from the last clause of the preceding verse; and which he removes by observing, that governors neither do, nor ought to inject terror into men that behave well, obey the laws, and keep a good decorum among their fellow-subjects, not doing any injury to any man's person, property, and estate. The Jews [a] have a saying, "that "a governor that injects more fear into the people, "than is for the honour of God, shall be punished, "and shall not see his son a disciple of a wise man." *But to the evil;* to wicked men, who make no conscience of doing hurt to their fellow-creatures, by abusing their persons, defrauding them of their substance, and by various illicit methods doing damage to them; to such, rulers are, and ought to be terrors; such are to be menaced, and threatened with inflicting upon them the penalty of the laws they break; and which ought to be inflicted on them by way of punishment to them, and for the terror of others. R. Chanina, the Sagan of the priests [b], used to say, "pray for the peace of "the kingdom, for if there was no מוראה, *fear*, (*i. e.* "a magistrate to inject fear,) one man would devour "another alive." *Wilt thou not then be afraid of the power?* of the civil magistrate, in power and authority, to oppose him, to refuse subjection to him, to break the laws, which, according to his office, he is to put in execution. *Do that which is good:* in a civil sense, between man and man, by complying with the laws of the land, which are not contrary to the laws of God; for of doing good in a spiritual and religious sense he is no judge: *and thou shalt have praise of the same;* shall be commended as a good neighbour, a good citizen, and a good commonwealth's man; an honest, quiet, peaceable man, that does not disturb the peace of civil society, but strengthens and increases it.

Ver. 4. *For he is the minister of God to thee for good,* &c.] He is a minister of God's appointing and commissioning, that acts under him, and for him, is a kind of a vicegerent of his, and in some sense represents him; and which is another reason why men ought to be subject to him; and especially since he is appointed for their *good*, natural, moral, civil, and spiritual, as Pareus observes: for natural good, for the protection of men's natural lives, which otherwise would be in continual danger from wicked men; for moral good, for the restraining of vice, and encouragement of virtue; profaneness abounds exceedingly, as the case is, but what would it do if there were no laws to forbid it, or civil magistrates to put them in execution? for civil good, for the preservation of men's properties, estates, rights, and liberties, which would be continually invaded, and made a prey of by others; and for spiritual and religious good, as many princes and magistrates have been; a sensible experience of which we have under the present government of these kingdoms, allowing us a liberty to worship God according to our consciences, none making us afraid, and is a reason why we should yield a cheerful subjection to it: *but if thou do that which is evil, be afraid;* of the punishment of such evil threatened by law, and to be inflicted by the civil magistrate; *for he beareth not the sword in vain.* The *sword* is an emblem of the power of life and death, the civil magistrate is invested with, and includes all sorts of punishment he has a right to inflict; and this power is not lodged in him in vain; he may and ought to make use of it at proper times, and upon proper persons: *for he is the minister of God;* as is said before, he has his mission, commission, power and authority from him; and is *a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil;* he is a defender of the laws, a vindicator of divine justice, an avenger of the wrongs of men; and his business is to inflict proper punishment, which is meant by *wrath*, upon delinquents.

Ver. 5. *Wherefore ye must needs be subject,* &c.] To the higher powers, to the civil magistrates; there is a necessity of it, because magistracy is God's ordinance, it is for the good of men; and such that oppose it will severely smart for it: but subjection to it from Christians should be, *not only for wrath;* through fear of punishment, and for the sake of escaping it; either the wrath of men or of God, in this or the other world: *but also for conscience-sake;* to keep conscience clear; to exercise a good one void of offence towards God and men; for natural reason, conscience itself, dictates that there ought to be such order among men, that civil government should take place, and ought to be submitted to.

Ver. 6. *For, for this cause pay you tribute also,* &c.] To shew that we are subject to the higher powers, and as a proof and evidence of our subjection to them, we do and ought to pay tribute to them, to support them in their office and dignity; and this is done not for fear of trouble, of distress on goods and estate, or imprisonment of person, but for conscience-sake; payment of taxes is not a mere matter of prudence, and done to avoid dangerous consequence, but is and ought to be a case of conscience; whatever is any one's due, and of right belongs to him, conscience dictates it ought to be paid him; as therefore it tells a man, that whatever is God's should be rendered to him, so whatever is Cæsar's should be given him: and indeed to do otherwise; to refuse to pay tribute, or by any fraudulent means to deprive the civil magistrate of his due, is not only to do an injury to him, but to the whole body politic, which has a greater concern therein than he himself; and such a person forfeits all right and claim to his protection: *for they are God's ministers.* This is another reason why tribute should be paid them, not only to testify subjection to them, and keep conscience clear, but because they are called unto, and put into this high office by God; for promotion to such honour and high places comes not from east, west, north, or south; but is by the providence of God, who puts down, and sets up at pleasure; they are his vicegerents, they act under him, are in his stead, and represent his majesty; and therefore, in some sort, what is done to them is done to him:

[a] T. Bab. Rochhashana, fol. 17. 1. Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrin, c. 25. sect. 1.

[b] Pirke Abot, c. 3. sect. 2.

attending continually upon this very thing: not of laying, collecting, and receiving tribute, but of service and ministry under God, for the welfare of their subjects; for rightly to administer the office of magistracy requires great pains, care, diligence, and assiduity; and as great wisdom and thoughtfulness in making laws for the good of the body, so a diligent constant concern to put them in execution, to secure the lives of subjects from cut-throats and murderers, and their properties and estates from thieves and robbers; and they are not only obliged diligently to attend to such service at home, but to keep a good look-out abroad, and penetrate into, and watch the designs of foreign enemies, to defend from their invasions, and fight for their country; that the inhabitants thereof may live peaceable and quiet lives, enjoying their respective rights and privileges; and since therefore civil government is a business of so much care, and since our rulers are so solicitous, and constantly concerned for our good, and which can't be done without great expense, as well as diligence, we ought cheerfully to pay tribute to them.

Ver. 7. *Render therefore to all their dues, &c.*] To all princes, magistrates, and officers, that are placed over us, from the supreme governor to the lowest officer under him, should we render as a due debt, and not as a mere gift, whatever belongs to them, or is proper for them for the due discharge of their office, to encourage in it, and support the dignity of it, whether external or internal: *tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom.* These two words include all sorts of levies, taxes, subsidies, &c. and the former may particularly design what is laid on men's persons and estates, as poll-money, land-tax, &c. and the latter, what arises from the exportation and importation of goods, to and from foreign parts: *fear to whom fear*; not of punishment; for a good subject has no reason to fear the civil magistrate in this sense, only the man that does evil, the malefactor; as for the good neighbour, citizen, and subject, he loves the magistrate the more, the more diligent he is in putting the laws in execution against wicked men; but this is to be understood of a fear of offending, and especially of a reverence bore in the mind, and expressed by outward actions, and such as has going with it a cheerful obedience to all lawful commands: *honour to whom honour*; there's an honour due to all men, according to their respective rank and station, and the relation they stand in to each other; so servants are to honour their masters, children their parents, wives their husbands, and subjects their princes; all inferior magistrates are to be honoured in their place, and more especially the king as supreme, in thought, word, and gesture; see 1 Peter ii. 17.

Ver. 8. *Owe no man any thing, &c.*] From the payment of dues to magistrates the apostle proceeds to a general exhortation to discharge all sorts of debts; as not to owe the civil magistrate any thing, but render to him his dues, so to owe nothing to any other man, but make good all obligations whatever, as of a civil, so of a natural kind. There are debts arising from the natural and civil relations subsisting among men, which should be discharged; as of the husband to the wife, the wife to the husband; parents to their children, children to their parents; masters to their servants, servants to their masters; one brother, friend, and neighbour, to another. Moreover, pecuniary debts may be here intended, such as are come into by borrowing, buying, commerce, and contracts; which though they can't be avoided in carrying on worldly business, yet men ought to make conscience of paying them as soon as they are able: many an honest man may be in debt, and by one providence or another be disabled from payment, which is a grief of mind to him; but for men industriously to run into debt, and take no care to pay, but live upon the property and substance of others, is scandalous to them as men, and greatly unbecoming professors of religion, and brings great reproach upon the Gospel of Christ. *But to love one another.* This is the only debt never to be wholly discharged; for though it should be always paying, yet ought always to be looked upon as owing. Saints ought to love one another as such; to this they are obliged by the new commandment of Christ, by the love of God, and Christ unto them, by the relations they stand in to one another, as the children of God, brethren, and members of the same body; and which is necessary to keep them and the churches of Christ together, it being the bond of perfectness by which they are knit to one another; and for their comfort and honour, as well as to shew the truth and reality of their profession. This debt should be always paying; saints should be continually serving one another in love, praying for each other, bearing one another's burdens, forbearing each other, and doing all good offices in things temporal and spiritual that lie in their power, and yet always owing; the obligation to it always remains. Christ's commandment is a new one, always new, and will never be antiquated; his and his father's love always continue, and the relations believers stand in to each other are ever the same; and therefore love will be always paying, and always owing in heaven to all eternity. But what the apostle seems chiefly to respect, is love to one another as men, love to one another, to the neighbour, as the following verses shew. Love is a debt we owe to every man, as a man, being all made of one blood, and in the image of God; so that not only such as are of the same family, live in the same neighbourhood, and belong to the same nation, but even all the individuals of mankind, yea, our very enemies are to share in our love; and as we have an opportunity and ability, are to shew it by doing them good. *For he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law*: that is, not who loves some one particular person, but every other person besides himself, even his neighbour, in the largest sense of the word, including all mankind, and that as himself; such an one has fulfilled the law, the law of the decalogue; that part of it particularly which relates to the neighbour; the second table of the law, as the next verse shews: though since there is no true love of our neighbour without the love of God, nor no true love of God without the love of our neighbour; and since these two involve each other, and include the whole law, it may be understood of fulfilling every part of it, that is, of doing it: for fulfilling the law means doing it, or acting according to it; and so far as a man loves, so far he fulfils, that is, does it: but this is not, nor can it be done perfectly,

which is evident, partly from the impotency of man, who is weak and strengthless, yea, dead in sin, and unable to do any thing of himself; and partly from the extensiveness of the law, which reaches to the thoughts and desires of the heart, as well as to words and actions; as also from the imperfection of love, for neither love to God, nor love to one another, either as men or Christians, is perfect: and consequently the fulfilling of the law by it is not perfect: hence this passage yields nothing in favour of the doctrine of justification by works; since the best works are imperfect, even those that spring from love, for love itself is imperfect; and are not done as they are, in a man's own strength, and without the spirit and grace of God. Christ only has fulfilled the law perfectly, both as to parts and degrees; and to him only should we look for a justifying righteousness.

Ver. 9. *For this, thou shalt not commit adultery, &c.*] The apostle here reckons up the several laws of the second table, with this view, that it might appear that so far as a man loves his neighbour, whether more near or distantly related, he fulfils the law, or acts according to it. He omits the first of these, the fifth commandment, either because he had urged this before, so far as it may be thought to regard magistrates; or because, according to the division of the Jews, who reckon five commands to each table, this belonged to the first: and he puts the seventh before the sixth, which is of no great moment; the order of things being frequently changed in the Scripture, and which is often done by Jewish writers, in alleging and citing passages of Scripture; and with whom this is a maxim, אין מוקדם ומאוחר בתורה, *that there's no first nor last in the law* [c]; that is, it is of no importance which stands first or last in it: it follows, *thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not bear false witness, thou shalt not covet:* which are the sixth, eighth, ninth, and tenth commands of the decalogue: *and if there be any other commandment:* of God, respecting the neighbour, either in the decalogue, as there was the fifth, or elsewhere, the apostle repeating this by memory: *it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself;* this is the summary and epitome of them; so Christ reduces the laws of the first table to the head of love to God, and those of the second to the head of love to the neighbour, Matt. xxii. 37, 38, 39. as the apostle does here, and in Gal. v. 14. and the Apostle James, in ch. ii. 8.

Ver. 10. *Love worketh no ill to his neighbour, &c.*] That is, the man that truly loves his neighbour, will contrive no ill against him, nor do any to him; he'll not injure his person, nor defile his bed, nor deprive or defraud him of his substance; or do hurt to his character, bear false testimony against him, or covet with an evil covetousness any thing that is his; but, on the contrary, will do him all the good he is capable of: *therefore love is the fulfilling of the law:* so far as a man loves his neighbour, he acts agreeably to the law, and the particular precepts of it above mentioned: what the apostle says of love to the neighbour, the Jews frequently say of love to God; "he that loveth "God (they say [d]) מקיים עשר אמירן, *hath fulfilled the "decalogue*, both above and below." And again [e], "there's no service like the love of God, R. Abba "saith it is כללא דאורייתא, *the sum of the law; for "the ten words of the law* הכא אתכלילו, *are herein "comprehended*, or fulfilled:" and elsewhere [f] they observe, "that, כל התורה כלולה באהבה, *the whole law "is comprehended*, or fulfilled *in love*."

Ver. 11. *And that knowing the time, &c.*] That it is day and not night, the Gospel day, the day of salvation; in which the grace of God shines forth, like the sun in its meridian glory; life and immortality are brought to light, righteousness and salvation are revealed; and so a time not for sloth and sleep, but business; in which the saints should be active in the exercise of grace, and discharge of duty; owing no man any thing but the debt of love; and that the dawn of grace, and day of spiritual light, had broke in upon their souls, and dispelled the darkness of sin, ignorance, and unbelief; that the darkness was past, and the true light shined, and the sun of righteousness was risen on them: all which they full well knew and were conscious of, and therefore should observe, *that now it is high time for us to awake out of sleep:* since sleep is for the night, and not the day; the Alexandrian copy reads, *for you.* This is to be understood, not of the dead sleep of sin, in which unconverted persons are, to be awoke out of which is a work of divine power; but of the carnal security and drowsy frame of spirit which sometimes attend the churches and children of God, the wise as well as the foolish virgins; and lies in grace being dormant in the soul; in a backwardness to duty, and a slothfulness in the performance of it; in resting in the outward duties of religion; in lukewarmness about the cause of Christ; in an unconcernedness about sins of omission and commission; and in a willingness to continue in such a sluggish frame: all which arise from a body of sin and death, and an over-anxious care for the things of the world; from a weariness in spiritual exercises, and an abstinence from spiritual company and ordinances, and from outward peace and liberty: such a frame of spirit, when it prevails and becomes general, is of bad consequence to the churches of Christ; the spirit of discerning, care and diligence in receiving members, are in a great measure lost, and so they are filled with hypocrites and heretics; Christ absents himself from them; leanness of soul is brought upon them; and they are in danger of being surprised with the midnight cry: the methods God takes to awaken his people out of such a sleep are various; sometimes in a more gentle way, by the discoveries of his love, which causes the lips of those that are asleep to speak; sometimes by severe reproofs in the ministry of the word; and sometimes by sharp persecutions in providence; and at last it will be done by the midnight cry: the argument, shewing the reasonableness of awaking out of sleep, and that it was high time to do so, follows, *for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed:* by which is meant, not temporal salvation, or a deliverance from the persecution the saints

[c] T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 6. 2.
[d] Zohar in Deut. fol. 113. 2.
[e] Zohar in Deut. fol. 113. 1.
[f] Moses Kotsensis Mitzvot Tora, precept. affirm. 3. prope finem.

endured in Judea, from their own countrymen, by the departure of them from Jerusalem, a little before its destruction, by the destruction of that city, and the peaceful times of Vespasian; but a spiritual and eternal salvation: not Christ the author of it, who was come to effect it; nor that itself, as obtained, which was now done, finished, and completed; nor the application of it to their souls, which also had been made; but the consummate enjoyment of it in heaven, the salvation of their souls at death, and both of soul and body at the resurrection; consisting in a freedom from every evil, and in a full possession of all that is good and glorious: this is brought nearer to the saints, to their sight and view, as their faith grows and increases; and they are nearer the enjoyment of that than when they first believed; and which is a strong reason why a sluggish slothful frame should not be indulged; what, sleep, and heaven so near at hand! just at their father's house, ready to enter into the joy of their Lord, into his everlasting kingdom and glory, and yet asleep!

Ver. 12. *The night is far spent*, &c.] Not of Jewish darkness, which was gone, and was succeeded by the Gospel day; nor of former ignorance in Gentilism and unregeneracy, for that was past, and the true light shined; much less of security in the latter day, which was not yet come on; rather of persecution and distress for Christ's sake; but it is best of all to understand it of the present time of life; so it is called by the Jews[g], העולם הזה דומה ללילה, *this world is like to the night*: and which, in the best of saints, is attended with imperfection and darkness, errors and mistakes, in principle and practice, in doctrine and conversation; however, it is far spent, and in a little time will be over: *the day is at hand*; not the Gospel day, for that was already come; nor the day of grace, and spiritual light and comfort to their souls, for that also had taken place; nor the latter-day glory, which then was at a distance; rather the approaching day of deliverance from present persecutions; but it is much better to understand it of the everlasting day of glory, which to particular persons was then, and now is at hand; a little while, and the night of darkness, affliction, and disconsolation will be over, and the day of glory will succeed, when there will be no more night, no more darkness, no more doubts, fears, and unbelief; but one continued series of light, joy, and comfort, and an uninterrupted communion with Father, Son, and Spirit; and which is another reason why the saints should not indulge themselves in sleep, but be active, since the halcyon days are at hand, as well as a reason why they should attend to the following exhortations: *let us therefore cast off the works of darkness*; as the apostle had made use of the metaphors of night and day, and of sleep, and awaking out of sleep, and rising in the morning to business, so he continues the same; and here alludes to persons throwing off their bed-clothes, and covering of the night, and putting on proper raiment for the day. By *works of darkness* are meant evil works, which are opposite to the light: to God, who is light itself; to Christ, the light of the world; to the word of God, both law and Gospel, which is a light to our paths; to both the light of nature, and the light of grace: and which spring from the darkness of the mind, and are encouraged to by the god of this world, and by his angels, the rulers of the darkness of it; and which are generally done in the dark, and are such as will not bear the light; and, if grace prevent not, will end in outer darkness, in blackness of darkness, reserved by the justice of God, as the punishment of them. *Casting them off* expresses a dislike of them, a displicency with them, and an abstinence from them. Some copies read, *the armour of darkness*, which agrees with what follows: *and let us put on the armour of light*; the whole armour of God, the use of which lies in the exercise of grace, and discharge of duty; particularly good works are designed here, which though they are not the believer's clothing, his robe of justifying righteousness, they are both his ornament and his armour; by which he adorns the doctrine of Christ, and defends his own character and principles against the charges and calumnies of men: these being performed aright, spring from the light of grace in a regenerate man, and are such as will bear the light to be seen of men; and are the lights which are to shine before men, that they beholding them, may glorify God; so virtue was by Antisthenes[h], called ἀναφαίρετον ὅπλον, *armour which cannot be taken away*: the allusion is thought to be to the bright and glittering armour of the Romans; the Alexandrian copy reads, *the works of light*.

Ver. 13. *Let us walk honestly as in the day*, &c.] Being under the day of the Gospel dispensation, and the day of grace having dawned, and the day-star of spiritual light and knowledge being risen in our hearts, and we being exposed to the view of all men in broad day-light, ought not to lie down and sleep, but to arise and be active, and walk decently with the armour of light on us, as becomes the Gospel of Christ; not naked and unclothed, which would expose us and the Gospel to shame and contempt: *not in rioting*; the Syriac and Arabic versions read, *in singing*, or *songs*; meaning lewd ones, sung at riotous feasts and banquets, made not for refreshment, but for pleasure and debauchery, what the Romans[i] call *comessations*; feasts after supper in the night season, and design all sorts of nocturnal revels: *Comus*, the word here used, is with the Heathens the god of feasts, perhaps the same with *Chemosh*, the god of the Moabites, 1 Kings xi. 33. *And drunkenness*; which always attended such unseasonable and immoderate festivals: *not in chambering*; in unlawful copulations, fornication, adultery, and all the defilements of the bed: *and wantonness*; lasciviousness, unnatural lusts, as sodomy, &c. *not in strife and envying*; contention and quarrels, which are usually the consequences of luxury and uncleanness.

Ver. 14. *But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ*, &c.] As a man puts on his clothes when he rises in the morning: the righteousness of Christ is compared to a garment, it is the best robe, it is fine linen, clean and white, and change of raiment; which being put on by the father's gracious act of imputation, covers

[g] Tzeror Hammor, fol. 24. 4.
[h] Diogen. Laert. l. 6. in Vita Antisthen. & Hesychius de viris illustr. p. 17.
[i] Suetonius in Vita Vitell. c. 13.

the sins and deformities of his people, defends them from divine justice, secures them from wrath to come, and renders them beautiful and acceptable in his sight: which righteousness being revealed from faith to faith, is received by faith, and made use of as a proper dress to appear in before God; and may be daily said to be put on by the believer, as often as he makes use of it, and pleads it with God as his justifying righteousness, which should be continually: moreover, to *put on Christ*, and which indeed seems to be the true sense of the phrase here, is not only to exercise faith on him as the Lord our righteousness, and to make a profession of his name, but to imitate him in the exercise of grace and discharge of duty; to walk as he walked, and as we have him for an example, in love, meekness, patience, humility, and holiness: *and make not provision for the flesh*: the body: not but that due care is to be taken of it, both for food and clothing; and for its health, and the continuance and preservation of it by all lawful methods; but not so as *to fulfil the lusts thereof*; to indulge and gratify them, by luxury and uncleanness: it is a saying of Hillell[k], מרבה בשר מרבה רמה, *he that increases flesh, increases worms*; the sense his commentators[l] give of it is, that "he that "increases by eating and drinking, until he becomes "fat and fleshy, increases for himself worms in the "grave:" the design of the sentence is, that voluptuous men, who care for nothing else but the flesh, should consider, that ere long they'll be a repast for worms: we should not provide, or be caterers for the flesh; and, by pampering it, stir up and satisfy its corrupt inclinations and desires.

CHAP. XIV.

THE apostle, having finished his exhortations to duties of a moral and civil kind, proceeds to the consideration of things indifferent, about eating some sorts of meats, and keeping days; to which he might be led by the last clause of the preceding chapter, lest that should be interpreted as referring to those who used their Christian liberty in eating every sort of food; in the use of which it was requisite to exercise that love which is the fulfilling of the law, he had so much pressed and recommended in the foregoing chapters. The church at Rome consisted both of Jews and Gentiles: and the former, though they believed in Christ, were not clear about the abrogation of the ceremonial law, and thought they ought still to observe the distinction of meats and days, which were made in it; the latter looked upon themselves under no manner of obligation to regard them; and even among the Jews, some might have greater light and knowledge in these things than others, and used their Christian liberty, when others could not; and this occasioned great animosities and contentions among them; and some on account of these things were called strong, and others weak: and the chief view of the apostle in this chapter, is to give advice to each party how to behave one towards another; how the strong should behave to the weak, and the weak to the strong: and he begins with the strong, and in general exhorts them to a kind, tender, and affectionate regard to their weaker brethren, and not to perplex their minds with disputations about things to little profit, ver. 1. then a distribution of the members of this church into two parts is made, ver. 2. shewing the reason of the above exhortations: the one sort being strong believers, the others weak, the one eating all things, the other herbs: when some advice is given to each, that the strong should not despise the weak, nor the weak judge the strong; for which reasons are given: and the first is taken from the common interest they both have in the affection of God, and in divine adoption, ver. 3. And another is taken from the relation which believers stand in to God, as servants; and therefore not to be judged and condemned, but to be left to their Lord and master, which is illustrated by a simile of such a relation among men, ver 4. and then another instance of different sentiments about Jewish rites and ceremonies is given, ver. 5. respecting the observation of days, in which also the members of the church were divided, some observing them, and some not; and the apostle's advice is, that every man should act as he was persuaded in his own mind, and not be uneasy with another: the reason for which he gives, ver. 6. because the end proposed by the one, and the other, is the honour and glory of God, and which is the same in the man that eats, or does not eat meat, since both give thanks to God. And this is further confirmed from the general end of the Christian's life and death likewise, which is not to himself, but to the Lord, ver. 7, 8. from whence it is concluded, that they are the Lord's in life and death, and all their actions are devoted to him; who by dying, rising, and living again, appears to be the Lord of quick and dead, and will judge both, ver. 9. and therefore to his judgment things should be left, and one should not condemn or despise another, since all must stand at his bar, ver. 10. which is proved ver. 11. from a passage in Isa. xlv. 23. from all which it is concluded, ver. 12. that an account must be given by every one to God, at the general judgment; wherefore it is right and best, not to judge and condemn one another, but to judge this to be the most reasonable and agreeable to Christian charity, that care be taken not to offend, or cause a brother to stumble, ver. 13. and whereas it might be objected, that nothing was impure in itself, and therefore might be lawfully eaten, which the apostle allows, and as for himself, was fully persuaded of, yet it was impure to them who thought it so, ver. 14. and therefore should not eat; nor should others, when it gave offence to such persons; and which is dissuaded from, because to eat to the grief of the brethren, is contrary to Christian charity; and because it destroys the peace of such persons, and they are such whom Christ has died for, ver. 15. besides, hereby reproach might be brought upon them, the Gospel they professed, and the truth of Christian liberty they used, ver. 16. and moreover, the kingdom of God did not lie in the use of these

[k] Pirke Abot, c. 2. sect. 7.

[l] Bartenora in Pirke Abot, c. 2. sect. 7. Vid. Fagium in ib.

things, but in spiritual ones, ver. 17. and which should be chiefly regarded, since the service of God in them, is what is grateful to him, and approved by all good men, ver. 18. wherefore the things which make for peace and edification should be followed after, things much preferable to meats and drinks, ver. 19. for the sake of which the peace of a brother, which is the work of God, should not be destroyed, ver. 20. for though all things are pure in themselves, and lawful to be eaten, yet it is an evil to eat them to the offence of another, and for another to eat them against his conscience, which he may be drawn into by the example of others; wherefore it is best to abstain from eating flesh or drinking wine, and every thing else that is stumbling and offensive to a weak brother, ver. 21. and whereas the strong brother might object and say, I have faith in this matter, I believe it is lawful for me to eat any thing, and why should I not? the apostle answers, by granting that he had faith, but then he observes, he ought to keep it to himself, and not disturb his weak brother, by putting it into practice openly; but should keep it to himself, it being his happiness not to condemn himself by using his liberty with offence, ver. 22. and then some advice is given to the weak brother, not to eat with a doubting conscience, ver. 23. because in so doing, he would be self-condemned, and because it would not be of faith, and therefore sinful.

Ver. 1. *Him that is weak in the faith,* &c.] This address is made to the stronger and more knowing Christians among the Romans, how to behave towards those that were inferior in light and knowledge to them, with regard to things of a ritual and ceremonial kind: and by *him that is weak in the faith,* is meant, either one that is weak in the exercise of the grace of faith, who has but a glimmering sight of Christ; who comes to him in a very feeble and trembling manner; who believes his ability to save him, but hesitates about his willingness; who casts himself with a peradventure on him; and who is attended with many misgivings of heart, faintings of spirit, and fluctuation of mind, about his interest in him: or one that is weak in the doctrine of faith; has but little light and knowledge in the truths of the Gospel; is a child in understanding; has more affection than judgment: very little able to distinguish truth from error; can't digest the greater and more sublime doctrines of grace; stands in need of milk, and can't bear strong meat: is very fluctuating and unsettled in his principles, and like children tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine: or rather one that is weak in his knowledge of that branch of the doctrine of faith, which concerns Christian liberty; and that part of it particularly, which respects freedom from the ceremonial law: it designs one, and chiefly a Jew, who though a believer in Christ, and an embracer of the other truths of the Gospel, yet had but very little knowledge of Gospel liberty; but though that believers were to observe all the rituals of the Mosaic dispensation, not knowing that they were abolished by Christ. The phrase is Jewish; it is[m] said, "what is the meaning "of the phrase, in Rephidim, Exod. xvii. 1? it signifies such as are of weak hands; as if it had been " said, because the Israelites were רפים באמנתם, "*weak in their faith.*" The advice the apostle gives, in reference to such a person, is to *receive* him; not only into their affections, and love him equally, being a believer in Christ, as one of the same sentiments with them, only in this matter, but also into church-fellowship with them. The Syriac version reads it, הבו לידה אידא, *give him the hand*: in token of communion, a form used in admission of members. The Gentiles were apt to boast against, and look with some contempt upon the Jews, and were ready to object to their communion, because of their want of light and knowledge in these matters; but this was no bar of communion, nor ought a person to be rejected on account of his weakness, either in the grace, or in the dotrine of faith, when it appears he has the true grace of God; and much less on account of his weakness in that branch of it, concerning Christian liberty; for since Christ does not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax, nor despise the day of small things, churches should not: it may also intend a receiving of such into intimate conversation, at their private meetings and conferences; taking particular notice of them; giving them proper instructions; praying with them and for them; endeavouring to build them up in their most holy faith, and to bring them into the knowledge of those things they are weak in; bearing their weaknesses patiently, and bearing with them in great tenderness: thus such should be received, *but not to doubtful disputations;* to vain jangling and perverse disputings, such as will rather perplex than inform them; and will leave their minds doubtful and in suspense, and do them more harm than good.

Ver. 2. *For one believeth that he may eat all things,* &c.] He is fully persuaded in his mind, that there is nothing in itself common, or unclean; that the difference between clean and unclean meats, commanded to be observed by the law of Moses, is taken away; and that he may now lawfully eat any sort of food; every creature of God being good, and none to be refused, because of the ceremonial law which is abrogated, provided it be received with thanksgiving, and used to the glory of God: *another who is weak eateth herbs;* meaning not one that is sickly and unhealthful, and of a weak constitution, and therefore eats herbs for health's sake; but one that is weak in the faith, and who thinks that the laws concerning the observance of meats and drinks are still in force; and therefore, rather than break any of them, and that he may be sure he does not, will eat nothing but herbs, which are not any of them forbidden by the law: and this he did, either as choosing rather to live altogether on herbs, than to eat any thing which the law forbids; or being of opinion with the Essenes among the Jews, and the Pythagoreans among the Gentiles, who thought they were to abstain from eating of all sorts of animals.

Ver. 3. *Let not him that eateth, despise him that eateth not,* &c.] Such who had a greater degree of Gospel light and knowledge, and made use of their Christian liberty in eating any sort of food, were not to despise, as they were apt to do, such as abstained therefrom on account of the ceremonial law, as weak, ignorant,

[m] Tzeror Hammor, fol. 77. 1.

superstitious, and bigoted persons; or were not to set them at naught, or make nothing of them, as the word signifies, have no regard to their peace and comfort; but, on the other hand, were to consider them as brethren in Christ, though weak; and as having a work of God upon their souls, and therefore to be careful how they grieved them, destroyed their peace, or laid stumbling-blocks in their way: *and let not him which eateth not, judge him that eateth*: such who thought it not their duty to eat any thing, but to forbear the use of some things directed to in the law, were not to censure and condemn, as they were apt to do, those who used their liberty in these things, as profane persons, and transgressors of the law of God; but leave them to the last and righteous judgment, when every one must be accountable to God for the various actions of life: the reason used to enforce this advice on both parties is, *for God hath received him;* which respects both him that eateth, and him that eateth not, him that is despised, and him that is judged; and is a reason why one should not despise, nor the other judge, because God had received both the one and the other into his heart's love and affection, into the covenant of grace, and into his family by adoption: they were received by Christ, coming to him as perishing sinners, according to the will of God; whose will it likewise was, that they should be received into church-fellowship, as being no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God: and God had also received them into his service, and they were made willing to serve him, as well as to be saved by him; and did serve him acceptably with reverence and godly fear, in righteousness and holiness; and this is the rather to be taken into the sense of this passage, because of what follows.

Ver. 4. *Who art thou that judgest another man's servant*, &c.] This is another reason, dissuading from censoriousness and rash judgment, taken from civil things; one man has nothing to do with another man's servant; he has no power over him, nor any right to call him to an account for his actions; nor has he any business to censure or condemn him for them, or concern himself about them: so the believer supposed to be judged, does not belong to him that takes upon him to judge and condemn him; he's another's servant, he's the servant of God; he's chosen by God the father for his service, as well as unto salvation; he's bought with the price of Christ's blood, and therefore not his own, nor another's, but Christ's, he is bought with his money; and he is also born in his house, the church; the spirit of God in regeneration forms him for himself, for righteousness and holiness; under the influence of whose grace he voluntarily gives up himself to the service of God, and is assisted by him to keep his statutes and do them; and what has another to do with him? what power has he over him, or right to judge him? *to his own master he standeth or falleth*: the meaning of which is, either if he *stands*, that is, if he serves his Lord and master, of which *standing* is expressive; and continues in the service of him, whose servant he professes to be; this is to his master's advantage and profit, and not to another's; and if he *falls*, that is, from his obedience to him, as such who profess to be the servants of God may; they may fall off from the doctrine of grace they have embraced; and that either totally and finally, as such do who never felt the power of it in their hearts; or partially, from some degree of steadfastness in the faith; and such also may fall from a lively exercise of the graces of faith, hope, and love, and into great sins, which is to their master's dishonour, and cause his ways and truths to be evil spoken of; and so it is to their own master they fail: or else the sense is, to their own master they are accountable, whether they stand or fall, serve or disobey him; and it is according to his judgment and not another's, that they *stand*, or are and will be justified and acquitted, and will hear, well done, good and faithful servant; and according to the same they will *fall*, or be condemned, and hear, take the slothful and unprofitable servant, and cast him into outer darkness: so the words *standing* and *falling* are used by the Jews in a forensic sense, for carrying or losing a cause, for justification or condemnation in a court of judicature, and particularly in the last judgment: and so they explain Psal. i. 5. *the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment*: the Targum paraphrases it, "the wicked "shall not be justified in the great day;" and Jarchi upon the place says, there shall be no רגל תקמת, *standing of the foot* of the wicked, in the day of judgment; see Luke xxi. 36. 1 John ii. 28. *Yea, ye shall be holden up;* which words seem to be a sort of correction of the apostle's, as if he should say, why do I talk of falling, one that is a true servant of the Lord's shall not fall, at least not totally and finally, nor in the last judgment; for he is holden by the right hand of God, by the right hand of his righteousness, and is kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation: *for God is able to make him stand;* and will make him stand; words of power oftentimes include willingness as well as ability; see Jud. v. 24. God will make such to persevere to the end, because he has loved them with an everlasting love, chosen them in Christ, made a covenant with them in him, and has put them into his hands, and made them his care and charge; Christ has redeemed them by his blood, now intercedes, and is making preparations for them in heaven; they are united to him, and are built on him, the sure foundation; and the spirit of God has begun that good work, which shall be performed. God will make such to stand in judgment with intrepidity, and without shame, being clothed with the righteousness of his son; and shall therefore have the crown of righteousness given them, and an abundant entrance administered into his kingdom and glory: hence they ought not to be judged by man's judgment, nor need they regard it. The Alexandrian copy reads, *the Lord is able*, &c.

Ver. 5. *One man esteemeth one day above another*, &c.] This is another instance of the difference of sentiments in this church, about the observation of rituals; and is not to be understood of days appointed by the Christian churches for fasting, or abstinence from certain meats, either once a year, as the *Quadragesima*, or Lent; or twice a week, as Wednesdays and Fridays; for these are things of much later observation, and which had never been introduced into the church of Rome in the apostle's time; nor were there any disputes about them: much less of days of Heathenish observation, as lucky or unlucky, or festi-

vals in honour of their gods; for the apostle would never say, that a man who regarded such a day, regarded it to the Lord; nor would have advised to a coalition and Christian conversation with such a man, but rather to exclude him from all society and communion: it remains, therefore, that it must be understood of Jewish days, or of such as were appointed to be observed by the Jews under the former dispensation, and which some thought were still to be regarded; wherefore they esteemed some days in the year above others, as the days of unleavened bread, or the passover; particularly the first night, which was a night to be observed throughout their generations; and in their service for it to this day, use these words, מה נשתנה הלילה הזה מכל הלילות, *how different is this night from every other night**? and the feast of tabernacles, especially the last and great day of the feast, and the day of Pentecost; also one day in a month above others, the first day of the month, or new moon; and one day in a week, the seventh-day sabbath: now there were some, who thought that the laws respecting these days were still in force, particularly the latter, and therefore esteemed it above another: but let it be observed, that the man that did so was one that was weak in faith; the same man that ate herbs, because he would not be guilty of violating those laws, which ordered a distinction of meats to be observed, the same weak man esteemed one day above another, imagining the laws concerning the distinction of days were still obligatory, not rightly understanding the doctrine of Christian liberty, or freedom from the yoke of the ceremonial law: *another esteemeth every day alike*: that is, one that is strong in faith, and has a greater degree of the knowledge of the Gospel, and of evangelical liberty, knows that the distinction of days, as well as of meats, is taken away, since the word was made flesh, and tabernacled among us, Christ the passover is sacrificed for us, the first-fruits of the spirit have been received, and light by the church from the sun of righteousness, and Christ the true sabbath and rest is come; and therefore, being firmly persuaded there is no more holiness in days than there is in places, has the same regard for one day as another. The difference between these two lay here, the weak brother regarded a day for the sake of a day, as having by a positive law, he supposed to be in force, a superiority to another, and he regarded worship for the sake of this day; the stronger brother, though he also observed a day for divine worship, which is the Lord's day, since there must be some time for it as well as place, yet he observed the day for the sake of worship, and not worship for the sake of the day: *let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind*: this is the advice the apostle gives to both parties; his sense is, that he would have each of them fully enjoy their own principle and practice undisturbed; he would have the weak brother, that esteemed one day above another, indulged in his way, since it arose from weakness, until he had better light, nor should he be despised for his weakness; he would have the stronger Christian also peaceably enjoy his sentiment, and pursue what he believed to be right; nor should he be judged, censured, and condemned, as a profane person, and a transgressor of the law: his counsel is, that they would sit down and carefully examine the word of God, and act according to the best light they should receive from thence; and take care especially, that they did not act contrary to their own consciences, with doubt and hesitation; they ought to be thoroughly satisfied in their own minds, and being so, should content themselves with their different sentiments and practices, without despising or censuring one another.

Ver. 6. *He that regardeth the day, regardeth it to the Lord*, &c.] The apostle strengthens the above advice with this reason, because what is done both by one and the other, is done unto the Lord. The weak brother that esteems one day above another, and regards the passover, pentecost, and feast of tabernacles, a new moon, or a seventh-day sabbath, does it in obedience to the commands of the Lord, which he thinks are still binding, not knowing that they are disannulled by Christ; and the worship performed by him on any of those days is done in the name and strength of the Lord, with a view to his glory, and as believing it was pleasing in his sight; and whether he is right or wrong, it is to the Lord he does it, and to his own master he stands or falls. The following clause is omitted in the Alexandrian copy and some others, and in the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions, but is in most Greek copies, and retained in the Syriac and Arabic versions. *And he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it*: believing it is the will of the Lord, that all distinction of days should cease; and that the law of commandments contained in ordinances, respecting such Jewish days, is abolished by the Lord Jesus Christ; and that it is to the honour of the Lord not to observe them: for to regard the days of the feast of tabernacles, is tacitly to say, that the Word has not tabernacled among us; and to observe the days of the passover, is virtually to deny that Christ our passover is sacrificed for us; and to keep the day of Pentecost, is all one as to affirm, that the first-fruits of the spirit have not been given; and to regard a new moon, is in effect to say, that the church has not received evangelical light from Christ, the sun of righteousness; and to keep a seventh-day sabbath, is a strong insinuation, as if Christ the true sabbath, in whom we have our spiritual and eternal rest, is not come; however, it is to the Lord that the stronger brother and more confirmed believer disregards any of those days; and it is to his own master he stands or falls, nor is he to be judged of man's judgment: and the same is the case of the eater, or non-eater of meats forbidden by the law: *he that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks*. The man that is strong in faith, and is fully persuaded by the Lord Jesus that all distinction of meats, as of days, is ceased, eats any thing, and every sort of food, that comes in his way, without making any difference; and when he eats or drinks at any time, it is all to the glory of God; which is a clear case, by his giving God thanks, as becomes him, for the food he eats: he acknowledges that these are the creatures of God, and his gifts to him; he gives him thanks for the right he has given him to eat of

* Haggada Shel Pesach, p. 5.

them, and for taking away the distinction of meats, and giving him the free use of his creatures; and the more thankful he is when he considers how unworthy he is of the least of these mercies: *and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks.* The man that is weak in faith, that eateth not food forbidden by the law, abstains from such food, purely on account of the Lord, in obedience to his will, and with a view to his glory, supposing such a law to be in full force; and is thankful to God for the herbs he allows him to eat, or for other food not forbidden by the law: and therefore since each party shews such a religious concern for the glory of the Lord, the apostle argues they ought to be easy one with another. The Alexandrian copy reads, *and giveth the Lord thanks.*

Ver. 7. *For none of us liveth to himself,* &c.] That is, none of us believers; others may, but these do not, at least they ought not, nor do they when under the influence of the grace of God: they don't live, neither to righteous, nor to sinful self; they don't live upon their duties and services; nor do they ascribe their life, righteousness, and salvation to them; nor do they live to their own lusts, or make provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof, and much less to the lusts and wills of others: *and no man dieth to himself;* every man dies, and must, or undergo a change equivalent to death; believers die as well as others, not eternally, or the second death, but corporeally, or a temporal death, but not to themselves; as they don't seek their own will and pleasure, and profit in life, so neither in death; they don't die to their own advantage only; death is gain unto them, it frees them from all their sorrows, toil, and labours, and introduces them into the presence of Christ, and the enjoyment of everlasting happiness; but this is not all their death issues in, but also in the glory of Christ: moreover, no man has the power over life or death; as his life is not from himself, he has no power to lengthen or shorten it, nor to hinder or hasten death: this belongs to another Lord and master, whom life and death are both to subserve. This is an illustration of the above reason, by which the apostle confirms his advice.

Ver. 8. *For whether we live, we live unto the Lord,* &c.] As natural, so spiritual life is derived from the Lord, and believers live by faith upon him, and according to his will revealed in the word; and to his honour and glory; at least they desire so to do: *and whether we die, we die unto the Lord:* resigning up life unto him, whenever it is his pleasure; magnifying of him, as by life, so by death; dying to be with him, to be raised again by him, and live with him for evermore; in the faith and hope of this, the believer both lives and dies, and so glorifies Christ both in life and death: hence this conclusion follows, *whether we live therefore or die, we are the Lord's;* by the gift of the father to him, by his own purchase, and the power of his grace, making them willing to give up themselves to him: and hence it is, that under a sense of this, that they are his, and not their own, nor another's, they do all they do for his glory; whether they observe, or not observe a day, it is to the Lord; whether they eat, or not eat things formerly forbidden, it is to him; and whether they live or die, it is to the Lord, whose they are: and hence also it is, that they are not to be despised and set at nought, or to be judged and censured by one another, since they belong to another master, who is their Lord, and will be their Judge.

Ver. 9. *For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived,* &c.] This last word *revived,* is omitted by the Vulgate Latin, but very naturally placed by the Syriac, between Christ's dying and rising. The Alexandrian copy reads, *died and lived:* and the Ethiopic version, *died and revived:* the end of all which was, *that he might be the Lord both of the dead and living:* that is, of believers, whether dead or alive; for though he is Lord of all, as God and Creator, yet his appearing to be Lord by his dying, rising, and living again, can only have respect to them, for whom dying he has abolished death, and destroyed Satan; whom he has redeemed from sin, and delivered from this present evil world; and so having freed them from those other lords which had the dominion over them, shews himself to be their one and only Lord: and by rising again from the dead, ascending to heaven, and sitting at the right hand of God, all creatures and things being subject to him, he's made or declared both Lord and Christ; and living again, and continuing to live for ever, he appears to have the keys of hell and death; and will open the graves, and raise from thence, and judge both quick and dead, those that will be found alive at his coming, and such as he will cause to rise from the dead then; till which time, the apostle suggests, the decision of these differences about meats and days was to be left; and in the mean time the saints were to cultivate peace and love among themselves.

Ver. 10. *But why dost thou judge thy brother?* &c.] These words are spoken to the man weak in faith, that scrupled eating of certain meats, and chose rather to eat none, and live on herbs, and who esteemed one day above another; and was very apt to censure and condemn such as made use of their Christian liberty in these things, though they were brethren, not in a natural or civil, but in a spiritual relation: *or why dost thou set at nought thy brother?* these words, on the other hand, are directed to the stronger believer, who believed he might eat all things, and esteemed every day alike; being fully persuaded, that the distinction of meats and of days was now ceased; and such were apt to be puffed up with their superior knowledge and faith, and were ready to treat with an air of contempt those that were weak; shewing little or no regard to their peace and edification, though they stood in the same relation to each other. The emphasis lies upon the word *brother,* in both branches of the expostulation; and the force of the apostle's reasoning is, that they should not judge or despise one another, because they were brethren, stood in the same relation to God and Christ, belonged to the same family, were partakers of the same grace, and had no pre-eminence one over another; they had but one master, and all they were brethren: and which he further enforces with the following reason or argument, *for we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ;* at the last day, when he shall sit on his throne of glory, and all nations shall be gathered before him, and he shall pronounce and execute the decisive sentence on each of them: there is a particular, and a general judgment; a particular judgment at death, when the soul is imme-

dately consigned to bliss or woe; and a general one in the end of time; which may be proved both from reason, as from the relation creatures stand in to God, from the inequality of things in this life, and the conscious fears of men with respect to a future one: and from divine revelation, Christ will be the Judge, he is so appointed by his father, and is every way fit for it, being God omniscient and omnipotent; and when he shall appear in his glory, he shall sit on his judgment-seat, the dead will be raised, the books will be opened, and all shall be summoned to appear before him, of every age and sex, of every rank and degree, and of every character, good or bad: here the saints are particularly designed, *we shall all stand;* whether ministers or private Christians, weak or strong believers; they that are apt to judge, and others that are too ready to despise; they shall all stand before the tribunal of Christ, who is sole Judge, and shall render to every man according to his works, and from whom they shall all receive their sentence. The allusion is to human courts of judicature, in which the judge sits upon a bench, and they that are tried stand before him; see 2 Cor. v. 10. The Alexandrian copy reads, *the judgment-seat of God.*

Ver. 11. *For it is written,* &c.] In Isa. xlv. 23. though Justin Martyr[e] cites a like passage with what follows, as out of Ezek. xxxvii. but no such words appear there, either in the Hebrew text, or Septuagint version: *as I live, saith the Lord;* the form of an oath used often by the Lord; who because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself, by his own life; signifying, that what he was about to say, would as surely come to pass, as that he lived; and in the original text in Isaiah it is, *I have sworn by myself;* which being generally expressed, the apostle, perfectly agreeable to the meaning of it, gives the particular form of oath he swore, as in Isa. xlix. 18. *every knee shall bow to me;* which is not to be understood literally of bowing of the knee at the name of Jesus, which has no foundation in this, nor in any other passage of Scripture, but figuratively, of the subjection of all creatures to Christ, both voluntary and involuntary. The Complutensian edition adds, *of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth,* as in Phil. ii. 10. from whence these words seem to be taken: *and every tongue shall confess to God;* that is, every one that has a tongue, every man, be he who he will, a good or a bad man, shall own at the last day, that Christ is God and Lord of all; see Phil. ii. 10, 11. It may be asked, how this passage appears to be a proof of what the apostle had asserted, for which purpose it seems to be cited, since here is nothing said of Christ, nor of his judgment-seat, nor of all standing before it? to which may be returned, that it is clear from the context in the prophet, that the Messiah is the person speaking, who is said to be a just God and Saviour; and is represented as calling upon, and encouraging all sorts of persons to look to him for salvation; and as he in whom the church expected righteousness and strength, and in whom all the seed of Israel shall be justified, and shall glory; and which the Chaldee paraphrase all along interprets of מימרא דיי, *the Word of the Lord;* the essential Word of God, the true Messiah: moreover, the bowing of the knee, and swearing, or confessing to him, relate to his lordship and dominion over all; and suppose him as sitting on his throne of glory, as Lord of all, or as a judge on his judgment-seat, in a court of judicature, where such like actions as here mentioned are performed; and whereas every knee is to bow, and every tongue to confess to him, which include all mankind, it follows then, that all the saints shall stand before him, bow unto him, own him as their Lord, and be judged by him. Kimchi says[f], that this shall be באחרית הימים, *in the last days;* and which the apostle rightly refers to the day of the general judgment. This place affords a considerable proof of Christ's true and proper deity, being in the prophet styled *Jehovah,* and by the apostle *God;* and such things being ascribed to him, as swearing by himself, which no creature may do, and the subjection and confession of all creatures to him, whether they will or no.

Ver. 12. *So then every one of us,* &c.] This is the conclusion, drawn from the foregoing account of things, that there will be a general judgment, that Christ will be Judge, and all must appear at his bar; from whence it necessarily follows, that every man, and so every Christian, strong or weak, whatever may be his gifts, talents, and abilities, *shall give an account of himself to God;* that is, to Christ, who is God; which is another proof of his deity, for he will be the Judge, the father will judge no man; 'tis before his judgment-seat all shall stand; and therefore the account must be given to him by every one, of himself, and not another; of all his thoughts, words, and deeds, which will be all brought into judgment; and of his time and talents, how they have been spent and used; and of all his gifts of nature, providence, and grace, how they have been exercised for the glory of God, his own good, and the good of others: the formal manner in which this will be done is unknown unto us; however, this is certain, that the saints will have upon this reckoning, in what sort soever it may be, a full and open discharge, through the blood and righteousness of Christ. The Jews[g] say, in much such language as the apostle does, that "when a man removes out of this "world, then יהיב חושבנא למאריה, *he gives an account* "*to his Lord,* of all that he has done in the world."

Ver. 13. *Let us not therefore judge one another any more,* &c.] With respect to the observance or non-observance of the laws relating to meats and drinks, and days, and times; the apostle means, that they should not judge rashly, nor any thing before the time; they should not censure and judge each other's characters and states, on account of these things, but leave all to the decisive day, to Christ the Judge, and to his bar, before which all must stand; *but judge this rather;* or reckon this to be the most proper, fit, and advisable: *that no man put a stumbling-block or occasion to fall in his brother's way;* as in the former part of the advice the apostle seems to have respect more especially to the weak brethren, who were ready to judge and con-

[e] Apolog. 2. pro Christianis, p. 87.
[f] In Isa. xlv. 22.

[g] Zohar in Gen. fol. 49. 2.

demn such as neglected the observance of the laws about meats and days, as transgressors, and as wicked persons, that ought not to be in the communion of the church; so in this he seems more principally to have regard to the stronger brethren; who, through their imprudent use of their Christian liberty, offended weaker minds, and were the occasion of their stumbling and falling, which it became them to be careful to prevent; and rather than be a means of any thing of this nature, it was much better, as he afterwards observes, neither to eat flesh, nor drink wine, and entirely drop or forego the use of their liberty.

Ver. 14. *I know and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus,* &c.] As for the apostle's own sense and judgment about the distinction of meats, it was this, *that there is nothing unclean of itself;* that every creature, as originally made by God, is good; that what is eatable, or fit for food, may be eaten, whatever the Mosaic laws, being now abrogated, say to the contrary; and that whatever physical or natural difference there may be between the creatures of God, one being naturally fit for food, and another not; yet there is no moral distinction between them, there's nothing in any of them that can morally defile a man by eating them; nor indeed is there now any ceremonial distinction between them, and so no ceremonial pollution by them. This was not a bare conjecture, nor a mere opinion, but a point of certain knowledge, a matter of faith, and of full assurance of faith; the apostle was thoroughly persuaded of the truth of it, and had not the least doubt nor difficulty in his mind about it; he was as fully assured of it, as he was of his salvation by Christ, and of his interest in the love of God, from which he could never be separated, and therefore expresses it in language equally as strong; and this he came to the knowledge and persuasion of, *by the Lord Jesus;* by his express words, Matt. xv. 11, 17, 18. or by a revelation from him, in which way he had the whole Gospel: he might be informed of this matter in like manner as Peter was, by a vision from heaven, Acts x. or he knew this through the abrogation of the whole ceremonial law by Christ, who abolished the law of commandments contained in ordinances, and so these laws relating to the difference of meats among the rest; and he knew, that all the creatures in their original creation were good, and though cursed, for man's sake yet Christ had removed the curse, and sanctified them for the use of his people, who, under the Gospel dispensation, might make use of them at pleasure, without distinction: and the Jews themselves own, that what before was unclean, shall in the days of the Messiah be clean: so they explain Psal. cxlvi. 7. *the Lord looseth the prisoners,* which they would render, *the Lord looseth that which was forbidden;* and give this as the sense [r], "every beast which was unclean in this world (the Jewish "state), ה' בה מטהר אותה לעתיד לבוא, *God will cleanse "it in the time to come* (in the times of the Messiah), when "they shall be clean as at the first, to the sons of Noah." So they observe, that the Hebrew word for a hog, חזיר, comes from חזר, which signifies to return; because, say they [s], hereafter God will cause it to return to the Israelites; and even now, as formerly, they allow of eating any thing that is torn, or dies of itself, or hog's flesh to an army entering into a Gentile country, and subduing it, where they can find nothing else [t]: *but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean;* such a man that thinks the laws concerning clean and unclean meats are still in force, and binding upon him, ought to refrain from eating them; because he would act contrary to his conscience, and so violate and defile it; wherefore though the apostle was so fully satisfied in his own mind, yet he would not have weak and scrupulous consciences do themselves any hurt through his faith; for if they ate doubtingly, and without faith, it was an evil. Capellus [u] mentions a rule laid down by the Jews, but does not direct where it is to be found, nor have I yet met with it, very agreeable to this of the apostle's, which runs thus: "this is the "grand general rule in the law, that every thing which "thou dost not know, אם הוא מותר או אסור עליך אסור, "*whether it is lawful or unlawful, to thee it is unlawful,* "until thou hast asked a wise man concerning it, "who may teach thee that it is lawful."

Ver. 15. *But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat,* &c.] The apostle proceeds to give reasons why, though he was so fully persuaded that nothing was unclean of itself, and so he, and any other of the same persuasion, might lawfully eat any thing; yet they should forbear, and not make use of this liberty; because if a brother should be grieved by it, that is, either should be concerned and troubled at it inwardly, both because the person that eats is thought by him to have transgressed a command of God, and because he himself is not only despised as a weak brother, but as if he was a *judaizing* Christian, and walked not uprightly, according to the truth of the Gospel; or else should be emboldened thereby to eat, and so wound and defile his weak conscience; or be so galled and offended at it, as to stumble and fall off from his profession of Christianity, and withdraw his communion, as judging there's nothing in it, no regard being had to the law of God: *now walkest thou not charitably;* this is a breach of the rule of charity or brotherly love; such an one is a brother, and though a weak one, yet he is to be loved as a brother, and to be charitably walked with: true charity, or love, vaunts not itself over, nor is it puffed up against a weak brother; nor is it unconcerned for his peace, but bears with his weaknesses, and forbears the use of things grieving to him: *destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.* This is to be understood not of eternal destruction, since that can never be thought to be either in the will or power of any man; such a degree of malice can never arise in the heart of any, to wish for, desire, or take any step towards the eternal damnation of another; and could any thing of this kind be among the men of the world, yet surely not among brethren of the same faith, and in the same church-state; and were there any so wicked as to desire this, yet it is not in their power to compass it, for none can destroy eter-

[r] Bereshit Rabba in Maji Synops. Jud. Theolog. p. 224. R. Moses Hadarsan in Galatin. de Arcan. Cathol. ver. l. 11. c. 12. p. 699.
[s] Abarbinel. Rosh Amana, c. 13. fol. 18. 2.

[t] Maimon. Hilch. Melacim, c. 8. sect. 1.
[u] In loc.

ually but God; see Matt. x. 28. besides, it is not reasonable to suppose, that eternal damnation should follow upon eating things indifferent, or be caused by an offence either given or taken through them; moreover, though such as only think themselves, or profess themselves, or are only thought by others to be such, for whom Christ died, may be eternally destroyed, yet none of those can, for whom Christ really died; for they are his special people, his peculiar friends, his own sheep, his body the church, which can never perish; and he, by dying, has procured such blessings for them, such as a justifying righteousness, pardon of sin, peace with God, and eternal life, which will for ever secure them from destruction: besides, should any one of them be destroyed, the death of Christ would be so far in vain, nor would it appear to be a sufficient security from condemnation, nor a full satisfaction to the justice of God; or God must be unjust, to punish twice for the same fault: but this is to be understood of the destruction of such a man's peace and comfort, which is signified by grieving, stumbling, offending, and making him weak; and the words are a fresh reason, why they that are strong in the faith of Christian liberty, should nevertheless forbear the use of it, to preserve the peace of a weak brother; which is a matter of importance, and the rather to be attended to, since it is the peace of one that belongs to Christ, whom he has so loved as to die for, and therefore should be the object of the regard and affections of such as believe in Christ and love him.

Ver. 16. *Let not then your good be evil spoken of.*] The Vulgate Latin reads it, *our good*, and so the Syriac version; the sense is the same, and to be understood either of the Gospel in general, which is good in its author, matter, effects, and consequences; is good tidings of good things, and which might be blasphemed by the men of the world, on account of the divisions and contentions among the professors of it, about such little trivial things, as eating this or the other sort of food; and therefore care should be taken, that it be not evil-spoken of through such conduct: or else the doctrine of Christian liberty in particular, which is a good thing; Christ has procured it, and bestows it upon his people; it is a valuable blessing in itself, and is attended and followed with many considerable privileges and immunities; but may be evil-spoken of by those, who don't so well understand it, through an imprudent use of it by those who do; and who therefore should guard against any reproach that may be cast upon it; and rather than this should be the case, forego the use of it, in things of an indifferent nature; see 1 Cor. x. 30. so that this is another of the apostle's reasons, why though nothing is of itself unclean, yet it should be abstained from on account of others.

Ver. 17. *For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, &c.*] Neither the kingdom of glory, nor the ultimate glory and happiness of the saints in the other world, is attained to by any such things; for neither eating and drinking, nor not eating and drinking, can recommend to the divine favour, or give a meetness for heaven, or a right unto it; see 1 Cor. viii. 8. nor does the kingdom of grace, the principle of grace, lie in such things, nor in any thing that is external; nor does the Gospel, or Gospel church-state, which frequently go under this name of the kingdom of God, consist of such things as the ceremonial and the legal dispensation did, but the Gospel and the dispensation of grace are opposed unto them; see Heb. ix. 10. and xiii. 9. *But righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.* The kingdom of glory, which is the kingdom of God, because of his preparing, giving, calling to, and putting into the possession of, is attained unto by righteousness; not the righteousness of men, but the righteousness of Christ imputed by God, and received by faith; and through peace made by the blood of Christ, and rejoicing in him, without having any confidence in the flesh, which is a branch of the spirit's grace in regeneration. The kingdom of grace, or the governing principle of grace in the soul, and which is of God's implanting there, lies in righteousness and true holiness, in which the new man is created; in truth and uprightness in the inward parts, where the laws of God are put and written; and in peace of conscience, arising from the blood and righteousness of Christ; and in that spiritual joy and comfort the Holy Ghost produces, by leading to a sight of Christ, and an interest in him and his atonement. The Gospel, which gives an account both of the kingdom of grace and of glory, reveals the righteousness of Christ, and teaches men to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present evil world: it is a publication of peace by the blood of Christ; it calls men to peace, to cultivate peace one among another, and to seek those things which make for it; and when it comes in power, is attended with joy in the Holy Ghost, and is the means of increasing it; and this is another reason, persuading to Christian forbearance, in the use of things indifferent.

Ver. 18. *For he that in these things serveth Christ, &c.*] That is, in righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost; he whose faith is an obediential one, and embraces these things, and from the heart obeys them; who seeks righteousness alone by Christ, and peace and pardon through his blood; who rejoices in Christ Jesus, and puts no trust in the flesh, in moral duties or ceremonial services; and who, from principles of grace, serves Christ in a way of righteousness, wherein he possesses true peace of conscience, and abundance of spiritual joy and comfort: the Alexandrian copy and some others, and the Vulgate Latin version, read, *in this thing*; as if it referred only to the right use of Christian liberty, about things indifferent: such an one *is acceptable to God*; in Christ the beloved, in whom he believes, from whom he derives all his peace, joy, and comfort; and whom he serves in righteousness and holiness, and through whom also all his services are acceptable unto God: *and approved of men*; of good men, of such that can discern things that differ, and approve those that are excellent; and even of bad men, for such who live honestly and uprightly, who cultivate peace and friendship among men, and carry themselves cheerfully and civilly to all men, cannot but be approved of by the generality of them, though they may dislike them on other accounts.

Ver. 19. *Let us therefore follow after the things, &c.*] Since the kingdom of God is in part peace, and the man that serves Christ in this, as in other things, is accepted with God, and grateful to men, the apostle very

pertinently exhorts to seek after such things, *which make for peace:* not with God, for, for a sinful creature to make peace with God is impracticable and impossible, nor is there any exhortation to it in all the word of God; and if there was, it would be unnecessary here; since the persons here exhorted were such for whom peace with God was made by Christ, and who had a clear and comfortable sense of it in their own souls; and besides, for any to be put upon, or to attempt to make their peace with God, must highly reflect upon the methods of God's grace, in reconciling sinners to himself; and be injurious to the blood, sacrifice, and satisfaction of Christ, by which only peace is made: but the apostle means, either what makes for a man's own peace, or for the peace of others; the things which make for a man's own peace in his own conscience distressed with sin, are looking to, and dealing with the blood of Christ, which speaks peace and pardon; and the righteousness of Christ, which being apprehended by faith, a soul has peace with God through Christ; and also an embracing the Gospel, and the truths of it, which direct to Christ, which publish peace, and are the means of increasing and establishing a solid and well-grounded peace, on the free grace of God and merits of Christ: attending on ordinances, and exercising a conscience void of offence towards God and men, are means of continuing and promoting a man's peace; he enjoys peace in them, though he don't derive it from them; yea, in the peace of others, is a man's own peace; and this is what is chiefly meant, a pursuing of things which make for the peace of others; of all men, and especially of saints; this is what should be eagerly followed after, closely pursued, and all ways and means should be made use of, to promote and secure it: this is the will of God; 'tis well-pleasing to Christ, and a fruit of the Spirit; it is one part of the Gospel dispensation; church-fellowship can't be profitable and pleasant without it; it suits with the character of saints, who are sons of peace; and agrees with their privileges they enjoy, or have a right unto, as spiritual peace here, and eternal peace hereafter; *and things wherewith one may edify another.* The church is often compared to a building, to a temple, a city, an house, and saints are the materials thereof; who are capable of being edified, or built up, yet more and more, both by words and by deeds; by words, by the ministry of the word, which is set up and continued among other things, for the edifying of the body of Christ; by praying with, and for each other; and by Christian conversation, about the experience of the grace of God, and doctrines of the Gospel, whereby saints may be useful in building up one another in their most holy faith; and so likewise by avoiding all filthy, frothy, and corrupt communication; all angry words and wrathful expressions, which tend not to profit, and are not for the use of edifying, but the contrary: moreover, edification is promoted by deeds, by acts of charity, or love; for charity edifies not by bare words, but by loving in deed and in truth, by serving one another in love; for the spiritual body of Christ his church, makes increase unto the edifying of itself in love; and also by laying aside the use of things indifferent, when disagreeable to any of the brethren; for though all things may be lawful to be done by us, yet all things do not edify the brethren; and things which make for the edification of the body, as well as our own, are diligently to be sought after. The Vulgate Latin version, and some copies, read, *let us keep,* or *observe those things wherewith one may edify another.*

Ver. 20. *For meat destroy not the work of God, &c.*] The Syriac reads it, *the works of God:* referring either to righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, of which the kingdom of God consists; or to the weak brother, who both as a creature, and as a new creature, is the workmanship of God; and to the good work of grace, the work of faith upon his soul, which is the work of God; or rather to his peace, and the peace of the church of Christ, which is both the will and work of God; peace is what he calls his people to, and what he himself is the author of; and may be destroyed, and sometimes is, by trifling things; whereas a true believer, though ever so weak, cannot be destroyed, nor the good work of God upon his soul be lost, nor any part of it; not the work of faith, which Christ prays for that it fail not, and is both the author and finisher of; but the work of peace and edification in particular persons, and in a church, may be destroyed, but 'tis pity it should, by so small a matter, so trivial a thing as meat, or the use of any thing that is indifferent: *all things indeed are pure.* The Ethiopic version adds, *to the pure:* to them that have pure consciences, sprinkled by the blood of Christ, and have no doubt or scruple about eating things indifferent; but this addition seems to be taken out of Titus i. 15. though it may serve to explain the sense, which is, that all sorts of food, without any distinction, may be eaten; there is nothing common or unclean, every creature in itself is good, and every Christian may lawfully eat thereof, with moderation and thankfulness. This is a concession which stands thus corrected and restrained, *but it is evil for that man who eateth with offence.* The Arabic version adds, *of his neighbour;* which is a good interpretation of the passage; for the apostle means not with offence to a man's own conscience, though so to eat is an evil too, but with offence to a fellow-Christian; it is not an evil in itself to eat, but when this circumstance of offending another thereby attends it; it is evil, though not in itself, yet in its consequences; it offends a weak brother, displeases Christ, who would not have one of his little ones offended, and brings a woe upon the person by whom the offence comes. The Ethiopic version reads, *who eats inordinately:* which to be sure is sinful, but is not the meaning here.

Ver. 21. *It is good neither to eat flesh, &c.*] Any sort of flesh, even that which is not forbidden in the law, rather than offend a weak brother; and the apostle determines for himself, that he would not, where there was any danger of doing this, 1 Cor. viii. 13. *Nor to drink wine:* not only the wine of libations to Heathen deities, but wine in common; which was not prohibited by the law of Moses, but in the case of a Nazarite, and of vows: *nor any thing,* be it what it will, *whereby thy brother stumbleth.* The Syriac version reads, *our brother:* any one that stands in such a spiritual relation to any of us; and for which reason care should be taken, that no stumbling-block, or occasion to fall, should be put in his way; particularly that Christian liberty in things indifferent be not unsea-

sonably and imprudently used, and so become a means of stumbling and staggering to weak minds: *or is offended;* to that degree, as to censure and judge him that eats, as an impious person, and a transgressor of the law; with whom he can't keep his communion, but withdraws himself from it, and is even tempted to drop his profession of the Christian religion entirely, being ready to think it is not right, since contrary to the law of Moses: *or is made weak;* more weak in the faith than he was before, and his love is weakened and grows very cold and indifferent to his Christian brethren, that can take and use a liberty which he cannot. These two last phrases are not in the Syriac and Ethiopic versions, nor in the Alexandrian copy, though in others, and are used for the sake of explanation and amplification.

Ver. 22. *Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God, &c.*] Which is to be understood, not of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the doctrines of the Gospel; for a man that has such faith given him, ought not to keep it in his own breast, but to declare it to others; he ought to make a public visible profession of it, before many witnesses; it becomes him to tell the church of God what great things the Lord has done for him; and as he believes with the heart, so he ought to make confession with the mouth unto salvation; but this faith only designs a full persuasion in a man's own mind, about the free and lawful use of things indifferent, the subject the apostle is upon; see ver. 5, 14. and his advice on this head is, to keep this faith and persuasion in a man's own breast, and not divulge it to others, where there's danger of scandal and offence: he does not advise such to alter their minds, change their sentiments, or cast away their faith, which was right and agreeable to his own, but to have it, hold and keep it, though within themselves; he would not have them openly declare it, and publicly make use of it, since it might be grieving and distressing to weak minds; but in private, and where there was no danger of giving offence, they might both speak of it, and use it; and if they could not, should satisfy themselves that God, who sees in secret, knows they have this faith, and sees their use of it, though others do not, for from him they have it; so the Ethiopic version reads it, and *if thou hast faith with thyself, thou art secure before God, from whom thou hast obtained it:* and should be thankful to him for it, and use it in such a manner as makes most for his glory, and the peace of his church, since to him they must give an account another day: some copies and versions read without an interrogation, *thou hast faith:* and others, *thou, the faith which thou hast, have it to thyself,* &c. so the Alexandrian copy and the Syriac version. *Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth;* or approves *of;* that is, it is well for that man who observes no difference of meats, if either he does not act contrary to his own conscience, and so condemns himself in what he allows himself in; or exposes himself to the censure, judgment, and condemnation of others, in doing that which he approves of as lawful, and is so, but unlawful when done to the offence of others: some understand this as spoken to the weak believer, signifying that he is in the right, who, through example, and the force of the sensual appetite, is not prevailed upon to allow himself to eat, contrary to his own conscience, and whereby he would be self-condemned; but as the strong believer is addressed in the beginning of the verse, I choose to think he is intended in this part of it; and the rather, because the weak believer is taken notice of in the next verse, with a peculiar view to this very thing.

Ver. 23. *And he that doubteth, &c.*] Or makes a difference between meats and meats, or is in suspense whether any difference should be observed or no, *is damned;* not with everlasting damnation, which is not the consequent of, nor connected with such an action, as eating of a thing indifferent, with a scrupulous conscience; but such an one is condemned in his own conscience; he's self-condemned, his conscience condemns him for what he himself does; and he's self-condemned in judging and censuring others, for the same things: so the Syriac renders it, אתחייב לה, *he becomes guilty,* or he contracts guilt to himself, or is self-condemned; and so the Arabic, *he is already condemned, because* he eateth *not of faith;* or of a full persuasion in his own mind that he is right in eating; he halts between two opinions, and is doubtful in his own mind what is best to do, and therefore, whilst this is his case, he ought to refrain: *for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.* This is a general rule, or axiom, which is not only applicable to the present case, but to any other, whether of a natural, civil, moral, or evangelic kind: *whatsoever does not spring from faith,* as the Arabic version renders it, cannot be excused of sin; whatever is not agreeable to the word and doctrine of faith, ought not to be done; whatever is done without faith, or not in the exercise of it, is culpable, for without faith nothing can be pleasing to God; and whatever is contrary to the persuasion of a man's own mind, is so far criminal, as it is a violation of his conscience; whatever men do, especially in a religious way, they ought to make faith of it, or to be fully persuaded of it in their own minds, or they act amiss: in the Arabic version, the Complutensian edition, the Alexandrian copy, and some others, the three last verses of the xvith chapter, *now to him that is of power,* &c. are here added; which have induced some to think, that the apostle intended to have finished his epistle here; but having more time, and other things occurred to write of, he proceeded.

CHAP. XV.

THE apostle in this chapter pursues his exhortation to mutual affection and forbearance, notwithstanding their different sentiments about the use of meats, and observation of days; excuses his writing so freely to them, which they might bear with, in consideration of his being an apostle, especially an apostle of the Gentiles, and which office he magnified and fulfilled everywhere; gives them the reasons why he had not as yet been with them, though he greatly desired it, and encourages them to expect a visit from him; and con-

cludes with earnestly entreating them that he might have a share in their prayers: and first, as an inference from what he had said in the preceding chapter, he lays it down as a duty incumbent on himself, and all that were strong in the doctrine of Christian liberty, to bear with the infirmities of weak Christians, and not please themselves, but others, ver. 1. which he enforces, from the usefulness of it, it being for the good and edification of others, ver. 2. and from the example of Christ, who pleased not himself, ver. 3. and which is proved from a passage of Scripture in Psal. lxix. 9. the pertinency of which passage, and the citation and application of it to Christ and the present case, are vindicated from this consideration, that whatever was written in former times, was for the use of the saints under the Gospel dispensation, ver. 4. and that the exhortation might have its effect upon them, he puts up a prayer to God for them, that such a temper of mind might be in them, which would be for the glory of God, ver. 5, 6. and then he repeats his exhortation, ver. 7. that they would affectionately receive one another; which he urges by the example of Christ, who had received them to the glory of God; and that they might glorify him, and this was one way of doing it: and that this argument might have the greater weight with both parties, he observes, that Jesus Christ had a special regard to the Jews, and was their minister, sent unto them to fulfil the promises made unto their fathers, and had received them; and therefore though they were weak, they were not to be despised, grieved, and offended, ver. 8. and as for the Gentiles, it was a clear case that God had had long ago a design of mercy to them, and that they were to be, and were now received by Christ, and so under obligation to glorify God for his mercy; and therefore not to be judged and condemned, though they did not conform to the ceremonial law; and this he proves in ver. 9, 10, 11, 12. from several passages of Scripture in Psal. xviii. 49. Deut. xxxii. 43. Psal. cxvii. 1. Isa. xi. 10. and closes this argument he had so long insisted on with a prayer to God for them, that they might be in the exercise of faith and hope; and, in the exercise of those graces, be filled with joy and peace, ver. 13. and in order to prevent an objection that might be made to these prayers and exhortations of his, that they suggested that they were wicked and ignorant men, devoid of affection, and knew not how to behave to each other, nor to exhort one another, the apostle softens such a resentment, by calling them brethren, and by expressing his persuasion of their abundant goodness, knowledge, and abilities, ver. 14. and excuses the freedom he took with them, by observing, that he only acted the part of a monitor, ver. 15. and the rather this freedom might be allowed him, on account of the great gifts bestowed upon him, qualifying him to be an apostle of Christ; and especially as he was an apostle of the Gentiles, and so their apostle, ver. 16. and on account of his office, gifts, and usefulness, he had reason to glory; though through Christ only, and in things relating to God, and not himself, ver. 17. when he takes an occasion to enlarge on his ministry, and magnify his office; partly from the end and success of it, bringing the Gentiles to the obedience of Christ, ver. 18. and partly from the means and causes of such success, the preaching of the word, working miracles, and the power of the Holy Ghost; and from the extent of it, reaching from Jerusalem to Illyricum, ver. 19. and from the difficulty which attended it, he preaching in places where the Gospel was never preached before, and which he chose to do, ver. 20. and which was necessary to be done, according to a prophecy in Isa. lii. 15. which he cites, ver. 21. and observes, that it was his preaching in these many and distant parts that was the reason of his not having been with the saints at Rome, ver. 22. but now gives them reason to expect his coming; partly because he had finished his travels in those countries, and partly because of the vehement desire he had to see them, ver. 23. and besides, an opportunity seemed to be offering, he intending to take a journey to Spain, when it would lie in his way to come to Rome, and be for his advantage, ver. 24. in the mean while he informs them what he was engaged in, to carry the contribution of the Macedonian and Acaian churches to Jerusalem, for the poor saints there, ver. 25. on which contributions he enlarges, shewing not only who made them, and for whom, but the source and spring of them, they arose from their good will and pleasure, ver. 26. and yet they were debtors, and under obligation to do what they did; it was but a piece of justice and equity, since those churches had received of the spiritual things of the Jews, ver. 27. and as for his coming to them, he acquaints them of the time that it would be, when he had finished the above service and labour of love, and when he should come into Spain, as he had before signified, ver. 28. and of the manner in which he should come, of which he was fully persuaded, as that it would be with the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ, ver. 29. and then with great importunity desires them to pray for him, and that very earnestly, ver. 30. particularly that he might be delivered from his enemies in Judea, and that the saints there would accept of what he brought them from the Gentiles, ver. 31. and that, if it was the will of God, he might come to them and be refreshed with them, ver. 32. and then closes the chapter with a salutation of them, or a wish that the God of peace might be with them, ver. 33.

Ver. 1. *We then that are strong, &c.*] Meaning not only ministers of the Gospel, who are men of strong parts, great abilities, mighty in the Scriptures, valiant for the truth on earth, and pillars in God's house; for though the apostle includes himself, yet not merely as such, but as expressing it to be his duty in common with other Christians; and the rather he does this, to engage them to the practice of it: but the stronger and more knowing part of private Christians are here intended; the Apostle John's young men, who are strong, in distinction from little children, or new-born babes, that are at present weaklings; and from fathers who are on the decline of life, and just going off the stage; when these young men are in the bloom and flower of a profession, in the prime of their judgment, and exercise of grace; who are strong in Christ, and not in themselves, in the grace that is in him, out of which they continually receive; who are strong in the grace of faith, and are established and settled in the doctrine of it; and have a large and extensive knowledge of the several truths of the Gospel; and, among the rest, of that of Christian liberty: *ought to bear the infirmities of*

the weak, of them that are weak in faith and knowledge, particularly in the knowledge of their freedom from Mosaical observances: their *infirmities* are partly their ignorance, mistakes, and errors, about things indifferent: which they consider and insist on, and would impose upon others, as necessary and obliging; and partly the peevishness and moroseness which they shew, the hard words they give, and the rash judgment and rigid censures they pass on their brethren, that differ from them: such persons and their infirmities are to be borne with; they are not to be despised for their weakness; and if in the church, are not to be excluded for their mistakes; and if not members, are not to be refused on account of them; since they arise from weakness, and are not subversive of the fundamental doctrines of the Gospel: they are not to be treated as wicked men, but as weak brethren; and their peevish tempers, morose dispositions and conduct, their hard speeches and censorious expressions, are patiently to be endured; they should be considered as from whence they arise, not from malice and ill will, from a malignant spirit, but from weakness and misguided zeal, for what they take to be in force, when it is abolished: moreover, they are to be complied with in cases not sinful, as the apostle did in circumcising Timothy, and purifying himself according to the law; and so to the weak he became weak, to gain some, and therefore could urge this exhortation by his own example with greater force; and which he represents, not only as what would be honourable, and a point of good nature, and as doing a kind action, but as what *ought* to be; what the law of love obliges to, and what the grace of love, which *bears all things*, constrains unto; and which indeed if not done, they that are strong do not answer one end of their having that spiritual strength they have; and it is but complying with the golden rule of Christ, to do as we would be done by: *and not please ourselves*; either entertain pleasing thoughts of, and make pleasing reflections on their stronger faith, greater degree of knowledge, superior light and understanding; which being indulged, are apt to excite and encourage spiritual pride and vanity, and generally issue in the contempt of weaker brethren; nor do those things, which are pleasing and grateful to themselves, to the offence and detriment of others; for instance, and which is what the apostle has reference to, to gratify their appetite, by eating such meat as is forbidden by the law of Moses, to the grieving of the weak brethren, wounding their consciences, and destroying their peace; these things should not be done; stronger Christians should deny themselves the use of their Christian liberty in things indifferent, when they can't make use of it without offence.

Ver. 2. *Let every one of us please his neighbour, &c.*] Every man, particularly his Christian friend and brother, whom he should seek to please in all things, and by all means lawful; he should carry it affably and courteously, should make himself agreeable to him; should condescend and accommodate himself to his weakness, and bear his infirmities, and deny himself rather than displease him. The Vulgate Latin version and some copies read, *let every one of you*; but the other reading is preferable, and best agrees with the context, ver. 1. 4. *For his good*; or as the Syriac renders it, במטבתא, *in good things*; for he is not to be pleased, gratified, and indulged, in any thing that is evil: we are not to please any man in any thing that is contrary to the Gospel of Christ, for then we should not be faithful servants of his; nor in any thing repugnant to the commands of God, and ordinances of Christ, who are to be obeyed and pleased, rather than men; nor in any thing that is of an immoral nature, we are not to comply with, though it may be to the displeasure of the dearest relation and friend; but in every thing that is naturally, civilly, morally, or evangelically good, we should study to please them; and in whatsoever may be for their good, temporal, spiritual, or eternal: and *to edification*; of our neighbour, brother, and Christian friend, for the establishment of his peace, the increase of his spiritual light, and the building of him up in his most holy faith; and also of the whole community, or church, to which each belong, whose peace and edification should be consulted, and every thing done, which may promote and secure it; and among which this is one, every man to please his neighbour, in things lawful and laudable.

Ver. 3. *For even Christ pleased not himself, &c.*] He sought not his own ease, pleasure, profit, honour, and glory, but to do his father's will and work; and he always did the things which pleased him, in his obedience, sufferings, and death; and sought not his own, but his glory: moreover, what he did and suffered were not for himself, but for us; he became incarnate for us; he obeyed, suffered, and died for us; he came not to be ministered to, to be attended upon as an earthly prince, enjoying his own ease and pleasure, things grateful to nature, but to minister to others; hence he appeared in the form of a servant, did the work of one in life, and at last became obedient to death, even the death of the cross: not but that he was well pleased in doing and suffering all this; it was his delight to do the will of God: it was his meat and drink to finish his work; yea, that part of it which was most disagreeable to flesh and blood, was most earnestly desired by him, even the baptism of his sufferings; and in the view of the salvation of his people, and of enjoying their company with him to all eternity, he endured the cross patiently, and despised the shame with pleasure: but then he met with many things which were far from being grateful to human nature; such as the hardness and unbelief of the Jews, with which he was grieved, their scoffs and insults, reproaches and jeers; the ignorance, frowardness, and moroseness of his own disciples, whose infirmities he bore; and at last the sufferings of death, that bitter cup, which he as man desired might pass from him; but, however, he submitted to his father's will; all which prove what the apostle here affirms. This instance of Christ, the man of God's right hand, the son of man, whom he has made strong for himself, the head of the church, the leader and commander of the people, bearing the infirmities of the weak, and not pleasing himself, is very pertinently produced, to enforce the above exhortations; who is an example to his people in the exercise of every grace, and the discharge of every duty; as in beneficence, forgiving of injuries, mutual love, meekness and humility, suffering of afflictions, and patience. The

proof of it follows, *but as it is written*, in Psal. lxix. 9. *the reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me*: which are the words of Christ unto his father, as the whole psalm is to be understood not of David, but of the Messiah, as is clear from the citations out of it, and references to it in the New Testament; see John ii. 17. and xv. 25. and xix. 28. compared with Psal. lxix. 9, 4, 21. and the meaning of them is, either that the reproaches which were cast on the house, worship, and ordinances of God, affected Christ as much as if they had been cast upon himself; which stirred up his zeal to take the method he did, to shew his resentment at such indignities; see John ii. 15, 16, 17. or that the same persons by whom the name of God was blasphemed, his sanctuary polluted, and his ordinances reproached, also reproached him; and he bore in his bosom the reproach of all the mighty people, which were in great plenty poured upon him: they reproached him with being a glutton, a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners; they said he was a Samaritan, and had a devil: charged him with blasphemy and sedition; and when on the cross, mocked, reviled, and wagged their heads at him; all which he bore patiently, and reviled not again: moreover, by *reproaches* may be meant the sins of his people, by which the name of God was blasphemed, his law trampled upon with contempt, and the perfections of his nature, as his justice and holiness, dishonoured; and which fell upon Christ, not by chance, but by the appointment of God, and according to his own voluntary agreement; and which he bore in his own body, and made satisfaction for; which though he did willingly, in order to obtain some valuable ends, the salvation of his people, and the glorifying of the divine perfections, the honouring of the law, and satisfying of justice, yet the bearing of them, in itself, could not be grateful to him as such; neither the charge of sin, nor the weight of punishment; and in this respect he pleased not himself, or did that which was grateful to his pure and holy nature.

Ver. 4. *For whatsoever things were written aforetime*, &c.] In the books of the Old Testament; the apostle says this, to vindicate the pertinency of the above citation, and to prevent any objection that might be made against it; since whatsoever was written in that psalm did not belong personally to David, but to Christ; and what is written concerning him, is designed for the use and instruction of his people; yea, whatever is written anywhere in the sacred Scriptures, *were written for our learning*: to instruct in the knowledge of Christ, of his person, offices, grace, righteousness, obedience, sufferings, death, resurrection, and ascension; and of the great salvation and redemption he came to obtain, and has obtained; and to teach us the doctrines of grace, of pardon through the blood of Christ, atonement by his sacrifice, justification by his righteousness, acceptance in his person, and eternal life through him; as also to inform us of our duty, and how we ought to behave both towards God and men: *that we, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope*; the Scriptures are not only written for our present instruction, but for the ingenerating, encouraging, and establishing, an hope of eternal life in another world; which they are the means of, under the influence of divine grace; since they give us a clear account of eternal life; of the promise of it in Christ; of its being procured by him, and secured in him; of the means of enjoying it, through his blood and righteousness; of the declarations of God's free grace and mercy to sinners, and of the various instances of persons who have been made partakers of it; all which encourage to hope in the Lord, and to rejoice in hope of the glory of God; believing we also may have and enjoy the thing hoped for, *through patience and comfort of the Scriptures*; both which are encouraged thereby: the *patience of the Scriptures* is not a stoical apathy, a stupid indolence; and is of a different kind from that patience the writings of the Heathen philosophers define and recommend: the Scripture gives an account of the true nature of patience, in bearing all sorts of evils for Christ's sake; of the excellency and usefulness of it; and do strongly exhort unto it upon the best principles, and with the best motives; and are full of promises to the exercise of it, and furnish out the best examples of suffering affliction, and patience: *the comfort of the Scriptures* is such as is not to be met with elsewhere. These writings abound with exceeding great and precious promises, and excellent doctrines, big with consolation to the saints; and both serve much to cherish, support, and maintain an hope of eternal happiness; all which prove the divine authority, excellency, and usefulness of the sacred writings, and recommend the reading of them by us, and the hearing of them explained by others.

Ver. 5. *Now the God of patience and consolation*, &c.] These titles and characters of God are manifestly used on account of what is before said concerning the Scriptures, and to shew, that the efficacy and usefulness of them, in producing and promoting patience and comfort, entirely depend upon God the author of them: from exhorting, the apostle proceeds to petitioning; well knowing that all his exhortations would be of no avail without the power of divine grace accompanying them. The words are a prayer. The object addressed is described as *the God of patience*, because he is the author and giver of that grace: it is a fruit of his spirit, produced by the means of his word, called the word of his patience. The Heathens themselves were so sensible that this is a divine blessing, that they call patience [illegible], *the invention of the gods**. God is the great pattern and exemplar of patience; he is patient himself, and bears much and long with the children of men; with wicked men, whose patient forbearance and long-suffering being despised by them, will be an aggravation of their damnation; but his long-suffering towards his elect issues in their salvation: he waits to be gracious to them before conversion, and after it bears with their infirmities, heals their backslidings, forgives their iniquities, patiently hears their cries, requests, and complaints, relieves and supports them, and carries them even to hoary hairs; and is in all a pattern to be imitated by his people. He is also the object of this grace; he it is on whom and for whom saints should and do patiently wait, until he is

* Archilochus apud Philostrat. Vit. Apollon. l. 7. c. 12.

pleased to manifest himself, and communicate to them for the supply of their wants of every sort; and upon whose account and for whose sake they patiently suffer reproach and persecution; the exercise of patience is what he requires, and calls for, and is very grateful and well-pleasing to him; to all which add, that he it is who strengthens to the exercise of it, and increases it; and which he does sometimes by tribulation; faith and other graces, being thereby tried, produce patience; and which at length, through divine grace, has its perfect work. Moreover, the object of prayer is described, as *the God of consolation;* all true, real, solid comfort springs from him, which he communicates by his son, the consolation of Israel; by his spirit, the comforter; by his word, the doctrines and promises of which afford strong consolation to the heirs of promise, sensible sinners and afflicted souls; by the ordinances of the Gospel, which are breasts of consolation; and by the faithful ministers of Christ, who are *Barnabases*, sons of consolation. The petition follows, *grant you to be like minded one towards another;* which does not respect sameness of judgment in the doctrines of faith; though this is very necessary to an honourable and comfortable walking together in church-fellowship; much less an agreement in things indifferent: the apostle's meaning is not, that they should all abstain from meats forbidden by the law of Moses, or that they should all eat every sort of food without distinction; nor that they should all observe any Jewish day, or that they should all observe none; rather, that every one should enjoy his own sentiment, and practise as he believed: but this request regards a likeness of affection, the sameness of mutual love, that they be of one heart, and one soul; that notwithstanding their different sentiments about things of a ceremonious kind, yet that they should love one another, and cease either to despise or judge each other; but think as well and as highly of them that differ from them, as of themselves, and of those of their own sentiments, without preferring in affection one to another; but studying and devising to promote and maintain, as the Syriac here reads it, בשויותא, *an equality* among them; shewing the same equal affection and respect to one as to the other, and to one another; the Jew to the Gentile, and the Gentile to the Jew; the strong to the weak, and the weak to the strong. This is what is greatly desirable. It is grateful to God; it is earnestly wished for by the ministers of the Gospel; and is pleasant and delightful to all good men; but it is God alone that can give and continue such a spirit: this the apostle knew, and therefore prays that he would *grant* it: and for which request there is a foundation for faith and hope concerning it; since God has promised he'll give his people one heart, and one way, as to fear him, so to love one another. The rule or pattern, according to which this is desired, is next expressed, *according to Christ Jesus;* according to the doctrine of Christ, which teaches, directs, and engages, as to sameness of judgment and practice, so to mutual love and affection; and according to the new commandment of Christ, which obliges to love one another; and according to the example of Christ, who is the great pattern of patience and forbearance, of meekness and humility, of condescension and goodness, and of equal love and affection to all his members.

Ver. 6. *That ye may with one mind and one mouth;* &c.] This is the end for which the above request is made, and shews, that a cordial and sincere affection for one another is necessary to the worshipping of God with one consent, to a joining together in acts of religious service, both in praying to God, and in praising of him, which latter seems here chiefly designed; for how should there be an agreement of heart and voice, of mind and mouth, in praising God, unless there is a singleness of heart, and oneness of affection? This is necessary in order to *glorify God, even the father of our Lord Jesus Christ.* The Syriac and Arabic versions read, *God the father of our Lord Jesus Christ;* leaving out the copulative, which we translate *even*, but may as well be rendered *and;* and be read, as by some, *the God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ.* God is the God of Christ, as Christ is man; who prepared the human nature for him, anointed it with the Holy Spirit, supported it in life, in sufferings and death, and glorified it at his own right hand; and in which nature Christ exercised every grace on him, as faith, hope, and love; discharged every duty to him, worshipped him, prayed unto him, and was in all things obedient to his will: and God is the father of Christ, as Christ is God; for as man he had no father. Now he is *glorified* when the perfections of his nature are ascribed unto him; when notice is taken of the works of his hands, and the glory of his majesty, which appears in them; when praise is offered up, and thanks given for all mercies, temporal and spiritual, he bestows on his people; when they join together in the solemn worship of him, presenting their bodies, and giving up their hearts unto him; when they unite in praying to him, and singing his praise; and when their lives and conversations are agreeable to their profession of him.

Ver. 7. *Wherefore receive ye one another,* &c.] Into your hearts and affections; embrace one another cordially, the Jew the Gentile, the Gentile the Jew, the strong brother the weak, the weak the strong: *as Christ also received us.* The Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions, read *you.* Both Jews and Gentiles, as appears from the following verses. Christ received all the chosen ones into his heart's love and affection from eternity; he received them in the council of peace, and when the covenant of grace was made at his father's hands, in the most tender manner, in order to take the care of them, preserve and save them; he assumed their nature, took upon him their sins, and sustained their persons in time, when he became incarnate, and suffered and died for them; and he receives them in effectual vocation on their coming to him, which he encourages by assuring them, that he will in no wise cast them out; so far is he from it, that he embraces them with open arms, and in the most affectionate manner receives them, though sinners, and eats with them; and notwithstanding all their unworthiness, sins, and transgressions: *to the glory of God:* that is, either in order to bring them to the enjoyment of eternal life and happiness; which is sometimes so called, because of the glory that shall be beheld by the saints, be revealed in them, and put upon

them, both in soul and body; and which is all of God's preparing and bestowing, and will lie in the vision and enjoyment of him: for this they were chosen in Christ, given to him, and received by him before the world began; and that they might enjoy it, Christ came into this world, took on him their persons, and died in their stead; and to this they are called by his grace with an holy calling; and when he has guided them with his counsel through this world, he'll receive them to this glory: or else by *the glory of God* is meant the glorifying of God, the perfections of God, as his wisdom, power, faithfulness, truth, justice, holiness, love, grace, and mercy, and the like; which is done by Christ's becoming the surety and Mediator of the new covenant, by his assumption of human nature, by his obedience, sufferings, and death, and by obtaining redemption for his people: and the force of the apostle's exhortation and argument is, that as Christ has received his people both in eternity and time, in so tender a manner, though unworthy, whereby he has glorified God, which was the principal end in view, and next to that the glorifying of them; so it becomes them to be like-minded to one another, and affectionately receive and embrace each other, that so they may join together in glorifying the God and father of Christ also.

Ver. 8. *Now I say*, &c.] Or affirm that Christ has received both Jews and Gentiles: that he has received the Jews, and therefore they are not to be despised, though they are weak, appears from hence, *that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision*: he is rightly called *a minister*, for this was the end of his coming into the world, and the whole of his work in it was not to be ministered unto, but to minister to others, both in life and at death. This character agrees with him in all his offices; as King he ministers judgment to the people; and as priest he is the minister of the true tabernacle of the human nature, in which he offered himself a sacrifice for the sins of his people, and now in it makes intercession for them; but here it is expressive of his prophetic office, in which he is such a minister as never was before, or since, or ever will be; if we consider the dignity of his person, being the son of God; the greatness of his qualifications, having the spirit without measure; the nature of his doctrines, which were amazing words of grace and truth; and the manner of his delivery, which was with authority; and that all other ministers receive their mission, qualifications, doctrine and success from him: he is styled a minister of *the circumcision*, not literally considered, as if he administered circumcision to any, which he did not; he was indeed subject to it as a son of Abraham, as a Jew by birth, as under the law, and in order to fulfil all righteousness, and to shew that he was truly man, and that he had regard to the people and ordinances of the Old Testament, as he shewed by baptism he had to those of the New, and to signify our cleansing and atonement by his blood; but circumcision is either to be understood in a spiritual sense of circumcision in the spirit, and not in the flesh, with which the true circumcision, or believers in Christ, are circumcised in him, through his circumcision: or rather the word here is to be taken metonymically, for the uncircumcised Jews, as it often is in this epistle; see ch. ii. 26. and iii. 30. and iv. 9. So that the meaning is, that Christ was their minister and preacher, just as Peter is said to have the apostleship of the circumcision, or to be the apostle of the Jews; as Paul was of the Gentiles, and to have the Gospel of the circumcision committed to him, it being his province to preach it to them, Gal. ii. 7, 8. Christ as a minister or preacher in the personal discharge of his prophetic office, was sent only to the Jews; among them he lived, and to them he only preached; nor did he allow his apostles to preach to any other till after his resurrection; and which is a manifest proof that he received the Jews, and took them under his care, and shewed a particular regard unto them: the ends of his being a minister to them were, *for the truth of God*; to preach the Gospel of salvation, the word of truth unto them, for which he was promised and sent; and in doing of which he declared the righteousness, faithfulness, loving kindness, and truth of God unto them: *and to confirm the promises made unto the fathers*; the fathers of the world, Adam, Noah, *&c.* or rather the Jewish fathers, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David, and others; concerning the Messiah's being the seed of the woman, and of Abraham, and of David; concerning the coming of Shiloh, the raising up of the great prophet among the Jews, &c. all which promises are yea and amen in Christ, ratified and fulfilled in him.

Ver. 9. *And that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy*, &c.] In choosing them in Christ as vessels of mercy, and in redeeming them by Christ as well as the Jews, and in regenerating and calling them by his abundant grace; and which as they clearly shew that Christ has received them, and therefore are not to be censured and judged as irreligious persons, because of the use of their Christian liberty; so these things lay them under obligations to glorify God, to shew forth his praise both by lip and life, since what they enjoy is not by promise, as the Jews, but of mere mercy; not but that promises arise from grace and mercy, though the accomplishment of them is owing to truth and faithfulness; but the Gentiles had no promises made to them, and yet obtained mercy, though there were many promises made concerning them, and many oracles and predictions in favour of them stood on divine record; some of which the apostle here produces to prove what he had asserted, that Christ had received them, and they were bound to glorify God on that account: *as it is written*, in Psal. xviii. 49. *for this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name*: which words are not spoken unto God by David, literally considered, but as personating the Messiah; for David when he penned this Psalm was in the decline of life; the next account after this is of his last dying words, 2 Sam. xxiii. 1. nor could he hope to praise God among the Gentiles, nor did he in person, but in his son the Messiah. These words are the words of Christ unto his father, who in the title of the psalm is called *the servant of God*, he being the Mediator eminently; he is represented as encompassed with the sorrows and snares of death and the grave, which were with Jesus when in the garden, and on the cross. God is all along in it spoken as his helper and deliverer, as he was to Christ in his human nature, having promised to be so, and on which he depended; and the person, the subject of the psalm, is a victorious person, one

that has got the conquest over all enemies, which is in the fullest sense true of the Messiah, who has overcome the world, made an end of sin, destroyed Satan, spoiled principalities and powers, and abolished death; and particularly is said to be the head of the Heathen, and they to be voluntary subjects to him, ver. 43, 44. which is expressed in much the same language as the like things are in Isa. lv. 4, 5. which is so manifest a prophecy of the Messiah; add to all which, that the Lord's anointed, the King Messiah, and who is called David, is expressly mentioned in the words following these that are cited, and which are applied by the Jews [x] themselves to the Messiah; as is the 32d verse of this psalm paraphrased of him, by the Targumist upon it: what is here said by the Messiah to God, is that he would *confess to him among the Gentiles*: which is to be understood not of confession of sin, or of a confession of faith in him; but of praise and thanksgiving, a celebration of his perfections, particularly his grace, mercy, and goodness; ascribing honour and glory to him, either for the conversion of the Gentiles, as he did in the believing Jews, Acts xi. 18. or by the mouth of the Gentiles, for what God had done in bringing the Gospel to them, Acts xiii. 48. or among them, by his apostles and ministers of the Gospel being made very successful among them, and made to triumph in Christ, whilst they diffused the savour of his knowledge in every place. The word *Lord* is omitted in this citation, though it appears in the Vulgate Latin and Arabic versions, and in the Complutensian edition, and two of Stephens's copies: *and sing unto thy name*: psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to the glory of his grace, as in all the churches of the Gentiles, to which they are directed by the spirit of Christ, Ephes. v. 19. Col. iii. 16.

Ver. 10. *And again he saith*, &c.] God or Christ, in Deut. xxxii. 43. *rejoice ye Gentiles with his people*: which from the Hebrew text are by some rendered, *rejoice his people O ye Gentiles*: to which agree the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan, who render it, *praise O ye nations his people*; or as some copies of the former, *the judgment of his people*; and the latter adds, the house of Israel. The note of R. Sol. Jarchi on the text is, "at that time the nations shall praise Israel; "see what is the praise of this people that cleave unto "the Lord, &c." But the design of this song is to praise God, and not the people of Israel; who in it are severely reproved for their many iniquities, and especially their very great ingratitude to God, and are threatened with the heaviest judgments. This is seen by other Jewish writers, who interpret the words accordingly, as R. Aben Ezra does, whose note is "then "shall they praise him, when God shall avenge their "blood;" and to this sense is the Jerusalem Targum, "praise before him O ye people, praise him O his "people of the house of Israel;" but the words may be better translated either thus, *rejoice O ye nations, his people*; that is, ye Gentiles who are his people, whom God has taken into his covenant, and whom he will declare as such in his own time, which time was now come, and therefore had reason to rejoice: see 1 Pet. ii. 9, 10. or thus, *rejoice ye Gentiles, and his people*; let both Jews and Gentiles rejoice; let them rejoice together when they come to be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of the same promises and privileges; when they shall be together in one fold, under one shepherd; and especially when the fulness of each of them is brought in, and God has avenged himself of his and their enemies; and which agrees with the apostle's sense, and whose version is supported by the Septuagint interpreters; and his supplement is to be justified, there only wanting a copulative in the Hebrew text, which is often the case in that language, and which may easily be supplied by *and* or *with*; as it is with the latter by the apostle, in perfect agreement with the sense of the words.

Ver. 11. *And again*, &c.] It is written in Psal. cxvii. 1. *praise the Lord all ye Gentiles, and laud him all ye people*: that is, praise him both Jews and Gentiles, for his merciful kindness and truth, as in ver. 2. the Gentiles for his mercy in choosing, redeeming, and calling them, as before; and the Jews for his truth and faithfulness in the fulfilment of his promises. R. David Kimchi on this psalm observes, that "it consists of "two verses only, and that it belongs לימות המשיח, "*to the days of the Messiah*; and intimates, by the "composition of it in two verses only, that all people "shall be divided into two parts, or be on two sides, "Israel shall be in their law, and all the nations in the "seven precepts," *i. e.* of Noah.

Ver. 12. *And again Esaias saith*, &c.] In ch. xi. 10. *there shall be a root of Jesse*. This prophecy is applied to the Messiah by the Jews [y], who say, "that when "the King Messiah is revealed, there shall be gathered "to him all the nations of the world, so that that "Scripture shall be fulfilled which is written, *there* "*shall be a root of Jesse*, &c." This character, *the root of Jesse*, may be understood of Christ with respect to his divine nature, who, as God, was before Jesse, and the author of his being, as of all creatures; just in such sense as he is called *the root and offspring of David*, Rev. v. 5. and xxii. 16. the root of David, as he is God, and the offspring of David, as he is man; unless both are to be interpreted of his human nature, as the phrase here also may be, and denote his descent from Jesse as man; and so the Jewish writers interpret it as well as some Christian ones. This is R. David Kimchi's comment; "*and there shall be a root of Jesse*; the meaning "is, היוצא משרש ישי, *which goes out from the root of* "*Jesse*, according to ver. 1. for *Jesse* is the root. And "so the Targum of Jonathan, בר בריה דישי, *the son's* "*son of Jesse*; that is, David's son, the King Messiah, who sprung from Jesse's family, when that family was very low and mean, like to a tree cut down to its roots, and to a root in a dry ground, out of which sprung the man the branch, David's son and Lord. This character may be applied to Christ as Mediator, who as a root is unseen and unknown to carnal men, and mean, abject, and of no account in the eyes of the world; the root that not only bears Jesse, David, and other good men, but all the branches of God's elect, from whom they have their beings, both in a natural and spiritual sense;

[x] Echa Rabbati, fol. 50. 2. Midrash Tillim in Tzeror Hammor, fol. 47. 3.

[y] Zohar in Exod. fol. 71. 1. Vid. R. Aben Ezra & R. David Kimchi in loc.

which communicates life and nourishment to them: in whom their life is hid, and is safe when scarcely to be discerned in them; and from whom they have all their fruitfulness, and to whom is owing their perseverance in faith and holiness. *And he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles:* or, as the Syriac version, *and he that shall rise shall be a prince unto the Gentiles:* or, as the Arabic, *and he that shall rise out of it,* the root, *shall rule over the Gentiles.* In the Hebrew text in Isaiah, this is said of the root, and to be read thus, *which shall stand for an ensign of the people;* because mention is made of a root, the apostle expresses the standing of it by rising out of it, which signifies both the incarnation and exaltation of Christ; and because an ensign is a token of power and government, therefore he has rendered it to *reign,* agreeably enough to the sense; since upon Christ's exaltation, and setting up his ensign or standard, the Gospel, in the Gentile world, multitudes became voluntary subjects to him, and still do; over whom he rules by his grace and spirit, and will more largely and manifestly in the latter day, when the kingdoms of this world shall be his. In like manner R. Aben Ezra explains the words of the Messiah. "Says he, this may be understood, "for all the whole world shall be תחת רשותו, *under* "*his power,* or government." And so the Targum of Jonathan paraphrases them, *and kingdoms shall obey him:* so that the Jew can have no reason to complain of the apostle's version. *In him shall the Gentiles trust,* or *hope;* this in the Hebrew text is, *to him shall the Gentiles seek;* which can't be truly done without faith and hope; see Heb. xi. 6. for the hope and faith of enjoying what is sought for, put persons upon seeking: so that the apostle here gives us the true sense of the words, and most fully describes the affection of the Gentiles to Christ; who having some knowledge of him, seek unto him for life and salvation, prostrate themselves at his feet, venture upon him, commit themselves to him, and hope and trust in him. This part of the prophecy is by the Jews understood of the Messiah. "All the Gentiles) says R. David Kimchi "on the text) shall seek אל המשיח, *to the Messiah,* "and shall go after him to do what he commands; all "of them shall obey him." But why no mention made of the Israelites seeking to the Messiah? hear what they say, and which still confirms the sense of these words[z]. "The Israelites will have no need of "the doctrine of the King Messiah in future time, as "it is said, *to him shall the Gentiles seek,* and not the "Israelites." True enough! The apostle dwells on the proof of this point, it not being so easy of belief with the Jews, but makes it clear from the law, psalms, and prophets, which is the threefold division of the writings of the Old Testament; see Luke xxiv. 44.

Ver. 13. *Now the God of hope,* &c.] This character is taken from the latter part of the preceding citation, and is occasioned by it, *in him shall the Gentiles trust,* or *hope;* and is proper to God as he is the author and giver of this grace; for naturally men are without it; that which is a good hope is the gift of God, and through his grace, and is wrought in the heart in regeneration; for to this are the children of God begotten again. Moreover, God is the object of it; not wealth and riches, nor works of righteousness, but Jehovah, Father, Son, and Spirit, particularly Christ, is called the believer's hope; that is, the object of it, in whom the Gentiles hope and trust. Likewise, 'tis God that encourages to the exercise of it by the proclamations of his grace, and mercy, and plenteous redemption; by the discoveries of his love, and views of interest in him; and by bringing to mind the past experiences of his goodness: he preserves and maintains this grace useful and lively, firm and steadfast, at least in being, which sometimes seems almost perished and gone; he increases it, and causes his people to abound in the exercise of it, and continues it even unto death. The Ethiopic version reads, *the God of our promises,* which are what hope has respect unto, and builds upon: *fill you with all joy and peace in believing.* This is a petition to the God of hope. The apostle has recourse again to prayer, knowing that all his exhortations would be useless, without the grace of God accompanying them: and it is observable, that he prays for the same things mentioned in the above prophecies and promises, as joy, peace, and hope; for though God has promised ever so great things concerning his people, he will be inquired of by them to do them for them. One part of this petition is, that God would *fill them with all joy;* not with every kind of joy; not with worldly joy, or with the joy of hypocrites, who rejoice in sin, or in their own boastings, which is evil; but with spiritual joy, joy in God as a covenant God and father; in Christ, in his person, righteousness, and salvation; and in the Holy Ghost, the author of it, whose fruit it is; and in the Gospel, doctrines, blessings, and promises of it; and in the view and hope of the heavenly glory, amidst various afflictions and tribulations: and it designs an abundance of it, even a fulness thereof; though the petition implies, that as yet it is not full; it is frequently interrupted and broke in upon by the corruption of nature, and falls into sin, by the temptations of Satan, through divine desertions, and various trials and exercises; yet it supposes it may be increased, as by the renewed discoveries of the love of God, of interest in Christ, and through the gracious influences of the Spirit; and even made full and complete, though not in this, yet in the other world: another branch of the petition is, that God would fill with *peace,* with a sense of their peace with him, made by the blood of Christ; with a conscience-peace in their own breasts, arising from a view of their justification by the righteousness of Christ, and from the sprinklings of his blood upon them: and also with peace one among another, which was much wanting, and the apostle was very desirous of; and all this he asks, that it might come to them *in believing;* in the way of faith, and the exercise of that grace; for joy comes this way; faith and joy go together: where one is, the other is also; and as the one increases, so does the other; a believing view of interest in Christ is attended with joy unspeakable, and full of glory: and so peace comes in at the door of faith: there's no true peace till a soul is brought to believe in Christ; and that is promoted and increased by repeated acts of

[z] Bereshit Rabba, sect. 98. fol. 85. 3. & Midrash Tillim apud Galatin. de Arcan. Cathol. ver. l. 2. c. 9.

faith on Christ, or by a constant living by faith on him; see Isa. xxvi. 3. The end for which this petition is made is, *that ye may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost.* By *hope* is meant that grace which God is the author, object, and promoter of; and the Syriac version reads it, בסברה, *in his hope,* or *the hope of him:* of enjoying him, of meeting with him, and having communion with him in his house and ordinances; of having fresh supplies of grace from him, and of being favoured with all the blessings of grace laid up in an everlasting covenant, and at last with eternal life and glory: to *abound* herein, is to be in the free and frequent exercise of this grace, being encouraged by the grace of God, and an enlarged experience of it, and supported by faith, the substance of things hoped for: and this *through the power of the Holy Ghost;* not by might or power of man, but by that same divine power which first began the good work, and must fulfil it; which at first implanted the grace of hope, and must perform the work of that, as of faith. The same power is requisite to cause grace to abound, or saints to abound in the exercise of it, as was to the first production of it. The Vulgate Latin reads, *that ye may abound in hope, and in the power of the Holy Ghost;* but there is no copulative in the Greek text.

Ver. 14. *And I myself also am persuaded of you,* &c.] This is said by way of prevention to an objection that might be made to the apostle's prayers and exhortations by the Romans. What does the apostle mean by all this? what does he think of us, or take us to be? men that live in malice to one another, devoid of all humanity, and mutual respect? a parcel of fools and ignorant men, that know nothing of divine things? and though there may be some that are much to be blamed for their conduct and carriage to their fellow-Christians, what, are there none among us fit to give advice and admonition? To which the apostle replies, that he was far from entertaining such thoughts of them; that though he had not seen them in person, yet he had had such an account of their faith and practice, which were famous throughout the world, that he was thoroughly persuaded of better things of them, though he thus spake; and therefore, to mollify them, and abate their resentment, he adds, *my brethren;* testifying his affection to them, owning the spiritual relation they stood in to him, and declaring the great esteem he had for them, and the high opinion he had of them: saying, *that ye also are full of goodness;* not naturally, for there's no good thing in men by nature, but what they had was from the spirit of God, whose fruit is *goodness;* and by which may be meant, either the good gifts of the spirit of God, or rather his graces, even the good work of grace in general, and which is goodness itself; it comes from a good cause, the good spirit of God; is good in its own nature, not having the least mixture or tincture of evil in it; and good in its effects, since it makes and denominates a man a good man: now these saints might be said to be full of this, to denote the abundance, the superabundance of grace in this work: or particularly beneficence, humanity, and sympathy to fellow-Christians, may be intended. The Vulgate Latin version reads, *full of love;* but the copies and eastern versions read as we do. *Filled with all knowledge;* not with every sort of knowledge, with the knowledge of all languages, or of all the arts and sciences, of all things, natural and political; but with all spiritual knowledge relating to God, his nature and perfections, his mind and will; to Christ, and the work of redemption by him; to the Spirit, and the operations of his grace; to the Gospel, and the doctrines of it; to their duty to God, fellow-creatures, and fellow-Christians; in short, with all knowledge necessary to salvation, though as yet not perfect, and which will not be in this world, but in another: *able also to admonish one another;* as they must be, since they were both good and knowing; goodness and knowledge are necessary to admonition, and qualify persons for it: if a man is not a good man himself, he's not fit to admonish another; and if he has not knowledge, he'll not be able to do it as it should be; and without humanity and tenderness, he'll not perform it aright, and with success; but all this being in these persons, they were able and fit for it. Some copies read it, *able also to admonish others;* so the Syriac version renders; which makes the expression still stronger, and enlarges their praise and commendation.

Ver. 15. *Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you,* &c.] Or freely, in taking notice of their party contentions and ill usage of each other, and in reproving, advising, and exhorting them; and which he excuses by observing, that it was, *in some sort,* or *in part* only; meaning either that it was only in some part of the epistle he had took such a liberty, which is the sense of the Arabic version, which renders it, *in some parts of the oration;* or else that he had regard not to all of them, but to some only, to a part of the church who were most culpable; and did not design a charge against them all, and that what he said should be applied to the whole body; or rather that the boldness and freedom he had taken was but in some sort, it was but in part: this he says to mitigate it, and that it might not be thought to be so large as it might appear at first; it was but *a little more boldly,* that he wrote unto them, as the Syriac renders it; for this clause is not to be read in connection with the word *written,* as if the apostle had only wrote of the doctrines of grace in some sort, or in part, for he declared the whole counsel of God, and never kept back any thing profitable to the churches: he adds, *as putting you in mind;* which is also said to excuse his writing, and the manner of it; he did not take upon him to be their teacher and instructor, to inform them of things they knew nothing of; only to be their monitor, to put them in mind of and refresh their memories with what they had been well instructed and established in before; see 2 Pet. i. 12, 13. *because of the grace that is given to me of God;* meaning not the doctrine of *grace, concerning* which, as the Ethiopic version renders it, he was putting them in mind; nor the internal grace of the spirit, by which he was inclined and assisted to write unto them; but the grace of apostleship, or that high office, which, by the grace of God, and not because of any merits of his, he was called unto; this he mentions also to excuse the freedom of his writing; since what he did was in consequence of, pursuant and agreeably to, his office as an apostle; and therefore could not have answered it

to God, or them, if he had not done it; wherefore he hoped it would be took well by them.

Ver. 16. *That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ, &c.*] The office of apostleship is here amplified and enlarged on, and the ends shewn for which that grace was given to him, that he should be a minister; not in holy things about the temple, as the priests and Levites were; or a teacher of the law, some were fond of; but a minister of Christ, one that was made so by him, was qualified and sent forth to minister in his name to men; and who was a preacher of him; Jesus Christ, and him crucified, was the grand subject of his ministrations; he adds, *to the Gentiles*; for to them, though not to the exclusion of the Jews, was he appointed a minister by Christ, and sent by him to them; among them he chiefly ministered, and was particularly and eminently useful to them; and this is another reason why the Romans ought to bear with a little boldness and freedom in writing to them, since he was the apostle of the Gentiles: *ministering the Gospel of God*; not the service of the temple, nor the traditions of the elders, nor the law of Moses, nor the morality of the Heathens; but the Gospel, of which God is the author, whose grace is the subject, and whose glory is the end; and is good news from him to the chief of sinners; to the preaching of which the apostle was separated by him: *that the offering up of the Gentiles*; not the offering the Gentiles offered up, their prayers, praises, or good works, though these are acceptable to God through Christ; but the Gentiles themselves, by the offering up of whom is meant their conversion; which was the end of the apostle's ministering the Gospel among them, and in which he was the happy instrument. The allusion is to the priests slaying and offering up sacrifices under the law. The apostle was a priest in a figurative and improper sense; the sacrifices he offered up were not slain beasts, but men, the Gentiles, cut to the heart by the sword of the spirit, the ministry of the Gospel; whose inside being laid open to them, and they brought to a sense of their lost condition, and need of Christ, were, through the power of divine grace attending the word, made willing to offer, or give up themselves to the Lord, to be saved by him, and him only: this the apostle, as an instrument, was concerned in; and all his view was, that it *might be acceptable*; that is, to God, as nothing is more so to him than a broken and a contrite heart, or souls brought to a sense of themselves, and to believe in Christ, and submit to his righteousness; and then both ministers and converts are unto God, a sweet savour of Christ: *being sanctified by the Holy Ghost*; this is said in allusion to the washing of the sacrifices under the law; and intimates, that the Gentiles, though unclean by nature and practice, yet being sanctified by the spirit of God, whose proper work it is to sanctify, become an acceptable, being an holy sacrifice to an holy God.

Ver. 17. *I have therefore whereof I may glory, &c.*] Not in himself, for he that taught others not to glory in men, would not glory in himself; not in his carnal descent and fleshly privileges; nor in his knowledge of, and compliance with, the ceremonies of the law; nor in his legal, moral, and civil righteousness before God; nor in his gifts and attainments, as merited and procured by himself; nor in his labours in the ministry, and the success of it, as of himself; but *through Jesus Christ*; or *in Jesus Christ*, as read the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions; in what Christ was unto him, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption; he could boast of what he had from him, and through him, even of all spiritual blessings in him; and of a large measure of grace he had received from him; and of great and eminent gifts Christ had bestowed on him; he gloried in his cross, and boasted of a crucified Jesus, whom others despised; and whom he made the subject of his ministry, and took delight in preaching; and freely owned that all he did was through Christ strengthening him; and that all his success in his work was owing to him, and of this he had to glory; and which was *in those things which pertain to God*; not *with God*, as the Syriac reads it; for though in some cases it may be lawful to glory before men, yet not before God, or in his presence: nor is it any thing a man may glory in, not in his own things, but in the things of God; in things relating to the Gospel of God, to the pure preaching of it, to the furtherance and spread of it, and the recommending of it to others; to the worship and ordinances of God, and a spiritual attendance on them; to the grace of God, and the magnifying of that in the business of salvation; and to the glory of God, which ought to be the chief end of all actions, natural, moral, and religious, and whether private or public. The apostle has chiefly reference to his ministerial function, and the things of God relating to that, in which he was employed; see Heb. v. 1.

Ver. 18. *For I will not dare to speak of any of those things, &c.*] He suggests that the false teachers did speak of things which were not done by them at all, and much less were what Christ had done by them; and signifies that he was a conscientious man, and could speak nothing but what was truth; his conscience would not suffer him, nor could he allow himself to make mention of any thing, that was not done by him, as if it was; nor of any thing that was done by himself, nor of any thing that was done, as if it was done by himself, but as it was wrought by Christ; nor had he any need to speak of any other things which he had wrought himself, as he could not of what he had not wrought at all; or, as he says, *which Christ hath not wrought by me*: signifying that what he had wrought, and which he could with good conscience speak of to the honour of Christ, and the glory of his grace, were not wrought by himself, but what Christ wrought by him; he was only the instrument, Christ was the efficient cause: as a Christian, it was not he that lived, but Christ lived in him; as a minister, it was not he that spoke, but Christ spoke in him; nor was it he that laboured, but the grace of Christ that was with him; much less was it he that converted souls, but Christ did it by him: *to make the Gentiles obedient*: the nations of the world, who had been brought up in blindness and ignorance of God, in rebellion and disobedience to him. The Gospel was sent among them, and was blessed unto them, to make them, of disobedient, obedient ones; not to men, but to God; not to magistrates and ministers, though they were taught to be so to both, but to Christ; to him as

a priest, by being made willing to be saved by him, and him only, renouncing their own works, and disclaiming all other ways of salvation; and to submit to his righteousness for their justification before God, and acceptance with him; and to deal with his precious blood for pardon and cleansing; to rely on his sacrifice for the atonement of their sins, and to make use of him as the new and living way to the father, as their one and only mediator, advocate, and intercessor; and to him as a prophet, to the faith of the Gospel, and the doctrines of it; not barely by hearing it, and notionally assenting to it, but by embracing it heartily, and professing it publicly and sincerely; and to him as a King, by owning him as such, and as theirs; and by subjecting to his ordinances, and obeying his commands in faith and fear, and from love to him: the means whereby these persons were brought to the obedience of Christ, and of faith, are *by word and deed*; or *deeds*, as the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions read: by the former is meant, the word of the Gospel and the preaching of it, being sent unto them, and coming with power, and not as the word of man, but as the word of God; and by the latter, either the laboriousness of the apostle, the pains he took, the hardships he endured, in ministering the Gospel to them; or his agreeable life and conversation, which were a means of recommending the word, and of engaging an attention to it; or rather the miraculous works and mighty deeds which were wrought by the apostle, in confirmation of the doctrine he preached, as it seems to be explained in the following verse.

Ver. 19. *Through mighty signs and wonders*, &c.] Or *in*, or *through the power of signs and wonders*, as the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions render the words. These carrying along with them evidence and conviction of the truth of what was delivered, wrought wonderfully and powerfully on the minds of the Gentiles to embrace the Gospel, and submit to the ordinances of it; though all would have been insufficient, had it not been for what follows, *by the power of the spirit of God*: the Alexandrian copy and one of Stephens's read, *by the power of the Holy Spirit*, and so does the Vulgate Latin version; meaning, either that the mighty signs and wonders in healing the sick, giving sight to the blind, raising the dead, *&c.* were performed not by the efficacy and working of Satan, as the signs and lying wonders of antichristian men, but by the spirit of God, by whom Christ and all his apostles wrought the miracles they did; or that the ministration of the word in which the apostle laboured, was by the power of the spirit of God; it was he that imparted all spiritual gifts to him, qualifying him for this service; it was he that assisted him in it, and enabled him to go through it; it was in demonstration of the spirit and of power that he performed it; and that not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth: or else that the obedience of the Gentiles to the faith of Christ, through the preaching of the Gospel, and the wonderful works that attended it as means, were purely owing to the power of the spirit of God, as the efficient cause; it was not by might, or power of the preacher; nor merely by the power of signs and wonders; but by the powerful and efficacious grace of the spirit of God, who took away the stony, stubborn, and disobedient heart, and gave them an heart of flesh, a tender, flexible, and obedient one; and caused them to walk in and observe the commandments and ordinances of the Lord: *so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the Gospel of Christ*; that which Christ, as God, is the author of; as man, was a preacher and minister of; and, as Mediator, is the subject-matter of: this the apostle *preached fully* and completely, every part and branch of it, kept back nothing of it, but faithfully declared the whole; and so fulfilled it, as the word may be rendered, and his ministry; or he filled the Gospel, the net of the Gospel, which he spread in every place; or rather he diffused the knowledge of it everywhere; he filled all places with it wherever he came, even *from Jerusalem round about unto Illyricum*: not that he began to preach at Jerusalem, but at Damascus; from whence he went to Arabia, and after that to Jerusalem; but inasmuch as he was of Jerusalem, and had preached there, from whence the Gospel originally came, and this was the boundary of his ministry one way, he makes mention of it; as Illyricum was the boundary of it another way, which was on the extreme part of Macedonia: it is now called Sclavonia, and is an European nation; part of it is Dalmatia, mentioned 2 Tim. iv. 10. Apollonia was in it, according to Mela[z], where the apostle is said to pass through, Acts xvii. 1. it has on the south the gulf of Venice, on the north the Danube, on the west Germany, and on the east Thracia and Macedonia: according to Ptolomy[a], Illyris, or Illyricum, was bounded on the north with upper and lower Pannonia, now called Hungary and Austria; on the east with upper Mysia, now Servia; and on the south with part of Macedonia; it lies overagainst Italy, the Adriatic sea being between them; its length, from the river Drinus to Arsa, is reckoned about 480 miles, and its breadth, from the mountains of Croatia to the sea, is computed to be about 120; it is by some divided into Slavonia, Dalmatia, and Albania; Slavonia is the western part, Albania the eastern, and Dalmatia between them; according to others, it includes Slavonia, Croatia, Bosnia, and Dalmatia; and had its name of Illyricum, from Illyrius, the son of Cadmus; or as others, from Illyrius, the son of Celta: here the Gospel was preached by the Apostle Paul, and no doubt with success; and churches were planted here, and which remained for several ages: in the *second* century there was a church in Illyricum, and Eleutherius was bishop, who is said to be a famous teacher; he was born at Rome, and his mother Anthia is reported to be converted by the Apostle Paul; in the same age lived one Quirinus, first a tribune, and then a bishop of Illyricum, who became a martyr under Trajan: in the *third* century there were churches in Illyricum, though devastations were made in it by the Goths: in the *fourth* century, frequent mention is made of the churches in Illyricum: and the bishops convened at Rome under Damascus

[z] De orbis situ, l. 2. c. 10.

[a] Geograph. l. 2. c. 17.

in the times of Constantius wrote with great respect to the brethren in Illyricum; in Siscia, a city in this country, Quirinus a bishop suffered martyrdom; here a synod met against the Arians, and yet many in this country were infected with that heresy, by Valens and Ursatius; in this age Hilary, of Poictiers in France, spread the Gospel in this country; and he and Eusebius of Vercelli, in Piedmont, visited the churches, and corrected what was amiss: in the *fifth* century there was a church in Illyricum, and in Salo, a city of Dalmatia, Glycerius was bishop; in the *sixth* century there were also churches here, as appears from the letter of Symmachus to the bishops of them, and to their people; and in this age also Gregory wrote to all the bishops in Illyricum, to receive such bishops as were banished: in the *eighth* century, the bishops of Illyricum were in the Nycene synod, and Boniface gathered a church in Slavonia[a]; thus far Christianity may be traced in this country: hither the apostle went, not in a direct line, but round about, and took many countries, cities, and towns in his way, as the history of his journeys and travels in the Acts of the Apostles shews, and as he here suggests.

Ver. 20. *Yea, so have I strived to preach the Gospel, &c.*] The sense is, not barely that he strove to preach the Gospel and not the law, the pure Gospel, and not a mixed one; nor only that he endeavoured to preach it fully, and leave out nothing; but that he had an holy ambition to preach it, *not where Christ was named*: as in Judea, where he had been for many ages spoken of and expected, and where he had lately appeared, lived, suffered, and died, and where his Gospel had been preached by all the apostles; as also in such parts of the Gentile world, where others of the apostles had been, and had made mention of his name, and published the glad tidings of salvation by him; but he chose rather to go to such Heathen nations, as were wholly without any knowledge of him; who had only the dim light of nature to guide them; had had no promises nor prophecies of the Messiah, nor so much as any hints, at least very distant ones, concerning him; and where as yet the sound of the Gospel had not reached: *lest I should build on another man's foundation*: meaning not the law of Moses, nor the doctrines of the false teachers, but the foundation of the true apostles, and which was no other than the foundation Christ, he himself laid; but he chose not to go where they had laid the foundation by preaching Christ and his Gospel, that he might not take another man's crown, or boast in another man's line, or of other men's labours; but rather to go where others had never been, that he might first lay the foundation himself, by preaching Christ, and him crucified, and so the more act up to his character as an apostle, and as the apostle to the Gentiles.

Ver. 21. *But as it is written, &c.*] In Isa. lii. 15. *to whom he was not spoken of, they shall see, and they that have not heard shall understand*: for the Messiah was not spoken of to the Gentiles; they were strangers to the covenants of promise; the oracles of God were committed to the Jews; God gave his word and statutes to them, and not to any other nation: and yet, according to this prophecy, the Gentiles were to see him whom they had no account of; not in the flesh with their bodily eyes, in which sense only, or at least chiefly, the Jews saw him; but with the eyes of their understanding, by faith, as exhibited and evidently set forth before them as crucified, in the Gospel and the ordinances of it: and though they had heard nothing of him, having for many hundreds of years been left in ignorance, and suffered to walk in their own ways, until the apostles were sent among them; whose sound went into all the earth, and their words to the end of the world; yet when this would be the case, according to these words, they would understand the mind and will of God, the mysteries of his grace, the nature of the person and offices of Christ, the design of his coming into the world, and the way of salvation by him; all which was greatly brought about and accomplished, in the ministry of the Apostle Paul among them. The passage is very pertinently cited and applied by the apostle. The whole paragraph is to be understood of the Messiah, from whence it is taken, as it is owned, and accordingly interpreted by many Jewish writers, both ancient[b] and modern[c]; and these words particularly respect the kings and nations of the world, who are represented as struck with silence and wonder, when, upon the preaching and hearing of the Messiah, they should see him by faith, and spiritually understand what is declared concerning him. The difference between the apostle's version of these words, which is the same with the Septuagint, and the text in Isaiah, is very inconsiderable. The first clause of the Hebrew text may be literally rendered thus, *for him, who was not spoken of to them, they shall see*; and the apostle's Greek in this manner, *to whom it was not spoken of concerning him, they shall see*; the sense is the same, and the person intended Christ: the latter clause, which we from the Hebrew text render, *and that which they had not heard, shall they consider*; and here, *they that have not heard, shall understand*, has nothing material in it, in which they differ; for in the former part of it both design the Messiah, and the things concerning him, the Gentiles had not heard of; and the latter is rendered and explained by the Targum, and by R. Sol Jarchi, as by the apostle, אסתכלו, *they shall understand*; and which fitly expresses the sense of the Hebrew word used by the prophet.

Ver. 22. *For which cause also, &c.*] By reason of being employed for so many years, in preaching the Gospel from Jerusalem, round about to Illyricum; taking so large a compass to minister in, and striving to introduce, propagate, and spread the Gospel, where Christ was never named before: *I have been much hindered from coming to you*: or he had been often, and by many ways, and upon many accounts, hindered from coming to them; the frequent calls to different and distant places, and the great work of preaching the Gospel in those dark parts of the world, and settling churches there, which was upon his hands, prevented his giving

[a] Magdeburg. Eccl. Hist. cent. 2. c. 2. p. 4. c. 10. p. 158. cent. 3. c. 2. p. 4. 14. cent. 4. c. 4. p. 6. c. 3. p. 22. c. 5. p. 181, 182. c. 7. p. 511. cent. 5. c. 2. p. 7. cent. 6. c. 2. p. 7. c. 2. p. 23. cent. 8. c. 2. p. 7.

[b] Targum in Isa. lii. 13. Pesikta in Kettoreth hassammim in Num. fol. 27. 2. Tanchuma apud Huls. Jud. Theolog. p. 321.

[c] Baal Hattarim in Lev. 16. 14. R. Moses Alshech in Isa. lii. 13. Vid. R. Aben Ezra in ib.

them a visit at Rome, which he much and often desired: as in the preceding verses the apostle excuses his freedom of writing to this church, so here his long delay of coming to them, assigning the reason of it.

Ver. 23. *But now having no more place in these parts,* &c.] Not because persecution was too hot for him, and therefore could not stay any longer, for this was what he expected everywhere; nor did it discourage him in his work, for he took pleasure in enduring it for the sake of Christ and his Gospel; but because he had so fully preached the Gospel from Jerusalem, in his circuit to Illyricum, had filled every town and city with it, had planted churches in every place, and ordained elders over them, to whom the care and charge of them were committed; that there were no more places for him to preach in, but either where he himself had been already, or some other of the apostles; not but that he could have staid with usefulness to these new-formed churches, for the edifying and confirming of them, for the furtherance of the joy of faith in them, and for the defence of the Gospel and its ordinances among them; but his proper work as an apostle being to preach the Gospel to all nations, and where Christ was not named, and to plant churches; and there being no more room in these climates, or regions, for such service, he begins to think of some other places, particularly Spain, where as yet very probably the Gospel was not preached: however, he found himself at leisure to visit other places, and hereby gives the church at Rome some hopes of seeing him from this consideration, as well as from what follows: *and having a great desire these many years to come unto you;* he had not only a desire, but a very vehement desire to come to them; he longed to see them, as he elsewhere says; so that since now he had leisure, they might hope it would not be long ere they did see him; especially as the thing had been upon his mind and thoughts for many years past; which shews that the Gospel had been preached very early at Rome, that many had been converted by it, and a church had been formed there some years ago, and was known to the apostle; on which account, having heard much of their faith and obedience, he had a longing desire of a great while to see them.

Ver. 24. *Whensoever I take my journey into Spain,* &c.] Which he had now meditated and resolved upon, being a place, as before observed, where it is very likely the Gospel as yet had not been preached, which made him desirous of going thither; but whether he ever went thither, or no, is not certain; some think he never performed the intended journey; others affirm he did, some time between his two appearances before Nero. Sepharad, in Obad. ver. 20. is taken by the Jewish writers for this country; and is by the Targum, Jarchi, and Aben Ezra on that place, called אספמיא, *Aspamia:* a name not greatly different from Hispania, by which it usually goes among the Greeks and Latins; but Kimchi calls it ספניא, *Spania,* the very word used in this place, and by us rendered *Spain,* as it is usually called: it was called *Span* in the language of the Celtæ, who first inhabited it, which signifies a companion; it was formerly called Iberia, from the river Iberus; afterwards Hesperia, from Hesperus, the brother of Atlas; and then Hispalia, from the city Hispalis, or Sevil; and from thence corruptly Hispania; there are some that derive it from σπανια, from the roughness of some places in it, barren, uncultivated, and uninhabited: it has on the east the Pyrenean mountains, by which it is divided from France, on the west the Atlantic ocean, on the north the Cantabrian, and on the south the Herculean sea, and the streights of Gades: now as the apostle intended a journey into this country, he mentions it, in order to raise their expectations of seeing him; since in his way thither, he would have a fair opportunity of coming to them; yea, he assures them, that whenever he went thither, he would come: *I will come to you;* it was his real intention, a settled resolution and determination in his mind so to do; but whereas every thing of this kind depends not upon the will of man, but upon the will and providence of God, and so many unforeseen things fall out which prevent the fulfilling of human purposes, therefore he adds, *for I trust,* or *hope to see you in my journey;* he could not be certain that he should see them, but he hoped he should, for nothing was more desirable to him; his wish was not to see their emperor, their senate, or their famous city, but them, the church of Christ there; and a beautiful and delightful sight it is, to see a church of Christ in Gospel order, walking together in the faith and fellowship, and ordinances of it, and in peace one with another: *and to be brought on my way thitherward by you;* he not only hoped to see them, but that he should have the company of some of them along with him, in his way to Spain; from whose conversation he might expect much spiritual pleasure and refreshment; and by whom he might be directed in his way, as well as supplied with all necessaries for his journey; in which sense the phrase of bringing on in the way, is sometimes used; see Titus iii. 13. 3 John 6. though before he should depart from them, he hoped to have abundance of satisfaction in his conversation with them together as a church: *if first I be somewhat,* or in part, *filled with your company;* or with you, meaning that before he should set forward from them to Spain, that he should be greatly delighted with beholding their order, and the steadfastness of their faith, hearing their sweet experiences, and observing their holy life and conversation, and their peace and concord among themselves: not that he expected entire satisfaction, a satiety of pleasure, fulness of joy, which are only to be had in the presence of God, and communion with angels and glorified saints; though perhaps he might expect more than he had, for at his first answer before Nero, all these Romans forsook him and fled; saints are often disappointed in their raised expectations of what they shall enjoy in each other's company.

Ver. 25. *But now I go unto Jerusalem,* &c.] Whither he was bound in spirit, not knowing what should befall him there, from which he could not be dissuaded by his friends, and thither he did go: *to minister unto the saints;* not to preach the Gospel, though doubtless he did that when he was there; but to distribute among the poor saints what had been raised for them by the Greek churches; who had entreated him to take upon him this service, even the fellowship of ministering to the saints; and though this might seem below his office

as an apostle, and as what more became an inferior officer, a deacon in a church; yet the apostle's heart was so much in it, and he was so bent upon it, and so diligent to execute it, that he postponed his journey to Spain and visit to Rome for the sake of it, and assigns this as a reason why he could not come at present.

Ver. 26. *For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia*, &c.] That is, the churches of Macedonia, particularly Philippi and Thessalonica; and the churches of Achaia, especially the church at Corinth, which was the *metropolis* of Achaia: *to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem*; of which contribution, of their great forwardness, readiness, and liberality, a large account is given, in the viiith and ixth chapters of the second epistle to the Corinthians; from whence Origen and others have rightly concluded, that this epistle to the Romans was wrote after that; since in that the apostle exhorts and encourages them, by the example of the Macedonian churches, to finish the collection they had begun; which collection is here called a contribution, or *communion*, as the word signifies; it being one part of the communion of churches and of saints, to relieve their poor, by communicating to them, and to assist each other therein; and in which they have not only fellowship with one another, but with Christ the head; who takes what is done to the least of his brethren as done to himself: the persons for whom the collection was made, are *the poor saints*, or *the poor of the saints*: for not all the saints, but the poor among them, were the objects of this generosity: they were *saints* such as are sanctified by God the father in eternal election, and by the blood of Christ in redemption, and by the spirit of Christ in effectual vocation, to these this goodness extended; for though good is to be done to all men, yet more especially to the household of faith: they were *poor*, which is the lot of many who are saints, whom God has chosen, to whom the Gospel is preached, and who are called by grace: these came to be so, either through the great dearth which was throughout the world in the times of Claudius Cæsar, when the brethren at Jerusalem particularly suffered, and were relieved by the disciples at Antioch; but this collection was made some years after that, and therefore rather they became so, through the persecutions of their countrymen; by whom they suffered joyfully the spoiling of their goods, knowing that they had a better and more enduring substance in heaven; or else through their having sold all their possessions, and thrown their money into one common stock and fund, for mutual subsistence, which was now exhausted: these poor saints lived at Jerusalem, which was at a great distance from Macedonia and Achaia; but though they were strangers, and unknown by face to them, and had only heard of them, and their distress; yet this was no objection to their cheerful contribution; they considered them as members of the same body, as belonging to the same family, and as standing in the same spiritual relation to God and Christ with themselves; and upon this foot they acted; and what they did is worthy the imitation of all the churches and people of God.

Ver. 27. *It hath pleased them* verily, &c.] This is repeated from the former verse, and is designed to point out the spring of this contribution, and the manner in which it was performed: it arose from themselves; it was the pure effect of their good will and pleasure; the first motion was from among themselves; it was their own thought, mind, and will; they were willing of themselves unto it, and begun it of themselves, unasked, and not moved unto it by any other: it was not done by constraint or necessity, but was entirely free; they did not make it for ostentation-sake, or to gain the applause of men, but from a principle of love to the poor saints; and which shewed itself to be sincere, hearty, and genuine, by deeds, and not bare words: they performed this service with great alacrity and cheerfulness; they gave not sparingly, but largely: it was not a matter of covetousness, but of bounty; and they did it not grudgingly, but cheerfully; they took delight and pleasure in it; their hearts and souls were in it, and yet notwithstanding did but what they ought to do. *And their debtors they are*; for being debtors to God for their temporal and spiritual mercies; and to Christ for what he has done for them in redemption, and for what he is to them; and to the Spirit for the influences and operations of his grace upon them, they are debtors to the saints; they are bound to love them; they owe the debt of love to them, as they are in the spiritual relation of the children of God, members of Christ, and brethren one of another; and their paying of this debt to them is, in some sense, reckoned a paying it to the divine persons. Moreover, it was not merely a debt of love which these Gentiles owed, and in this way paid to the believing Jews; but it was a debt of justice and equity; they had received what was of valuable consideration from them, and by their means: Christ himself was of the Jews; hence salvation is said to be of them, John iv. 22. The writings of the Old Testament were committed to them, and faithfully preserved by them, and from them transmitted to the Gentiles; the apostles were all Jews, under whose ministry they were enlightened, converted, and brought to the knowledge of Christ, and salvation by him; the Gospel of the grace of God came out from among them; it was first preached in Judea, and at Jerusalem; and from thence was carried and spread in the Gentile world; yea, it looks very likely, and is not at all unreasonable to suppose, that the charge of carrying and spreading the Gospel among the Gentiles was at first defrayed by the believing Jews, and out of that common stock and fund which was at Jerusalem; for it was not proper that the apostles, at their first setting out, should take any thing of the Gentiles, lest they should be thought to be mercenary persons, who only sought their own worldly advantage: hence the apostle argues from the greater to the lesser, *for if the Gentiles have been partakers of their spiritual things*: the Gospel, and the doctrines of it, which are spiritual things; contain and make known spiritual blessings; impart spiritual gifts: in which the spirit of God is greatly concerned, he is the author of them; he leads men into them; qualifies them to preach them unto others; blesses and succeeds them to the conversion; comfort, and edification of souls; and by means of which he himself is received as a spirit of illumination, sanctification, and faith: and which doctrines also relate to the spiritual and eternal welfare of the souls and spirits of men:

hereby they are enlightened, quickened, comforted, and nourished up unto eternal life: wherefore, since this is the case, and these the favours the Gentiles enjoyed through the Jews, *their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things*: in outward and temporal things; in things pertaining to the flesh, or outward man, for the clothing and nourishment of the body. This he said to stir up the Romans, who were Gentiles also, and under the same obligations to make a contribution for them likewise.

Ver. 28. *When therefore I have performed this*, &c.] Meaning, when he had dispatched that business, and finished that affair which the Macedonian and Achaian churches had entreated him to engage in, and which he had undertook; namely, to take their collection, and carry it to Jerusalem, and distribute it among the poor saints there; and which he expresses by another phrase, *and have sealed to them this fruit*. The liberality of the Gentile churches is called *fruit*, as it may be on many accounts; as with respect to the apostle, it was the fruit of his ministry and laborious preaching of the Gospel among them; he had been sowing the seed of the word, and planting churches in these parts; and among other fruits brought forth hereby, as the conversion of sinners, and edification of saints, the exercise of grace, and performance of good works, this of liberality to the poor saints was one: with respect to the persons, the objects of this bounty, it was the fruit of their spiritual things, which the Gentiles, by their means, had been partakers of; and would be as fruit, useful and profitable to them, to relieve their wants, supply them with necessaries, and make their lives more comfortable: and also with respect to the contributors, it was the fruit of the spirit of God, and his grace in them; it was the fruit of faith, which works by love; and it was the fruit of their love to Christ, and to his saints; and was profitable to them in things temporal, spiritual, and eternal; promises of each being made and performed to such that sow liberally and bountifully. Now the ministration of this to the poor saints at Jerusalem, and on the behalf of the Grecian churches, the apostle calls a *sealing* it to them; and it is thought to be an allusion to the delivery of money sealed up, that it may not be lost, nor made use of for any other purpose than that for which it was designed: whether the apostle carried this collection sealed or no, it matters not; his sense is, that he should deliver it whole and safe unto them, and in such manner as to leave no suspicion that he had converted any part of it to his own use; though the word here used seems to answer to the Hebrew חתם, which, with the Jews, frequently signifies to conclude, *finish*, and make an end of any thing, as well as to *seal*; the sealing up of letters being the last and finishing part of them. Innumerable instances might be given; take the following one as a proof[d]: "we find in the former prophets, "שחתמו דבריהן, *that they sealed*, or ended their words "with words of praise, or with words of consolation. "Says R. Eliezer, except Jeremiah, שחתם, *who sealed*, "or finished with words of reproof." So the word is used in Dan. ix. 24. and then the apostle's plain meaning is, when I have made an end of this affair, have finished this business of ministering and distributing to the poor saints at Jerusalem, *I will come by you into Spain*. The Ethiopic version reads it, *Lusitania*, designing, no doubt, Lusitania, which was formerly a part of Spain, now called Portugal. Whether the apostle ever was there, is not certain, nor very probable; since when he came to Jerusalem he was apprehended, and after some time sent a prisoner to Rome, where he suffered; however, it was his intention to go to Spain, and to take Rome in his way thither.

Ver. 29. *And I am sure when I come to you*, &c.] He intended to go to Spain; he was not sure he should reach thither; but he was positive in it he should come to Rome. It had been much and long upon his mind; and under an impress of the spirit of God upon him, he had signified some time before this, that after he had been at Jerusalem, he *must see Rome also*, Acts xix. 21. and it was afterwards more expressly told him by the Lord, that as he had testified of him at Jerusalem, he should bear witness at Rome also, Acts xxiii. 11. and therefore he was fully assured he should come to Rome, and was as confident of the manner of his coming thither. *I shall come in*, or *with the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ*: with the Gospel, the good news of salvation by Christ; and which must make him a welcome person to every sensible soul wherever he came; to this he was chosen, separated, and called; for this he was abundantly qualified; this was committed to his trust, and which he carried with him wherever he went: and he was not ashamed of it, and was ready to preach it even at Rome also. With *the Gospel of Christ*; not his own, or another's, or any man's, but Christ's; which he had by the revelation of Christ; of which Christ is the sum and substance, and which Christ himself preached; *with the blessing of the Gospel of Christ*. Some by *blessing* understand a liberal contribution, which he trusted he should make at Rome, for the poor saints at Jerusalem; believing that their hearts would be opened, under the preaching of the Gospel, to give freely to them, and that this would be a blessing that would attend it: but rather he means, either the blessed gifts he had, qualifying him for preaching the Gospel; with which he should come and deliver it among them, and which would attend it with success; such as boldness of spirit, freedom of speech, enlarged knowledge, mighty signs and wonders, and the demonstration of the spirit, and of power: or the blessed effects it would have on them, in establishing them in the present truths; in further enlightening and instructing their minds; in edifying, quickening, and comforting them; and in nourishing up with the words of faith and sound doctrine, unto eternal life; or the blessings of grace exhibited and set forth in the Gospel; such as justification and forgiveness of sins, peace and reconciliation, salvation and eternal life. Nay, he believed he should come in, or with the *fulness* of all this; meaning, either that he believed he should find them full of the Gospel, and the fruits of it; or rather that he should come full fraught with it, and fully preach it to them, and keep back no

[d] T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 8. 4.

thing that would be profitable. There is a fulness in the Gospel; it is full of the deep things of God, which the spirit searches and reveals; it is full of the doctrines of grace and truth, which Christ himself is said to be full of: it is full of exceeding great and precious promises transcribed from Christ, and out of the covenant of grace; and it is full of a variety of food, of milk for babes, and meat for strong persons. The Alexandrian copy, and some others, read only, *with the fulness of the blessing of Christ;* and so the Ethiopic version.

Ver. 30. *Now I beseech you, brethren,* &c.] Having declared his intention of coming to them, and his confidence of it, he entreats an interest in their prayers; and which he urges from the consideration of their mutual relation as *brethren;* and therefore should love one another, and shew it, among other things, by praying for each other to their common parent, in whom they have a joint interest, saying, as directed by Christ, *our father which art in heaven;* thereby signifying, that they prayed not for themselves only, but for all the brethren, all the children of God: and this the apostle further urges, *for Christ's sake;* whose servant he was, and in whose cause he was engaged, whose Gospel he preached, and whose glory he sought; and therefore, if they had any regard for Christ, and the good of his interest, he beseeches them that they would pray for the continuance of his life and usefulness; since for him to live was for the good of the churches of Christ, though for him to die would be his own personal gain: and which he also stirs them up to, *for the love of the spirit;* meaning either the love of the father, and of the son, which was shed abroad in their hearts by the spirit, which he had directed them into, and they had a comfortable sensation of; or that love to God, to Christ, and one another, which the spirit of God had wrought in them in regeneration; or that love with which the spirit of God equally loved them, as the father, and the son; and which he had shewn in their conversion and sanctification, in applying all grace unto them, and indwelling in them as the spirit of adoption, and as the earnest and pledge of the heavenly inheritance. *That ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me.* The apostle prayed for himself, as he had been wont to do ever since he was a converted man; but knowing well the force of united social prayer, he desires the assistance of others. He represents prayer as an agony, an holy conflict, and striving with God, a wrestling with him, as Jacob did, who held him, and would not let him go without the blessing, and had power with him, and prevailed. The phrase denotes the fervency of prayer, the strength, laboriousness, and energy of it; see Col. iv. 12. and also intimates, that the apostle foresaw he should have a combat with many enemies where he was going, and should be in great danger by them; and therefore desires they would join him in the use of their spiritual armour, and in that particular part of it, prayer, which has been often used to good purpose against the enemies of the Gospel: he does not desire these Romans to beg the assistance of their senate or emperor; but to pray to God for him, and join with him in their prayers to him, who is a God hearing prayer, and able to save. The petitions he would have them put up to him, are as follow:

Ver. 31. *That I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judea,* &c.] By whom some think are meant such, who, though they believed in Jesus as the Messiah, yet were violently set against the apostle for preaching down the ceremonial law; and from whom he foresaw he should be in much danger when he came to Jerusalem, and therefore desires the church at Rome to pray for his deliverance from them; though rather such who did not believe in Jesus Christ at all are designed; and who were enemies to the Gospel, and to all Gospel ministers, but especially to the Apostle Paul, for preaching among the Gentiles, and such doctrines as he did, which struck at their peculiar notions; and, as he feared, he should be set upon by them, and his life be in great danger, so it was; see Acts xxi. 27—31. though he was not disheartened and intimidated, and did not shun going up to Jerusalem, though entreated not to go; yet he thought proper to engage the churches of Christ in prayer for him, that he might be delivered out of the hands of such wicked and unreasonable men, who being destitute of faith in Christ, were filled with enmity against his ministers; see 2 Thess. iii. 1, 2. and *that my service which I have for Jerusalem, may be accepted of the saints;* that is, that the collection which was made by the Gentile churches for the poor saints at Jerusalem, the ministration of which unto them he had took upon him, might be cheerfully and gratefully received by them. One would think there were no fear of this, nor any need to pray for it; for if they were poor, and in necessitous circumstances, as they were, they would be glad of relief, and thankfully accept it: but the case was this, and the difficulties attending this service were, that this collection came from the Gentiles, to whom the Jews had an aversion, and was brought to them by one that they had entertained an ill opinion of, being informed that he had taught the Gentiles to forsake Moses, not to circumcise their children, or walk after the customs: wherefore he did not know whether, though in necessity, any thing coming for their relief from such a quarter, and through his hands, would be received with any pleasure by them: besides, his desire was that it might be received as a token of the true and sincere love the Gentiles bore to them; and be a means of reconciling the believing Jews to them, to own them as sister churches of the same faith and order with themselves.

Ver. 32. *That I may come unto you with joy,* &c.] The end the apostle had, in desiring them to request the above things at the throne of grace for him, was, that he might come to them, which unless he was delivered from the unbelieving Jews, could not be; and therefore since they had an interest in this matter, he might hope they would be the more importunate in their supplications for him, that he might escape their hands; and seeing also, should the saints there use him in an ungrateful manner, and slight the kindness of the Gentile churches, and his service should not have the desired effect, his coming to them would be with sorrow: wherefore he puts them upon praying for success in this affair, that so when he came among them he should have no uneasiness upon his mind, or any thing

of this kind to distress him, and interrupt that pleasure and delight he promised himself in their company and conversation: he adds, *by the will of God*; resigning himself, and submitting all things to the sovereign will of God, and the wise disposals of his providence: he knew his deliverance from his enemies must be by, and the success of his services owing to, and his coming to Rome entirely according to, the will of God, and as he should think fit and proper; so he acted himself, and so he taught these believers to have their regard to, and sit down contented with the will of God in all things: to which he subjoins, *and may with you be refreshed*: with the presence of God among them, with the Gospel in the fulness and blessing of it with which he should come, and with the mutual faith and comfortable experience of him and them, which they should communicate to each other; than all which nothing is more reviving, and refreshing to the spirits of God's people.

Ver. 33. *Now the God of peace be with you all, Amen.*] As God is in this chapter before styled the God of patience, and the God of hope, because of his concern in these graces; so he is here styled *the God of peace*, because of his concern in that peace which is made between him and his people, by the blood of Christ. This peace was first upon his thoughts, which are therefore called thoughts of peace; a council of peace was held between him and his son upon this head; the scheme of reconciliation was drawn by him in it; he entered into a covenant of peace with Christ, which takes its name from this momentous article of it; he appointed Christ to be the peacemaker, and laid on him the chastisement of our peace; and it pleased him by him to reconcile all things to himself. Moreover, he is so called because he is the giver of all true solid conscience-peace, the peace of God, which passeth all understanding of natural men; and which when he gives, none can give trouble; and is what he fills his people with in a way of believing, leading their faith to the blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of his son. He is also the author of happiness and prosperity, temporal, spiritual, and eternal, and likewise of all the peace and concord which is in his churches, and among his saints; so that when the apostle wishes that the God of peace might be with them, he not only prays that the presence of God might be with them; but that they might have fresh views of their interest in peace, made by the blood of Christ; that they might enjoy peace in their own consciences, arising from thence; that they might be possessed of felicity of every kind, and that unity and harmony might subsist among them; that the peace of God might rule in their hearts, and they live in love and peace one with another, laying aside all their differences as Jews and Gentiles, about the rites and ceremonies of the law of Moses; to which the apostle may have a particular respect in this concluding wish of his, and here indeed properly the epistle ends; the following chapter being as a sort of postscript, filled up with salutations and recommendations of particular persons; wherefore the word *Amen* is placed here, though it is wanting in the Alexandrian copy.

CHAP. XVI.

THIS chapter contains a recommendation of a single person, herein mentioned; a list of the chief of the saints at Rome, who are saluted by name, and some with singular encomiums; a caution to beware of false teachers; various salutations of persons that were with the apostle sent to the church at Rome; and the whole is concluded with a doxology, or an ascription of glory to God. First, a commendation is given of a woman, by whom this long letter was sent, who is described by her name, Phebe; by her spiritual relation, a sister in Christ; by her office or character, a servant of the church at Cenchrea, ver. 1. who is recommended to the saints at Rome, to receive her into their communion, conversation, and affection, as became them, and to assist her in every thing she might need from them; which is enforced by this reason, because she had been a succourer of the apostle, and many others, ver. 2. and next follows a catalogue of the principal saints at Rome, to whom the apostle sends his Christian salutations; and among these stand, in the first place, Aquila and Priscilla, and the church in their house, ver. 3, 4, 5, who are described as greatly assisting to him in the cause of Christ, and as having a strong affection for him; which they shewed by risking their lives on his account, for which he gives them thanks, as did all the churches: Secondly, Epenetus is next saluted, as having a great interest in the apostle's affections, and as being one of the first converts in Achaia, ver. 5. Thirdly, a woman named Mary, who did her utmost to serve the apostle, and those that were with him, ver. 6. Fourthly, a couple of saints, Andronicus, and Junia, described by their relation to the apostle, his kinsmen; by their sufferings with him, fellow-prisoners; by the fame and credit they were in among the Christians of the first rank, even the apostles; and by their early conversion, being converted before the apostle himself, ver. 7. Fifthly, next in the list is Amplias, who is saluted as in the Lord, and as beloved in him, ver. 8. Sixthly, two worthy men are joined together, Urban and Stachys; the one is saluted as an helper in Christ, and the other as beloved by the apostle, ver. 9. Seventhly, Apelles is next named, and commended as one approved in Christ. Eighthly, the family of Aristobulus is greeted, ver. 10. Ninthly, a kinsman of the apostle's, by name Herodion: and, Tenthly, the household of Narcissus, said to be in the Lord, ver. 11. Eleventhly, two excellent women are greeted, who had been indefatigable in the service of Christ: and, Twelfthly, another woman, by name Persis, a person to be respected and loved, on account of her labour in the Lord, ver. 12. Thirteenthly, Rufus is saluted as one chosen in Christ, and also his mother, and who was the mother of the apostle, ver. 13. Fourteenthly, five of the saints are joined together, who are mentioned by name, and other brethren with them, whose names are not set down, ver. 14. and, Lastly,

five other saints, with all the brethren with them, are likewise saluted, ver. 15. and these, and all the members of the church, are exhorted to salute one another in an affectionate and chaste manner, who are told that all the churches saluted them, ver. 16. then follows the exhortation to take care of false teachers, to mark them, and avoid them; who are described as schismatics and heretics, making divisions in the church, and preaching contrary to the Gospel taught and learned, ver. 17. The arguments or reasons made use of to enforce the exhortation, are taken partly from the characters of these teachers, being selfish men, who served not the Lord Jesus, but their own bellies; and deceivers, who by smooth words and plausible doctrines imposed upon simple minds, ver. 18. and partly from the characters of the saints at Rome, who were simple and credulous, and ready to give in to every thing that carried an appearance of truth; and though they were to be commended for their ready obedience to the Gospel, yet it became them to mingle wisdom and prudence with their simplicity and readiness to receive what appeared to be truth, ver. 19. and from a promise of victory over Satan and his emissaries in a short time; to which the apostle annexes his usual salutation, and *Amen*, as if he had concluded the epistle, ver. 20. but adds various salutations of persons that were with him, who desired to be remembered to the brethren at Rome, as Timotheus a fellow-worker, Lucius, Jason and Sosipater, his kinsmen, ver. 21. Tertius the writer of the epistle, ver. 22. Gaius the host of the apostle, and of the whole church; Erastus, chamberlain of the city of Corinth, and Quartus a brother, ver. 23. and then the apostle repeats the above salutation, ver. 24. and yet still has not finished his epistle, but concludes with a doxology, ver. 25, 26, 27. in which is celebrated the power of God, in establishing his people according to the Gospel, commended by its being the preaching of Christ, and the revelation of the mystery hid from ages past; and the goodness of God is also taken notice of, in giving orders to make it manifest, and in making it manifest to the Gentiles, in order to bring them to the obedience of faith; and likewise the wisdom of God is observed, to whom wisdom alone belongs, and which is apparent in the Gospel before mentioned, and in all the methods of his grace, as well as providence; and glory to him, through Christ for ever, is wished and prayed for; and so ends this excellent and valuable epistle.

Ver. 1. *I commend unto you Phebe our sister*, &c.] This chapter chiefly consists of commendations and salutations of persons, and begins with the former. It was usual to give letters of commendation of a member of one church to those of another; see 2 Cor. iii. 1. The person who is here recommended was, as appears from the subscription of this epistle, if that may be depended on, the bearer of this letter, and is described by her name, Phebe; as she dwelt at Cenchrea, it is probable she was a Grecian, as is her name. Pausanias[e] makes frequent mention of one of this name in Greece. With the Heathen poets, Phœbus was the sun, and Phœbe the moon. Though it is not unlikely that she might be a Jewess, since there were many of them in those parts; and this was a name in use among them. We often read[f] of R. Ishmael בן פאבי, *ben Phœbi*, which I take to be the same name with this. She is recommended as a sister, *our sister*; not in a natural, but spiritual relation; one that was a member of the church at Cenchrea, and in full communion with it; for as it was usual to call the men brethren, it was common to call the women sisters. Elderly men were called fathers, younger men brethren; elderly women were styled mothers, and younger women sisters, who were partakers of the grace of God, and enjoyed the fellowship of the saints: *which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea*. This place was a sea-port of the Corinthians, distant from Corinth about seventy furlongs, or eight or nine miles: it was on one side of the Isthmus, as Lechea was on the other[g]; see the note on Acts xviii. 18. In the way to this place from the Isthmus, as Pausanias relates[h], was the temple of Diana, and a very ancient sculpture; and in Cenchrea itself was the temple of Venus, and a wooden image; and near the flow of the sea was a Neptune of brass. But now, in this place, was a church of Jesus Christ; and since it was so near to Corinth, it shews that churches in those early times were not national, or provincial, but congregational. Of this church Phebe was a servant, or, as the word signifies, a minister or deacon; not that she was a teacher of the word, or preacher of the Gospel, for that was not allowed of by the apostle in the church at Corinth, that a woman should teach; see 1 Cor. xiv. 34, 35. and therefore would never be admitted at Cenchrea. Rather, as some think, she was a deaconness appointed by the church, to take care of the poor sisters of the church; though as they were usually poor, and ancient women, that were put into that service, and this woman, according to the account of her, being neither poor, nor very ancient; it seems rather, that being a rich and generous woman, she served or ministered to the church by relieving the poor; not out of the church's stock, as deaconnesses did, but out of her own substance; and received the ministers of the Gospel, and all strangers, into her house, which was open to all Christians; and so was exceeding serviceable to that church, and to all the saints that came thither: though it is certain that among the ancient Christians there were women servants who were called ministers. Pliny, in an epistle of his to Trajan the emperor, says[i], that he had examined two maids, quæ ministræ dicebantur, *who were called ministers*, to know the truth of the Christian religion.

Ver. 2. *That ye receive her in the Lord*, &c.] This is one thing he recommends her to them for, that they would receive her in a kind and friendly manner into their houses, and into their hearts' love and affections; admit her to their private meetings, and into church-fellowship with them, and that as one that was in the Lord, and belonged to him; and also in his name, and for his sake: *as becometh saints*; that is, both that they

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[e] Græc. Descript. l. 2. p. 125. l. 3. p. 196. l. 4. p. 276.
[f] Misn. Sota, c. 9. sect. 15. T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 9. 1. & 35. 2. Juchasin, fol. 24. 2. & 51. 2.
[g] Plin. Natural Hist. l. 4. c. 4. Ptolem. l. 3. c. 16.
[h] In Corinthiacis, p. 88.
[i] Epist. l. 10. ep. 97.

would treat her with that humanity, courteousness, Christian affection, and respect, as became them who were saints by calling and profession; and that they would use her as being one of the saints, a godly, holy person, and as such an one ought to be used, by virtue of the communion of saints: *and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you:* what her business was at Rome is not known; whether it was only to visit the saints; or whether it was to have a cause tried in any court of judicature there; or whether she came upon worldly business, as Lydia of Thyatira was at Philippi, to sell her purple, when the Apostle Paul was there, it matters not: whatever assistance they could give her, either by directing her where the saints lived; or by giving her proper counsel and advice; or by helping her forward in her worldly affairs; or whatever she was concerned in, this is desired; and is another thing for which the apostle recommends her to them, adding this reason, *for she hath been a succourer of many;* or *a patroness of many* of the saints in necessity and distress. The word that is here used, προστάτις, is, as Harpocratian says[a], the name by which such were called by the Athenians, οἱ τῶν μετοίκων προεστῶτες, *that were over the sojourners*, who had the care and direction of them. And such was this woman to the poor saints in Cenchrea, and the strangers that came thither; not as being in such an office by the order and appointment of the church, but what she cheerfully and voluntarily took up herself, and performed at her own expense, otherwise there would not be so much in the character as to deserve such peculiar notice, nor she be so worthy of praise and commendation: moreover, the apostle observes, that he also partook of her succour and assistance, *and of myself also:* which would hardly have been the case had she been one that had only the care of the poor sisters of the church, which was the office of the deaconess: but she being a rich generous woman, and the apostle having shared in her bounty, gratefully acknowledges it; and he the rather mentions it, as knowing it would the more endear her to the saints at Rome, who would take more notice of her for the respect she had shewn to him.

Ver. 3. *Greet Priscilla* and *Aquila*, &c.] The former of these, who was a woman, and the wife of the latter, is in some copies called Prisca; and so the Vulgate Latin here reads it, as she is also called in 2 Tim. iv. 19. Her being named before her husband, is without design, for sometimes he is put before her, as in Acts xviii. 2, 26. 1 Cor. xvi. 19. And it is a rule with the Jews[b], that there is neither first nor last in the Scriptures; that is, strict order is not always observed; it is sometimes inverted, and nothing depends upon it: hence the reasons assigned by some, that she was first converted, or had more zeal than her husband, are uncertain and impertinent. She is called Triscilla in the Ethiopic version, as he is in the Arabic, Achilles: he was a Jew of Pontus, and was with his wife drove out of Rome by Claudius Cæsar, when with her he went to Corinth, where he met with the Apostle Paul; and they being of the same craft, abode and wrought together at their trade of tent-making; and when the apostle removed from thence, they went with him, and were with him at Ephesus; where, meeting with Apollos, who, though an eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures, yet being in some things deficient, these two took him unto them, in a private way, and taught him the way of God's salvation more perfectly: when they left the apostle is not certain; but either Claudius being dead, or the edict which ordered the Jews to depart from Rome being revoked, or not regarded, they returned thither again; and were here when the apostle wrote this epistle, and whom he salutes, calling them *my helpers in Christ Jesus:* in spreading the Gospel, and promoting the kingdom, honour, and interest of Christ: for though they did not publicly preach, at least not Priscilla, yet they were very useful in their private conferences and instructions, both to ministers of the Gospel, as in the case of Apollos, and to young Christians: as the apostle, wherever he went, was an instrument of the conversion of many souls: these were helpful privately in encouraging the young converts, comforting them with their own experiences, and thereby helped them forward, instructed, strengthened, and established them: and so were greatly assistant to the apostle in the work of the Lord Jesus.

Ver. 4. *Who for my life laid down their necks,* &c.] That is, exposed themselves to great danger to save the apostle's life: the allusion is to the manner of executions by beheading, and to one person's laying down his head, and offering his neck to the executioner in the room of another: this we are not to suppose was literally done; but the design of the expression is, that in some shape or another they risked their own lives for the apostle's; which might be done either at the insurrection in Corinth against Paul, when the Jews dragged him to the judgment-seat of Gallio, and beat Sosthenes the ruler of the synagogue before him; or at the uproar in Ephesus by Demetrius and the craftsmen, when Paul and his companions were in great danger; at both which times and places these two persons were, and being very zealous, were no doubt active to preserve the apostle, and which he acknowledges with thankfulness: *unto whom not only I give thanks, but all the churches of the Gentiles:* both for the care they took of him, and the danger they exposed themselves to on his account; which the apostle expresses his sense of gratitude for, and which all the Gentile churches were under obligations to do likewise, since they had a common share in his labours and usefulness, he was the apostle of them all; and also for their help and assistance in carrying on the work of the Lord in all the churches of the Gentiles.

Ver. 5. *Likewise greet the church that is in their house,* &c.] Which was either their own family, which might be somewhat large, and consisting entirely or chiefly of religious persons; for when they were in other places they had a church in their house, as well as at Rome; see 1 Cor. xvi. 19. or the saints at Rome, who used to meet privately at their house, and pray and sing praises together, speak to one another of the things of God, and build up one another in their most holy faith; and from their gathering together in the name of Christ, and for the worship of him, and among whom

[a] Lexic. decem Orator. p. 255.

[b] T. Bab. Pesach. fol. 6. 1.

his presence, according to his promise, was, they are called a church, or an assembly of Christians. *Salute my well-beloved Epenetus;* for though all the saints were beloved by the apostle, yet there were some, as this good man, for whom he might have, on some account or another, a particular affection; as our Lord, as man, had for his disciple John, though he loved all his disciples. There is one of this name, said to be one of the seventy disciples, and bishop of Carthage; see the note on Luke x. 1. *Who is the first-fruits of Achaia unto Christ;* that is, either he was one of the chief and principal for gifts and grace, or one of the first that was converted to Christ in those parts: the allusion is to the first-fruits under the law, which were offered unto the Lord, and were pledges of, and sanctified the rest. The Vulgate Latin, instead of Achaia, reads *Asia:* and so it is read in the Alexandrian copy, and others: the reason of this different reading seems to be, because the house of Stephanus are said to be the first-fruits of Achaia, 1 Cor. xvi. 15. But this hinders not but that Epenetus might be so too, for he might be one of the family of Stephanus, who was now removed to Rome. If he was a Jew, his Jewish name might be Judah, the same with Epenetus, in Greek.

Ver. 6. *Greet Mary, who bestowed much labour on us.*] Some copies read, *you;* and so do the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions: and indeed it seems most likely that the persons on whom this good woman bestowed so much labour, and to whom she was so very serviceable, were the saints at Rome, where she lived, rather than the apostle and his companions; not but that she might have been in some parts where she had met with him, and his friends, and had been very indefatigable in assisting and supplying them, in a very generous and liberal manner, with all the necessaries of life; and was exceeding useful in encouraging the ministers of the Gospel, and in promoting the interest of Christ. Her name Mary is the same with Miriam in Hebrew; whether she was of Jewish extract is not certain, and who she was is not known: some have conjectured her to be the same that Ignatius wrote an epistle to; not Mary of Castabilis, but of Naples, who was at Rome in the time of Linus, the Latin version reads *Cletus*, and of Clement, on whom he bestows very great characters; calling her most faithful, worthy of God, and a bearer of Christ, and in all things wise[y]; and in another letter[z] of his he represents her as exceeding learned, an exemplar of godly women, and having a church in her house. But both these epistles are thought, by learned men, to be falsely ascribed to him, and so not to be depended on.

Ver. 7. *Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen, &c.*] According to the flesh, being perhaps not only of the same nation, Jews, but also of the same tribe, the tribe of Benjamin, and even of the same family, and might be nearly allied in blood. And though the apostle did not value himself upon his carnal descent, yet he had a very great value and affection for his relations after the flesh, even though they were only of the same nation; see Rom. ix. 3. and especially for such as were partakers of the grace of God, as these his kinsmen were. These were their Gentile names, the one Greek, the other Latin; but both were Jews. Grotius thinks that their Jewish names were, the one Masinissa, and the other Naarah; and that the latter was the wife of the former, but they rather seem both to be men; Junia should be read Junias, a contraction of Junilius: *and my fellow-prisoners;* either at Philippi, or in some other place; for though we read only of the apostle's being in prison at that place, and at Rome, yet it is certain from his own account, 2 Cor. xi. 23. that he was frequently imprisoned; and Clement of Rome says, he was seven times in bonds[a], at one of which times these were bound with him, but when and where is not known. This is a greater character of them, and a greater honour to them, than to be called his kinsmen after the flesh: *who are of note among the apostles;* were well known by, and in great account with the twelve apostles, though not of their number; they might be converted by them, and be followers of them in Judea; they are thought by some to be of the number of the seventy disciples, whom Christ himself sent forth to preach: Andronicus particularly is mentioned among them, and said to be bishop of Pannonia, or rather of Spain; see the note on Luke xi. 1. however, they might be preachers of the Gospel, and be persons of great fame and renown as such; for which reason they might be called apostles, that being a name sometimes given to ordinary ministers of the word, and to such who were messengers of the churches, 2 Cor. viii. 23. as these might be, and were famous for their prudent, faithful, and diligent discharge of their office and duty: *who also were in Christ before me;* which is to be understood, not of their secret being in Christ, as being loved by him, chosen in him, given to him, and represented by him in the covenant of grace; for they had not a place in Christ's heart, or a share in his love before him; wherefore the Arabic version is not only a bad one, but carries a false sense in it; which renders the clause thus, *who were in the love of Christ before me:* nor were they chosen in Christ before him, for all the elect were chosen together in him before the foundation of the world; nor were they given to him, put into his hands, and made his care and charge before him; nor were they considered in Christ as their covenant-head before him; Christ became their surety for them together, and received grace, blessings, and promises for them, and they in him before the world began; and was their common head and representative in time, in their nature; and they were all together crucified, buried, and raised with him, and set down with him in heavenly places together. But they were in the profession of faith, and in the church of Christ, and in the ministry of the word before him, being converted and brought to the faith of Christ before he was; which is the saints' open being in Christ, and is the effect and evidence of their being secretly in him from everlasting: this is to be created in Christ, or made new creatures in him; to be brought to believe in him, and even into him for righteousness, pardon, peace, acceptance, and eternal life, which are in him; and to live upon him, and in him, and

[y] Ignat. Epist. ad Mariam, p. 68, 70.
[z] Ib. ad Heronem, p. 97. Ed. Voss.

[a] Epist. ad Corinth. p. 14.

derive all light and life, grace and strength, joy, peace, and comfort from him, as the branch derives its sap and nourishment from the vine, in which it is; and in this sense these men were in Christ before the apostle; they were converted persons, professors of religion, members of a church, and Gospel ministers before him: and though this is nothing in the business of salvation, who is called first or last; the one is equally as safe and as happy as the other; the thief that was called at the last hour, and the last man that will be called by grace in the world; yet it is a great blessing and mercy to be converted betimes; hereby a multitude of sins is prevented, and more service done for Christ. And doubtless the apostle had this in view, and therefore gives these his kinsmen the preference to himself, that whilst he was a blasphemer of Christ, a persecutor of his people, and injurious to his interest, these made a profession of his name, preached his Gospel, and served his cause: it shews also, that they were persevering Christians, were pillars in the house of God, and never went out; and on account of their constancy and long standing, were worthy of respect. The apostle rises gradually in the character of these persons; as it was more to be fellow-prisoners with him than to be his kinsmen, so it was more to be of note among the apostles, or to be eminent preachers of the Gospel, than to be fellow-prisoners with him; and it was more to be in Christ than them all, than to be Paul's kinsmen, fellow-prisoners with him, or to be known and approved of by the apostles, to be messengers of churches, preachers of the word, or even to be apostles themselves, and the chiefest of them; for such are blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ, are complete and perfect in him, are safe and secure, and can never perish: and being once in Christ, are always in him, and will be found in him living and dying, and at judgment.

Ver. 8. *Greet Amplias my beloved in the Lord.*] This was a Roman name; the Vulgate Latin reads *Ampliatus*, and so do the Alexandrian copy, and the Ethiopic version: some call him *Amphias*, and *Amphiatus*, and say, but whether on good authority I will not affirm, that this man was bishop of Odyssus; but be he who he will, the apostle had a singular affection for him; and that not upon any external account, as natural relation, riches, honour, learning, &c. but for the Lord's sake, and as he was in Christ, a member of him, and so in a spiritual relation to the apostle; a *brother* of his, as the Ethiopic version here calls him; and because he was honoured with the gifts and graces of the spirit, and for his usefulness in the Gospel of Christ Jesus.

Ver. 9. *Salute Urbane, our helper in Christ, &c.*] This also was a Roman name, and which many of the popes of Rome have since taken to themselves; he is said to be one of the seventy disciples, and to be a bishop in Macedonia; see the note on Luke x. 1. which is not very probable: others have conjectured him to be one of the pastors of the church of Rome, which is more likely: and if he was, but few of his successors have deserved the character given of him, an *helper in Christ*: in spreading the Gospel, and enlarging the kingdom and interest of Christ: *and Stachys my beloved*: this is a Greek name, he is said to be one of the seventy disciples, and bishop of Byzantium: see the note on Luke x. 1. According to the Roman martyrology, he was ordained bishop of the Byzantine church, by Andrew the apostle, but this is not to be depended on: he was, however, because of his faith in Christ, and love to him, or on such like spiritual accounts, very dear to the apostle.

Ver. 10. *Salute Apelles approved in Christ, &c.*] Origen was in doubt whether this was not the same person with Apollos the Alexandrian Jew, whom Aquila and Priscilla met with at Ephesus: but had he been intended, the apostle would doubtless have said more of him, he being so eminent and remarkable a preacher of the Gospel; though indeed the character here given is very considerable; besides, Apollos did not live at Rome, though it was not impossible he might be there at this time. The name seems to be a Greek one, there was a famous painter of this name in Greece; though it was also used among the Jews, and this person here might possibly be a Jew; for Horace[r] speaks of one of this name, when he says, *credat Judæus Apella*: by whom he means, not, as many have thought, a circumcised Jew in general, but a particular person, a Jew of that name: but it is of no importance whether he was a Jew or a Gentile; some say he was one of the seventy disciples, and bishop of Smyrna: see the note on Luke x. 1. However, he was one that was *approved in Christ*; approved of God in Christ, who approves of none but in Christ; not of any on account of their own commendations, or those of others; for not he that commendeth himself is approved of God, nor whom others commend; and oftentimes what is highly esteemed of men, is abominable in the sight of God; nor does he approve of any on the score of their own works and duties, or as in themselves considered, whose righteousness in as filthy rags, and they themselves polluted and unclean; but as in Christ his well-beloved son, in whom he is well pleased, and with all in him; and so God's elect are, as this man was approved of in him the beloved, even in his own son, in whom both persons and services are accepted; moreover he was approved of *by* Christ, and that from eternity, as presented to him in the glass of his father's purposes and decrees; and in time, as adorned with his own grace, and clothed with his justifying righteousness, and as faithfully serving him in his day and generation: he was also proved to be in Christ; he had proved it to himself, to his own satisfaction, by observing, upon self-examination, that Christ was in him; and he had made it to appear to others, by his faith in Christ, love to him, zeal for him, and close attachment to his Gospel, against all errors and heresies, whereby they that are approved are made manifest; and that in the face of all opposition and persecution: he was tried and proved, and so approved by a variety of tribulations and afflictions; his faith remained firm, and he abode by the interest of a Redeemer; and so he was tried, or proved, as the Arabic version renders it, *in the religion of Christ*; in which he was

[r] Sermon. l. 1. Satyr. 5. prope finem.

sincere, upright, and faithful; his faith was unfeigned, his love without dissimulation, he was an Israelite indeed, in whom there was no guile: if a preacher of the word, he did not corrupt it, but in sincerity, and as in the sight of God and Christ, spoke it: and if only a private believer, he was one that desired the sincere milk of the word, and was in all respects a sincere upright man in Christ; so the word here used may be understood, being the reverse of ἀδόκιμος, reprobate, rejected, spurious, adulterate and disapproved: in a word, this character shews, that he was not only approved of God and Christ, but of all good men, and particularly the apostle; and that on account of his being in Christ, united to him, and closely attached to his service and interest, and was an honour to it: *salute them which are of Aristobulus's household.* This was also a Greek name, though in use among the Jews; there was one of this name master of Ptolomy, king of Egypt, who was of Jewish extract, and of the priests, 2 Maccab. i. 10. One of the sons of Hyrcanus, the high-priest of the Jews, was called by this name; Herod had a son of this name, and it was a name much in use in his family, and among his descendants: who this man was is not known, nor is he himself saluted by the apostle; either because he was now dead, or was absent from Rome at this time; for some say he was sent into Britain, our isle, to preach the Gospel, of which he is said to be bishop, and one of the seventy disciples; see the note on Luke x. 1. or perhaps he might not be a believer in Christ, only his household believers, and therefore they only are taken notice of.

Ver. 11. *Salute Herodion my kinsman,* &c.] According to the flesh, being of the same nation, a Jew; or of the same tribe, the tribe of Benjamin; or of the same family, and nearly allied in blood to him: though the name is of Attic, or Parthic original, and seems to be a derivative of Herod; this man is reckoned among the seventy disciples, and said to be bishop of Tarsus: see the note on Luke x. 1. *Greet them that be of the household of Narcissus, which are in the Lord;* some have thought, that this Narcissus is the same man that Suetonius[s] and other writers speak of[t], who was secretary to Claudius Cæsar; a very great favourite of his, who amassed a great deal of wealth under him, and was raised to great honour and dignity by him: he himself is not saluted, either because he was not at home, which might be the case, if, as Ambrose, or rather Hilary the deacon on the text says, he was a presbyter, and abroad, performing his office in foreign parts; or because he was dead, or rather not a believer: if he was the same with Claudius's favourite, he was dead before this time, being miserably put to death by Agrippina[u], the wife of Claudius; and seems to have died a wicked man, and justly punished for his being the cause of the destruction of others, through his calumnies: nor are all of his household saluted, not being all converted persons; it being frequently the method of divine grace to take some of a family, and not all, and bring them to Zion; only those that were *in the Lord,* on his heart, and in his hands, secretly represented by him, and united to him, and who were openly in him, being called by his grace, and brought to believe in him, and live upon him.

Ver. 12. *Salute Tryphena and Tryphosa, who labour in the Lord,* &c.] These two were women, and are said to be noble women of Iconium, whom the apostle converted there, and afterwards went to Rome. The names are Greek[v], though they might be Jewish women, since Tryphon is the name of a man among the Jews. Trypho, the famous Jew, with whom Justin Martyr had his dialogue, is well known, and perhaps is the same with R. Tarphon, or Tryphon, so often mentioned in the Misnic and Talmudic writings: however, as these were women, their labour can't be understood of their labouring in the word of the Lord, or in the public ministry of it, since this was forbid by the apostle, and therefore would never commend them on account of it; but of their great usefulness and indefatigableness, in serving the interest of their dear Lord with their purses; in relieving the poor of the church, in entertaining and supplying the ministers of the Gospel, as well as by their private instructions, exhortations, and giving an account of their own experience, whereby they might greatly encourage, edify, and strengthen young converts, and other Christians, as Priscilla with her husband did; and were unwearied in doing every thing that they were capable of, in promoting the Gospel and kingdom of Christ: *salute the beloved Persis, which laboured much in the Lord;* who being a woman also, and perhaps of Persic original, and might have her name from her country; her labour must be understood of the same kind with the former, only with this addition, that she abounded and exceeded in it; she is said by the Syriac scholiast to be the wife of Rufus, mentioned in the next verse.

Ver. 13. *Salute Rufus chosen in the Lord,* &c.] This was a Roman name; frequent mention is made in Jewish writings[w] of one Turnus Rufus, a Roman officer, that destroyed the temple, and ploughed up the city of Jerusalem; the name was in use among the Cyrenians, for one of the sons of Simon of Cyrene, whom the Jews compelled to carry the cross of Christ, was so called, Mark xv. 21. and some have thought that the same person is here meant, nor is it unlikely; he is said to be one of the seventy disciples, and to be bishop of Thebes; see the note on Luke x. 1. The apostle knew him, and that as one *chosen in the Lord:* meaning either that he was a choice believer in Christ, an excellent Christian, one of the highest form; for though all true believers have like precious faith, yet some are strong, and others weak, in the exercise of it; this man was eminent for his faith in Christ; or he might be one that was chosen to some office in the church, as to that of a deacon, or pastor; though had this been the case, it is much the particular office was not mentioned: rather therefore this is to be understood of his being chosen in Christ to grace and glory, and that from all eternity; for the phrase is only used

[s] In Vita Claud. sect. 28.
[t] Tacitus, Dio, &c.
[u] Tacit. Hist. l. 13.

[v] Vid. Gatherleth. Animadv. Philolog. in Inscript. Smyrn. p. 115, &c.
[w] T. Hieros. Taanieth, fol. 69. 2. T. Bab. Nedar. fol. 50. 2. Avoda Zara, fol. 20. 1. & Sanhedrin, fol. 65. 2. Juchasin, fol. 56. 2.

in one place more, Eph. i. 4. and there most manifestly designs the election of persons in Christ, before the foundation of the world; which election is made not *for* Christ, or the sake of his merits, his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, which have no causal influence on this act, and which purely arises from the love and grace of God: nor merely *by* him as God equal with the father, though this is true; but *in* him, as the head and representative of the chosen ones: this instance, as others, shews that election is not of nations, nor churches, but of particular persons; and so expresses the distinguishing, free, and sovereign grace of God in it, that one and not another should be chosen; though these are on an equal foot, and so not owing to foreseen faith, holiness, and good works. The apostle knew this man to be a chosen vessel, not by immediate revelation, or divine inspiration, but by his faith in Christ, and love to him, and by the power of the Gospel on him; and so may any one know himself, or another man hereby to be chosen, and ought in a judgment of charity so to think of him, as long as his life is agreeably to his profession; see 1 Thess. i. 4, 5. The apostle not only salutes this man, but his mother also, who doubtless was a believer in Christ, and highly respected by him: *and his mother and mine*: the mother of Rufus in nature, and his mother in affection; and who very probably had endeared herself to the apostle by some kind offices, which she, as a Christian, had performed towards him; for the apostle cannot mean his own natural mother, besides Rufus's, whom he salutes, and whom Anselm on the place suggests might be at Rome; since it can hardly be thought he would have passed the mention of her in so transient a manner.

Ver. 14. *Salute Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, &c.*] The two first of these names are Greek, and the persons called by them, with Herodion before mentioned, are taken notice of in the Roman martyrology, as disciples of the apostle: Asyncritus is said to be bishop of Hyrcania, and Phlegon of Marathon, and both of the seventy disciples; see the note on Luke x. 1. Hermas is said to be bishop of Philippi, or Aquileia, and brother of Pope Pius the First, and to be the author of the book called Pastor, or the Shepherd, cited by many of the ancients; but all is doubtful and uncertain. Patrobas is a Roman name, Martial makes mention of it[w]; it seems to be composed of the Greek word *πατηρ*, or the Latin *pater*, and the Syriac אבא, *Abba*, and signifies the same as the other two. This man might be a Jew, whose name was Abba; we often read of R. Abba in the Jewish writings[x], and as the Jews were wont to have two names, the one Gentile, the other Jewish, Pater might be this man's Gentile name, and Abba his Jewish one, and both being put together, by contraction be called *Patrobas*: he is said to be of the seventy disciples, and to be bishop of Puteoli; see the note on Luke x. 1. The last of them, Hermes, is a Greek name, the same with Mercurius, which the Lystrians called Paul by, in Acts xiv. 12. who he was is not known; he is also mentioned among the seventy disciples, and said to be bishop of Dalmatia: *and the brethren which are with them*: these seem to have lived together, with others who were their brethren, not in a natural but spiritual relation, and whom the apostle owned and loved as such.

Ver. 15. *Salute Philologus, and Julia, &c.*] The first of these is a Greek name, and the name of a man, and signifies a lover of learning. This name Atteius assumed to himself, which Eratosthenes had done before him, because of his great learning[y]; this man is reckoned among the seventy disciples, and is said to be bishop of Sinope: see the note on Luke x. 1. Julia is a woman's name, and Roman, probably the wife of the former; one of Stephens's copies read, *Junia*: *Nereus, and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints which are with them*: who all dwelt together also in one family; and were saints, by separation, imputation, and effectual vocation; were called to be saints, and lived as such, and had a place in the apostle's affections on that account: Nerio, or Neriene, according to Gellius[z], was a name with the Sabines, signifying *strength*, from whence came Nero; and Olympas is the same with Olympius, said to be of the seventy disciples, and a Roman martyr: see the note on Luke x. 1. It deserves some notice, that among all the persons here mentioned by name, known by the apostle to be at Rome, that he takes no notice of Peter; which surely he would have done, had he been, as the Papists say, bishop of Rome, and resided there.

Ver. 16. *Salute one another with an holy kiss, &c.*] Christian salutation is a wishing all temporal, spiritual, and eternal happiness, to one another; and which, as it should be mutual, should be also hearty and sincere, and this is meant by the *holy kiss*; the allusion is to a common custom in most nations, used by friends at meeting or parting, to kiss each other, in token of their hearty love, and sincere affection and friendship for each other; and is called *holy*, to distinguish it from an unchaste and lascivious one; and from an hypocritical and deceitful one, such an one as Joab gave to Amasa, when, inquiring of his health, he took him by the beard to kiss him, and stabbed him under the fifth rib; and as Judas, who cried, hail master, to Christ, and kissed him, and betrayed him into the hands of his enemies. I say, 'tis an allusion to this custom, for it is only an allusion; the apostle did not mean that any outward action should be made use of, only that their Christian salutations should not be mere complaisance, or expressed by bare words, and outward gestures and actions, either of the hand or mouth; but that they should spring from real love and true friendship, and be without dissimulation, hearty and sincere: *the churches of Christ salute you.* The Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read, *all the churches*: that is, in Greece, or in the neighbourhood where the apostle was, and who might know of his writing to this church, and thereby send their Christian salutations to it; or if they did not know of his writing, yet as he knew their sincere affections, and hearty good will to this church, and the members of it, he in their names

[w] Epig. l. 2. ep. 27.
[x] Juchasin, fol. 70. 1, &c.

[y] Suetonius de Illustr. Gram. c. 10.
[z] Noct. Attic. l. 13. c. 22.

sent greetings to them: this shews the communion of churches, and how they ought to wish and sincerely desire each other's welfare.

Ver. 17. *Now I beseech you, brethren, &c.*] The apostle being about to finish his epistle, and recollecting that he had not given this church any instructions about the false teachers, who had been the cause of all their differences and uneasiness, inserts them here; or he purposely put them in this place, amidst his salutations, that they might be taken the more notice of; and very pertinently, since nothing could more express his great affection and tender concern for them; and these instructions he delivers to them, not in an authoritative way, as he might, and sometimes did, but by way of entreaty, beseeching them, and with the kind and loving appellation of brethren, the more to engage them to attend to what he was about to say to them: *mark them which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned.* The men he would have taken notice of were such who divided them in their religious sentiments, introducing heterodox notions, contrary to the doctrine of the Scriptures, of Christ and his apostles, and which they had learned from them; such as justification by the works of the law, the observance of Jewish days, and abstinence from meats, enjoined by the ceremonial law, and that as necessary to salvation; to which some gave heed, and others not, and so were divided; whereas the doctrine of faith is but one, the Gospel is one uniform thing, all of a piece; and those that profess it ought to be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment: hence their minds were alienated from each other, and they began to despise and judge one another, yea, to go into factions and parties, being unwilling to receive and admit each other to communion; and thus by these men they were divided in sentiments, affection, and worship; and which must needs cause offence to the church and the godly members of it, as well as cause many so to be offended, as to stumble and fall from the doctrine of faith, and profession of it, and greatly stagger and distress weak believers, and bring a scandal on religion, and the name and ways of Christ among the world, as nothing does more so than the jars and discords among Christians: wherefore the apostle advises to *mark* such persons, look out for, narrowly watch, strictly observe, and diligently examine them: the metaphor is taken from watchmen, who look out from their watch-tower, and observe who are coming, or pass by, and take up suspicious persons, and carefully inquire who they are, and what they are about, and whether friends or foes. So both ministers of the Gospel, and members of churches, should not be asleep, which is the opportunity false teachers take to sow the seeds of false doctrine, discord, and contention, but should watch, and be upon their guard, and look diligently, that none among them fail of, or fall from, the doctrine of grace, or any root of bitterness, error, or heresy, as well as immorality, spring up, which may be troublesome, and defile others; they should observe, and take notice of such who are busy to spread false doctrine, should watch their motions, follow them closely, take them to an account, examine their principles according to the word of God; and if found to be contrary thereunto, note them as false teachers: *and avoid them*; shun their ministry, drop attendance on it, depart far from them, have no private conversation with them, receive them not into their houses, nor bid them God speed; with such do not eat, have no communion with them at the Lord's table, withdraw from them as disorderly persons, who act contrary to the doctrine and order of the Gospel, and after proper admonition reject them from all fellowship with you.

Ver. 18. *For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, &c.*] They don't preach him, but themselves; they don't seek the things of Christ, his honour and glory, the spread of his Gospel, and the enlargement of his kingdom and interest; they seek their own things, worldly honour and applause, riches, wealth, and grandeur; they seek to please men, and so are not the servants of Christ: they introduced the observance of meats and drinks into the kingdom of Christ, which it don't consist of, and neglected the doctrines of righteousness and peace, from whence springs joy in the Holy Ghost, and so in these spiritual things did not serve Christ; and therefore, as they were not acceptable to God, were not to be approved of by Christian men, but to be marked and avoided: *but their own belly*; which they made a god of, and devoted themselves to the service of; all their views were to gratify and indulge their sensual appetite. The false teachers among the Jews were particularly addicted to this vice; hence the apostle sometimes calls them dogs, on account of their voraciousness, and who, in Isaiah's time, were greedy ones that could never have enough; and, in our Lord's time devoured widows' houses, under a pretence of long prayers for them; and were like the Cretians, evil beasts, and slow bellies, unwilling to labour, and lived upon the spoil of others: *and by good words, and fair speeches, deceive the hearts of the simple*; they were deceivers; they lay in wait to deceive, made use of the hidden things of dishonesty, walked in craftiness, and handled the word of God deceitfully; and therefore to be marked and avoided: they deceived *the simple*, harmless, and innocent, that think no evil, nor are aware of any; who have little understanding of things; persons of weak minds, easy to be imposed upon; very credulous, ready to believe every word, so the simple man does, as Solomon says; and such false teachers choose to tamper with, and make their attacks upon, being able to gain upon them the most easily, as their father the devil, the old serpent, did, when he first assailed human nature: the *hearts* of these they deceive; they work upon their affections, blind their understandings, impose on their judgments, and corrupt their minds from the simplicity that is in Christ: and this they do *by good words and fair speeches*: either by making use of the words of Scripture, and a shew of arguments taken from thence; so Satan cited Scripture in his dispute with our Lord; and so heretics, in all ages, have pretended to it in favour of their principles, by which means they have gained on many to follow their pernicious ways; or by using words and phrases that faithful ministers of Christ use, such as the grace of God, the righteousness of Christ, the spirit of Christ, but in a different sense; as some among us now frequently

make mention of them, when they mean no more by them than the light of nature within them, and the dictates of a natural conscience; or by an elegant style, a set of fine words, a flow of rhetorical expressions, great swelling words of vanity, which such men generally affect, and so work themselves into the admiration of the common people; or by doctrines suited to the carnal minds and reasonings of men, which tickle human nature, and swell it with pride and vanity; as by preaching up the purity and power of it, asserting man's free will, and the strength of it to that which is good; the capacity of man to keep the law, and perform good works; justification by them before God, and acceptance with him; on account of them; atonement for sins committed, by repentance and reformation; that God does not regard trifling things, some sins are venial, and easily passed over; that concupiscence is no sin; God does not rigorously exact duty, he takes the will for the deed, and is merciful unto all, and if but sincere, there is no doubt of heaven; and such men, generally speaking, instead of correcting vice, and reproving men for their sins, connive at them, indulge them in them, sooth and flatter, commend and defend them, whereby they attach them to their persons and interest.

Ver. 19. *For your obedience is come abroad unto all men*, &c.] That is, as the Arabic and Ethiopic versions render it, *the fame* and report of their obedience to the faith, to the doctrine of the Gospel, and the ministers of it, was spread everywhere, was well known to every one, and spoken of with commendation among all the churches in all nations: and this the apostle mentions as another reason why they should beware of false teachers, since it would be greatly to their reproach, should they, after all this, drop that form of doctrine which they had obeyed, desert the faithful ministers of the word, and follow these false teachers; should this be the case, they would be as notorious for their disobedience, as now for their obedience: and moreover, the apostle might hereby suggest, that whereas it was everywhere known how readily and at once they embraced the Gospel of Christ; this credulity and readiness to believe, which was their commendation, might have invited false teachers among them, who might hope and take encouragement from hence the more easily to gain upon them; and therefore they ought to be upon their watch and guard, and beware of them, and not believe every spirit: *I am glad therefore on your behalf;* that they had so cheerfully and readily embraced the Gospel, and from the heart obeyed that form of doctrine delivered to them; and that their praise for this was in all the churches of Christ, and had everywhere a good report on this account: *but yet I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil:* which is just the reverse of natural and unregenerate men, who are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge; some reference seems to be had to the words of Christ in Matt. x. 16. the apostle's meaning is, that though he rejoiced at the heartiness and simplicity of their obedience, and the credit they obtained abroad on account of it, yet was he not without his fears and jealousies concerning them; and could not but greatly wish them more wisdom to understand the doctrines of the Gospel, to discern things that differ, and approve that which is the most excellent, and hold fast that which is good; and with all their harmlessness, innocence, and simplicity, prudently guard against all evil doctrines and principles, such as might unawares lead them into bad practices, dishonourable to religion, and uncomfortable to themselves.

Ver. 20. *And the God of peace*, &c.] See the note on ch. xv. 33. *shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly.* Some read this by way of wish or prayer, *may the God of peace bruise:* so the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, and the Alexandrian copy; but others as ours, as a promise, or as expressive of the apostle's faith and hope in this matter; and which he mentions to encourage the members of this church to be upon their guard, and make head against these false teachers; since in a little time they might be assured of victory over Satan and these his emissaries: as it is before suggested, that the methods these men used to beguile weak minds were much like those that Satan used when he attacked our first parents, so here is a manifest allusion to what was said by way of threatening to him, *it*, the woman's seed, *shall bruise thy head*, Gen. iii. 15. and which has had its accomplishment in Christ, who has not only destroyed the works of the devil, but him himself, and spoiled his principalities and powers, and bruised him and them under his feet, when he led captivity captive; and though, for the trial of the graces of his people, Satan is permitted to attack them in various shapes, yet in a short time he will be bruised under their feet, as he is already under their Lord and master's. The apostle refers not so much to his coming among them in a short time, when he might hope and believe that he should be an instrument of crushing these men Satan made use of, of quelling the contentions they raised, and putting a stop to the divisions they made, and under the influence, and by the assistance of the God of peace, restore them to their former peace and tranquillity, though it is a sense not to be despised; much less does he refer to the destruction of Jerusalem, which was to be in a very short time, when the crucifiers of Christ and the persecutors of the saints would have the wrath of God come upon them to the uttermost, since these Romans had no great and immediate concern with them; nor does he regard the spread of the Gospel in the Gentile world, whereby Satan fell as lightning from heaven, and was cast out of the idol temples, for this was greatly fulfilled already: but rather he refers to the time of Constantine, when Satan's seat at Rome was overturned, when he was cast down from his throne and trampled under feet, who had deceived the whole world, the whole Roman empire, when the Gospel triumphed over its secret and open enemies, profane persecutors, and perfidious teachers, over idolatry and superstition on the one hand, and error and heresy on the other, though this did not last long; wherefore some have thought the apostle refers to the latter day, when Satan shall be bound a thousand years, or to the last of all, when he shall be for ever under the feet of the saints, and never be able to give them any more trouble; and this the apostle might say would be shortly, since the second coming of Christ was expected to be quickly: yea, this may be applied to the case of every

believer now, and be for his encouragement to be vigilant and on his guard against Satan, to resist him, repel his temptations, and oppose his emissaries; since he may assure himself he shall be more than a conqueror over him through Christ, that has loved him, and that in a very little time, when death comes, and he shall enter into the joy of his Lord, where he will be out of the reach of Satan, and unmolested by him. *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you, Amen:* to enable you to abide by the truth; to mark and avoid the authors of sects, and causes of divisions, and offences; to oppose error and defend truth; to keep from falling; to stand against every assault of Satan, and to bear up under every temptation of his; to get the victory over him, and to preserve them safe to the kingdom and glory of Christ.

Ver. 21. *Timotheus my work-fellow,* &c.] Now follow the salutations of the friends and companions of the apostle: we may imagine that when this epistle was just concluding, that these his friends being about him, one said, pray send my Christian salutation to our dear friends at Rome, so said a second, and likewise a third, and so on, and Timotheus he began. This is the same person with Timothy, a disciple the apostle met with at Derbe, whose father was a Greek, and his mother a Jewess, and a believer in Christ. This same man he circumcised because of the Jews, and took him along with him, and was his companion in his travels, and very assisting to him in the work of the ministry, in spreading the Gospel, and promoting the interest of Jesus Christ; and therefore he here calls him his *work-fellow:* he wrote two epistles to him afterwards when at a distance from him, in which he often calls him his son, his dear and well-beloved son, having a great affection for him, because as a son with a father he served with him in the Gospel of Christ; *and Lucius, and Jason, and Sosipater my kinsmen salute you.* This Lucius was either Lucius of Cyrene, who was one of the prophets in the church at Antioch, Acts xiii. 1. though indeed he is never said to travel with the apostle, or to be at Corinth, from whence this epistle was written; or rather, therefore, as others think, Luke the evangelist, who was a constant companion of the apostle, and was at Corinth with him at this time, as appears from Acts xx. 5. Jason no doubt is he of Thessalonica, that received Paul and Silas into his house, and when an uproar was made concerning them, was brought before the rulers of the city, and gave security for them, Acts xvii. 5, 6, 9. This is a Jewish name, and he himself was a Jew, as is clear from his being a kinsman of the apostle's; his name was ישוע, *Jeshua* or *Jesus:* so we read of one Jason, the brother of Onias the high-priest of the Jews, 2 Maccab. iv. 7. and whose name, as Josephus* relates, was Jesus, but he chose to be called Jason, very likely because that was a name among the Greeks, whose fashions he was fond of. Sosipater was Sopater of Berea, who, with others, accompanied the apostle into Asia, Acts xx. 4. he also was a Jew, and his Jewish name, as Grotius conjectures, might be Abisha, or rather Abishua, the name of the son of Phinehas the high-priest, 1 Chron. iv. 4. Mention is also made of one of this name, Sosipater, in 2 Maccab. xii. 19, 24. These three last were Paul's kinsmen after the flesh, as well as in the spirit; being of the same nation, and perhaps of the same tribe, and it may be of the same family; they are all three mentioned among the seventy disciples: Lucius is said to be bishop of Laodicea in Syria, Jason of Tarsus, and Sosipater of Iconium; see the note on Luke x. 1.

Ver. 22. *I Tertius, who wrote this epistle,* &c.] This name is a Latin one, and perhaps the person might be a Roman, for the names Secundus, Tertius, Quartus, Quintus, *&c.* were common with the Romans; unless it may be thought, as it is by some, that this man was the same with Silas, who was a constant companion of the apostle; and the Hebrew word שלש is the same as Tertius; he also is numbered among the seventy disciples, and said to be bishop of Iconium; see the note on Luke x. 1. Whoever he was, it is certain he was an amanuensis of the apostle, who wrote this letter, either from the apostle's notes, or from his mouth. *Salute you in the Lord.* Some connect this phrase, *in the Lord,* with the other, *wrote this epistle,* and make the sense to be that he wrote this epistle for the Lord's sake, for his honour and glory; which he might do, though he wrote it not by inspiration, being only scribe to the apostle; but it is better connected with the word *salute,* and the sense is, that his salutation was not a mere form, nor only concerned their temporal good, but their spiritual welfare; that he wished them well in the Lord, that they might have much communion with him, and larger measures of grace from him.

Ver. 23. *Gaius mine host,* &c.] There was one Gaius a Macedonian, that was with the apostle at Ephesus, Acts xix. 29. and another Gaius of Derbe, that accompanied him into Asia, Acts xx. 4. whether either of these, as the latter seems more probable, was this person, is not certain. However, it seems very likely that it is the same Gaius the apostle baptized at Corinth, 1 Cor. i. 14. and some have thought him to be the same that the Apostle John wrote his third epistle to, and indeed the characters of hospitality and generosity there given him well agree with this, who was not only the apostle's host that entertained him in a kind and liberal manner, but of all the saints: *and of the whole church, saluteth you:* that is, of the church at Corinth, to whom he was kind and hospitable, even to as many as stood in need of his assistance; or of the church of Christ in general, being beneficent and liberal to all Christian strangers that came that way, lodged them at his house, and provided every thing proper and convenient for them. Dr. Lightfoot thinks that there was a public hospital or receptacle for strangers at Corinth, in imitation of the Jews, who had a place adjoining to their synagogues to entertain travellers in; and that Gaius was the chief officer and overseer of this house, who, discharging his trust well, is deservedly commended. That the Jews had places near their synagogues for such a purpose is certain. It is said†, "why do they sanctify (or consecrate the day?) that "travellers may do their duty, who eat, and drink, and "sleep in the synagogue." The gloss on it is, "not

* Antiqu. l. 12. c. 5. sect. 1.

† T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 101. 1.

" the synagogue itself, but the chambers which were " near the synagogue, are called the synagogue, and " from thence they heard the consecration." And elsewhere [c] it is said, " in the synagogues they neither " eat nor drink——but there is a place near the syna- " gogue where travellers used to sleep and eat;" and then follows what is said before. And Maimonides [d] observes, " there is no sanctification (of " the sabbath) but in the place where the meal is " eaten; so a man may not sanctify in one house, and " eat in another; but if he sanctifies in this, he must " eat in this; but why do they sanctify in the syna- " gogue? because of travellers who eat and drink " there." Upon which his commentator remarks [e], that " they do not eat in the synagogue at all, but they " eat, בבית הסמוך לבית הכנסת, *in a house near the " synagogue*, where they sit at the time of hearing the " sanctification." But whether there was such an house at Corinth near the place of public worship, or any where else for this purpose, is not certain; and to make Gaius only an overseer over such an house, though a faithful one, greatly sinks his character; since one would conclude from hence, that his entertainment of the apostle, and other saints, was at his own expense. *Erastus the chamberlain of the city saluteth you*; whom the apostle is said to leave at Corinth, 2 Tim. iv. 20. and at another time to send along with Timotheus into Macedonia, if the same person is intended; for these do not seem so well to accord with his being in such an office, which must require attendance, and would not admit of going from place to place with the apostle, or of being sent by him. The city, of which he was chamberlain, was the city of Corinth, where the apostle and this Erastus were, when this epistle was wrote. The word translated *chamberlain*, is often used for a steward; and here it signifies such an officer as had the care of the city chest or coffer, and distributed the public money; and seems to answer to the *quæstor urbanus*, or city-treasurer, among the Romans, whose business it was to receive the city accounts, and disburse at all occasions of public expenses; so that this was a place of honour and trust; hence it appears, that though not many, yet some rich and honourable were called by grace, and embraced the Gospel. His name signifies beloved, and is the same with David in Hebrew. What nation he was of is not certain, whether a Roman, a Greek, or Jew; one of this name is reckoned among the seventy disciples, and is said to be bishop of Paneas, or of the Philippians; see the note on Luke x. 1. *Quartus a brother*: not of Tertius, nor of Erastus, nor of the apostle according to the flesh, as some have thought, but a brother in a spiritual relation. This man, as appears from his name, was a Roman; probably had before lived at Rome, and therefore sends his salutations to the Christians there: he is mentioned among the seventy disciples, and said to be bishop of Berytus; see the note on Luke x. 1.

Ver. 24. *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.*] This verse is placed by the Syriac at the end of the chapter, and is wanting in the Ethiopic version, and in one ancient copy, being, excepting the word *all*, the same as at the end of ver. 20. but inasmuch as it is in all other copies, it ought to be repeated and stand here: the reason of the repetition may either be, because the former might be written by his amanuensis, and this with his own hand, as was usual with him in all his epistles, by which they might be known to be his, 2 Thess. iii. 17, 18. or the apostle having so great an affection for this church, knew not how to take his leave of them, but repeats his valediction again and again, as here, and in ver. 20. and ch. xv. 33. The three following verses are placed in some copies, at the end of ch. xiv. and omitted here, as they are by the Arabic version, which begins thus, *to the only most wise God, Jesus Christ*; and so considers the following doxology as belonging to Christ, and to him as God, and as the only most wise God.

Ver. 25. *Now to him that is of power to stablish you,* &c.] God is here described by his power, and the particular instance of it is the establishing of his people; that is, in the Gospel, as the Syriac version reads the next clause, and in the profession of it, with grace in their hearts, and in the exercise of it, and more lively and cheerful discharge of duty; see the note on ch. i. 11. *according to my Gospel*; this is the means by which God usually establishes his people in faith and holiness; it is, indeed, an act of divine power, and which there is reason to hope and believe will be exerted; for words which express the power of God to do this, or the other thing, generally import willingness to do it, as the word does here; but then this is commonly done in the use of means: and that is the Gospel, than which nothing has a greater tendency to, and is better calculated for, and with a divine blessing always issues in the establishment of the saints. The apostle calls the Gospel his, not because he was the author of it, or the subject of it; but because he was the minister of it; it was that Gospel which he was sent and qualified to preach, and did preach fully and faithfully, and which he explains by the following clauses: *and the preaching of Jesus Christ*: being that Gospel which Jesus Christ himself preached, for which he was anointed and sent, and which first began to be spoken by him in its power and purity, and in such a manner as it never was before or since: and of which he also is the subject; it treats of his person, offices, righteousness, blood, sacrifice, and salvation; and which when preached aright is done in his name, by his authority, through gifts, grace, and strength received from him, and with a view to his glory: it follows as a further explanation of it, *according to the revelation of the mystery*; by which is meant, not, as some think, only the calling and conversion of the Gentiles through the preaching of the Gospel, though what is said of it well agrees with it; see Ephes. iii. 3, 4, 5. nor merely the mystery of Christ's incarnation and redemption by him; but the whole Gospel, and all the truths of it, which is often in Scripture called a *mystery*, because the reason of many of its important doctrines does not clearly appear to the carnal reason of men; and the *modus* of

[c] Gloss. in T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 3. 2.
[d] Hilchot Sabbat, c. 29. sect. 8.
[e] Maggid Misnah in ib.

several of them will ever remain inexplicable by us, as the doctrine of the Trinity, the sonship of Christ, and his incarnation, the resurrection, &c. though the things themselves are most clearly revealed, as here *revelation* is ascribed unto them; by which is meant not that internal revelation of them, by the spirit of God to the souls of men, though absolutely necessary to the understanding of them in a spiritual manner; nor the revelation of them to the apostles by Christ, by which, and not by men, they were taught and received; but that revelation which they have made of them in the external ministry of the word: *which was kept secret since the world began*, or *from eternal times*: from all the ages of the former dispensation, or that have run out from the beginning of the world; not that this mystery of the Gospel was entirely unknown, nor any hints given of it in those ages; for there certainly were, as to our first parents after the fall, to Abraham, Moses, David, Isaiah, and others; but it was but obscurely revealed, only some dark intimations were given of it; it was exhibited in types, shadows, and sacrifices; and, in a comparative sense, was wrapped up in darkness and silence, in reference to the more clear discovery and open exhibition of it under the Gospel dispensation.

Ver. 26. *But now is made manifest*, &c.] In these last days, in which God has spoken by his son, by whom the doctrines of grace are most clearly revealed, and fully dispensed; and by his apostles, who were blessed with a clear insight into them, and with extraordinary gifts to minister them; *and by the Scriptures of the prophets*; or prophetic writings, in which these truths are hinted, and by which, being made manifest by Christ and his apostles, they are attested and confirmed; *according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith*: that is, it is by the express order and command of that God who is from everlasting to everlasting, that the mystery of the Gospel is made manifest by the preaching of the apostles being witnessed to by the law and prophets in all its doctrines; particularly justification by Christ's righteousness, remission of sins through his blood, and salvation by his sufferings and death; that this should be made known not only in the land of Judea, but to all the nations of the world; for this end, that many souls may be brought to submit to the righteousness of faith, to embrace the doctrine of faith, make a profession of it, be subject to the ordinances of it, live by faith on Christ, and also soberly, righteously and godly in this world: if this commandment refers, as it seems to do, to the order of Christ to his apostles, to preach the Gospel to Jews and Gentiles, to the Jews first, and upon their rejection of it, to turn to the Gentiles; for so, says the apostle, has the Lord commanded us, Acts xiii. 46, 47. here is a clear proof that Christ is God, and that he is the everlasting God.

Ver. 27. *To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ*, &c.] This may be understood of God the Father, who is the only wise God, originally, essentially, and infinitely; though not to the exclusion of the Son and Spirit; and whose infinite wisdom appears in the works of creation and providence, in redemption and salvation by Christ, and in the whole scheme of the Gospel so largely commended in the foregoing verses: and the glory of all is displayed in, and to be given to him through Christ as Mediator; as the glory of his power and wisdom, particularly mentioned, who is the wisdom of God and the power of God; and the glory of the Gospel, of which Christ is the sum and substance; and the glory of salvation by him, and indeed of all his perfections; which is most illustriously manifested in it, in the contrivance, impetration, and application of it; and this glory is to be ascribed to him *for ever*, throughout the endless ages of eternity, as it will be by angels and men; to which the apostle sets his *Amen*, as wishing that so it might be, and as firmly believing that so it will be: the subscription of the epistle runs thus, *written to the Romans from Corinthus*, and sent *by Phebe, servant of the church at Cenchrea*: which though it is not in every copy, nor are the subscriptions at the end of the epistles always to be depended upon; yet this seems to be a right and true one, both with respect to the place from whence, and the person by whom it was sent, as well as with respect to the persons to whom it is inscribed, of which there is no doubt.

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO

THE CORINTHIANS.

THIS was not the first epistle that was written by the apostle to the Corinthians, for we read in this of his having written an epistle to them before, ch. v. 9. but this is the first epistle of his unto them, that is now extant; and has been received by the churches, as of divine authority, being written by the inspiration of God, of which there has been no doubt in any age. The apostle himself was near two years at Corinth, where he preached with great success; and was the instrument of converting many persons, who by him were formed into a church-state, consisting both of Jews and Gentiles, as is clear from many pas-

sages in this epistle, and whom he left in good order, and in great peace and harmony; but quickly after his departure, false teachers got in among them, and bad principles were imbibed by many of them, and evil practices prevailed among them, and they fell into factions and parties, which occasioned the apostle to write this epistle to them, as well as their writing to him concerning certain things, they desired to have his judgment and opinion of, ch. vii. 1. It is thought to be written about the year of Christ 55, and in the first year of Nero, though some place it in the year 59. It was written not from Philippi, as the subscription added to it affirms, but from Ephesus, as appears from ch. xvi. 8. and, it may be, after the uproar raised there by Demetrius, as should seem from a passage in ch. xv. 32. The matter of it is various. The apostle first rebukes them for their schisms and divisions; suggests that their regard to the wisdom of men, and the philosophy of the Gentiles, had brought the simplicity of the Gospel into contempt with them; blames them for their conduct in the case of the incestuous person, and urges them to put him away from them; reproves them for going to law with one another before Heathen magistrates, and warmly inveighs against fornication; and then answers several questions, and resolves several cases concerning marriage; treats of things offered to idols, and of the maintenance of ministers; and dissuades from idolatry, and all appearance of it; takes notice of the unbecoming conduct of the members of the church at the Lord's supper; and discourses concerning the nature and use of spiritual gifts, and commends charity above them; observes and corrects some irregularities in the use of their gifts; proves by various arguments the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, which some of them denied; exhorts to a collection for the poor saints, and to several other things, and concludes the epistle with the salutations of others, and of himself.

CHAP. I.

THIS chapter contains the general inscription of the epistle, the usual salutation, and a special thanksgiving for blessings received; after which the apostle intimates the occasion of his writing, the divisions about their ministers, which gives him an opportunity of discoursing concerning the nature, end, use, and efficacy of the preaching of the Gospel. The inscription is in ver. 1, 2. in which an account is given of the persons concerned in this epistle; and first of Paul, the only inspired writer of it, who is described by his name, by which he went among the Gentiles; by his office, an apostle of Jesus Christ; and by the manner in which he came into it, being called to it not through any merit of his own, but through the sovereign will and pleasure of God: and next mention is made of Sosthenes, a brother minister of the Gospel, who was with the apostle, and joined in the salutation of the church, to whom the epistle is written; who are described, by their general character, a church of God; by the place of their abode, and seat of their church-state, Corinth; and by their special characters, sanctified in Christ by election, and saints through effectual vocation; and with them are joined all other saints in Achaia, that belonged to them and the apostle, that called upon the name of the Lord; and then follows the salutation in ver. 3. usual in all the epistles; after that a thanksgiving to God for the grace they had by Christ in general, ver. 4. and particularly for their gifts of utterance and knowledge, which were plentifully bestowed upon them, ver. 5. and were a confirmation to them of the Gospel of Christ, ver. 6. and by which it appeared, that they were not behind other churches in these things; and are commended for their waiting for the coming of Christ, ver. 7. by whom the apostle assures them, they would be so confirmed in the mean while, as to be presented blameless by him in that day, ver. 8. of which they might be assured from the faithfulness of God, who had called them to communion with Christ, ver. 9. upon which he exhorts them to unity of affection and judgment, for this end, that there might be no schisms among them; and this he does in a way of entreaty, and that by the name of Christ, and from the consideration of their being brethren, ver. 10. suggesting hereby, that there were divisions among them: and signifies, that he had good reason to believe it, having had an account of them from a family of repute among them, ver. 11. and then expressly mentions what their differences were about, namely, their ministers, ver. 12. and uses arguments to dissuade them from their dividing principles and practices; shewing, that one was their Lord and master, Christ, who was crucified for them, and in whose name they were baptized, and not his ministers, ver. 13. and since some among them made an ill use of their having been baptized by the apostle, he is thankful that he had baptized no more of them, and mentions by name those that he had baptized, ver. 14, 15, 16. and gives a reason for it, taken from the principal end of his mission by Christ, which was to preach the Gospel, and not only or chiefly to baptize, ver. 17. The manner in which he was sent to preach, and did preach it, is observed by him, not in the words of human wisdom; and that for this reason, lest either the Gospel should be of no use, or the effect of it should be ascribed to a wrong cause; and then he obviates an objection that might be made to this way of preaching, that hereby the Gospel would be brought into contempt; to which he answers, by granting that it would be, and was reckoned foolishness by them that were blinded and were lost; and by observing on the other hand, that it was effectual to saving purposes to others, ver. 18. and though the former sort might be the wise and prudent of this world, this need seem no strange thing, since the infatuation of such persons is no other than what was foretold would be, as appears from a testimony out of Isa. cxix. 14. cited in ver. 19. upon which some questions are put, and inquiries made, after men of

wisdom and learning, whose wisdom God made foolish, ver. 20. the reason of which was, because they did not make a right use of their natural wisdom in the knowledge of God, wherefore it was his pleasure to save men by means esteemed foolishness by them, ver. 21. and these wise men, who accounted the preaching of the Gospel foolishness, are distinguished into two sorts, Jews and Gentiles; the one requiring miracles to confirm it, the other seeking wisdom in it, ver. 22. but finding neither, though there were really both, the preaching of a crucified Christ was a stumbling to the one, and folly to the other, ver. 23. though those that were called by grace from among them, whether Jews or Gentiles, had different sentiments of it, and of Christ preached in it, in whose esteem he was the power and wisdom of God, ver. 24. the reason of which was, because there are superior wisdom and power in Christ and his Gospel, which the apostle, by an ironical concession, calls the foolishness and weakness of God, to the wisdom and power of men, ver. 25. and instances in the effectual vocation and conversion of the Corinthians, who for the most part were not the wise, the mighty, and noble, ver. 26. but the foolish, weak, and base; and the end of God, in the call of such, was to draw a veil over and bring to confusion the wisdom and power of men, ver. 27, 28. and also that no creature whatever should dare to glory before him, ver. 29. but the true object of glorying in is pointed at, the Lord Jesus Christ; and the reason of it, all blessings of grace being in him, and from him, is suggested, ver. 30. so that whoever glories, should glory in him, ver. 31.

Ver. 1. *Paul called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ, &c.*] The author, or rather the writer of the following epistle; for the Holy Ghost was the author and dictator of it, and which was never doubted: he is described by his name Paul, though his Jewish name was Saul; and very probably he being a Jew by birth, and yet born in a Roman city, might have two names, the one Jewish, the other Gentile; and by the one he went when among the Jews, and by the other when concerned with the Gentiles: and also by his office, *an apostle of Jesus Christ;* immediately called, and sent forth by him; had the Gospel from him by immediate revelation, and a commission to preach it; and which high office was confirmed by signs and wonders, and mighty deeds; by the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost conferred on him, and on others under his ministry; and by the eminent success which attended the preaching of the Gospel by him. This his character he the rather mentions, because some in this church, through the insinuations of the false apostles, demurred upon it; whereas this was not a mere name given him by men, and by which he was only commonly called by them, but was an office he was *called* to by Christ; he did not rush into it, or assume it of himself, but had a divine warrant for it; for he was invested with it, *through the will of God:* both by the secret will and purpose of God, by which he was a *chosen vessel,* to bear the name of Christ among the Gentiles; and by the revealed will of God, signified by the spirit of God, who said, *separate me Saul and Barnabas, for the work whereunto I have called them,* Acts ix. 15. and xiii. 2. and shews, that it was not owing to any worth or merit in him, but purely to the free grace and sovereign will and pleasure of God, that he was made an apostle of Christ: *and Sosthenes our brother.* This seems to be the same man, who was the chief ruler of the synagogue of the Jews at Corinth; and was converted to the Christian faith by the Apostle Paul whilst there, as appears from his favouring the cause of the apostle, for which the Jews beat him before the judgment-seat, and yet Gallio the Roman deputy took no notice of it: in the Syriac dictionary * mention is made of one Sosthenes, governor of a city, one of the seventy disciples, who was educated at Pontus, and cast into the sea by the order of Nouna; and is also said to be bishop of Colophon in Ionia, see the note on Luke x. 1. but without any reason. This person the apostle joins with him, not as in equal office with him, but as a brother in Christ, and very probably a ministering brother, and a companion of his; and the rather, because he might be well known to the Corinthians, and respected by them; wherefore he chose to join him with him, to shew their agreement in doctrine and discipline, and in advice to them, which might have the greater weight with them; see Acts xviii. 17.

Ver. 2. *Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, &c.*] This epistle is inscribed to the saints at Corinth; who are described by their being *the church of God,* a particular congregated church; a number of persons gathered out of the world, and joined together in holy fellowship, carrying on the worship of God together, and walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord; a very high character this, to be called the church of God, which is the pillar and ground of truth: and it may be observed, that this is here given to a people, among whom were many irregularities, errors, disorders, and divisions; which shews, that a church of God is not to be unchurched for every thing that is amiss in them: they are further described by the place of their abode, Corinth, the *metropolis* of Achaia; a very large and opulent city, a place of great trade and commerce, and famous both for its wealth and wisdom; but not so famous for any thing as this, that there was a church of Christ in it; of the city of Corinth, see the note on Acts xviii. 1. and of the church, see on ver. 8. The members of it in general, for it can't be thought to hold good of every individual, are said to be *sanctified in Christ Jesus;* not by baptism, for they were sanctified before that; but were set apart, or chosen in Christ from all eternity, to grace here, and glory hereafter; justified by the blood and righteousness of Christ, in which sense the word *sanctified* is sometimes used; and to whom Christ was made *sanctification* and righteousness; and in consequence of which they were sanctified by his spirit in his name, out of that fulness of grace and holiness which is in him: wherefore it follows, *called to be saints;* for though they were chosen to holiness in Christ, and through sanctification of the spirit unto salvation, yet before calling were unholy; though Christ had given himself for them to sanctify and purify them, yet

* Bar Bahlul apud Castel. Lex. Polyglott. Col. 2444. Vid. Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. 1. c. 12.

whilst uncalled were impure; they fell in Adam, and became both guilty and filthy through his transgression; and by their first birth were unholy and unclean, and were so in their lives and conversations; nor are any holy by natural descent: these were not born saints, nor made so by their own free will, but were become such through the powerful grace of God in effectual vocation; in which not only desires after holiness, but principles of holiness were wrought in them; and by which they were called to the practice of external holiness, or to live an holy life and conversation. And this epistle is not only inscribed to these saints at Corinth, but to them, *with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord:* as in Corinth, so in any part of Achaia, of which Corinth was the chief city. Invocation of the name of Christ not only respects prayer to him, but includes the whole of religious worship: see Rom. x. 13. and this being given to Christ, and performed in his name, is a very considerable proof of his true and proper deity; and the Ethiopic version here styles him, *God, our Lord Jesus Christ:* for none but God is to be invoked; nor can any but a divine person, one that is truly and properly God, without idolatry, be regarded as the object of religious worship and adoration. The phrase *both theirs and ours,* either, as some think, refers to *every place:* and so read the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions; and the sense is, that the apostle inscribes his epistle to all that call upon the name of Christ, whether in Judea or in the Gentile world, in the place where the apostle was, or the Corinthians were, or any of the other saints in Achaia were; signifying, that invocation of God is not confined to any particular place, but that men may now lift up holy hands in prayer to God everywhere; or rather it refers to *our Lord,* and shews that Christ is the common Lord of his people, whom they all invoke, and by whom they are called, and therefore ought to love one another.

Ver. 3. *Grace be unto you, and peace from God,* &c.] This is an usual salutation in all Paul's epistles; see the note on Rom. i. 7.

Ver. 4. *I thank my God always on your behalf,* &c.] Now follows a thanksgiving for various blessings bestowed upon this church, which is a proof of the apostle's great affection for it, and how much its welfare lay at his heart. The object of thanksgiving is God, for as he is the author of all mercies, the glory and praise of them ought to be given to him. The apostle styles him *my God,* to distinguish him from others; and to express his faith of interest in him; and to observe to this church, that all the good things they enjoyed came from him, who was his God and their God, his father and their father; and for which reason he returned thanks to him for them, and by so doing set them an example: the persons on whose behalf he gave thanks were not at this time himself and Sosthenes, but the members of the church at Corinth; and the continuance of his thankfulness for them, is *always,* as often as he went to the throne of grace, or at any other time thought of them: what he particularly gives thanks to God for in this verse is, *for the grace which is given you by Jesus Christ:* and includes all sorts of grace, adopting, justifying, pardoning, regenerating, and sanctifying grace; every particular grace of the spirit, as faith, repentance, hope, love, fear, humility, self-denial, &c. all are gifts of God, and entirely owing to his free grace, and not to man's free will and power, or to any merits of his; and all come through the hands of Christ, and are given forth by him, as the Mediator of the covenant, and in consequence of his blood, righteousness, sacrifice, and merit.

Ver. 5. *That in every thing ye are enriched by him,* &c.] This is still a continuation of the thanksgiving for this church, that they were *enriched,* or plentifully and abundantly provided for by Christ, with all grace, with all the riches of grace; with his own unsearchable riches, of which they were made partakers, and the riches of glory, to which they were entitled by him; and all which come to them through his poverty, which makes his grace in the donation of these riches the more illustrious: and particularly the apostle is thankful, that they were enriched by Christ *in all utterance, and in all knowledge;* that not only they had the knowledge of the truths and doctrines of the Gospel, concerning the person, offices, grace, and righteousness of Christ in the theory of them, or a speculative notion of them; but for the most part had a spiritual experimental knowledge of these things; and many of them had such large gifts of knowledge, elocution, and utterance, that they were richly qualified to preach the Gospel to others; nay, even had the extraordinary gifts of the spirit, so as to speak with divers tongues, as the spirit gave them utterance.

Ver. 6. *Even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you.*] By *the testimony of Christ* is meant the Gospel of Christ, which bears a testimony to his deity, his incarnation, his obedience, sufferings, and death, his resurrection from the dead, ascension to heaven, session at God's right hand, and intercession for the saints; to redemption by his blood, justification by his righteousness, pardon and atonement of sin by his sacrifice, and complete salvation by his obedience and death. This, as it had been preached to the Corinthians, was confirmed and established among them, by the signs and miracles with which it was attended; by the extraordinary gifts of the spirit, particularly of prophecy bestowed on many of them; and by the internal power and energy of the spirit, accompanying and applying it to their souls.

Ver. 7. *So that ye come behind in no gift,* &c.] Ordinary or extraordinary; a detail of the gifts which were bestowed on them is made in ch. xii. 8, 9, 10. by which it appears that they were not inferior in gifts to any of the churches: *waiting for the coming; or the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ;* who will appear a second time, come in great glory, will raise the dead, and judge both quick and dead; when gifts will cease and be of no more use, and when they must all be accounted for; and therefore, till that time comes, should be diligently made use of, and improved to the interest and service of Christ; who will surely come again, and call his servants and churches to an account for the talents he has intrusted them with; and whose coming is to be believed, loved, looked, and hoped for by all, that love him in sincerity and truth.

Ver. 8. *Who shall also confirm you unto the end,* &c.] The author of this blessing of confirmation is not the Lord Jesus Christ, though he is mentioned in the latter

part of the preceding verse; and seems to be the antecedent to the relative *who* in this, but is not, for this confirmation is made in him; see 2 Cor. i. 21. and besides, it is in order that the saints might be blameless in the day of Christ, and so must design some other person distinct from him, which is God the father, ver. 4. to whom the apostle gives thanks, and continues to do so unto this verse; in which he assures the saints of confirmation in grace by God, the author and giver of all grace: and which may be understood of their confirmation in the love and favour of God, from which there can be no separation; and of their establishment in the person of Christ, and in the doctrines of grace; and of the permanency of the grace of the spirit in them, and of their perseverance in faith and holiness *unto the end*; that is, of their days; even until the day of Christ, when the good work begun in them shall be performed and finished; that is, *for ever*, as the Ethiopic version reads it: for the love of God to his people always continues; their interest in Christ can never be lost; grace in them is an immortal seed; nor shall they be ever finally and totally moved away from the hope of the Gospel: *that ye may be blameless*; not in themselves, for no man is without his faults; none of God's children are without their failings and infirmities; they have whereof to blame themselves, and may be blamed by God too in a providential way; but they are so in Christ their head, being justified by his righteousness, and washed in his blood; and so in the sight of God, as considered in Christ; and will appear such in the day of Christ, when he shall descend from heaven, and take his saints to him, and present them to himself a glorious church, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing.

Ver. 9. *God is faithful, by whom ye were called*, &c.] These words contain arguments, assuring the saints of their confirmation in grace, and of their being preserved blameless to the day of Christ, taken from the faithfulness of God, who is always true to his promises: whatever he has said, he'll do it; he'll never suffer his faithfulness to fail; and since he has made so many promises concerning the establishment of his people, and their perseverance to grace, they may assure themselves of them; and also from his having called them by his grace, for whom he effectually calls by his grace, he glorifies; and particularly from his having called them *unto the fellowship of his son Jesus Christ our Lord*: to partake of his grace, and to be heirs of glory with him; to enjoy communion with him in private and public exercises of religion, which is an evidence of being in him, and of union to him; for it is not merely into the fellowship of his saints or churches, but into the fellowship of his son they are said to be called; and such are members of Christ, of his body, of his flesh, and of his bone; and shall never be lost and perish, but shall be confirmed to the end; be preserved in him blameless, and presented to him faultless, and have everlasting life.

Ver. 10. *Now I beseech you, brethren*, &c.] The apostle having observed the many favours and blessings bestowed on this church, proceeds to take notice of the divisions and contentions which were fomented in it; and in the most kind and tender manner entreats them to take every proper step to prevent schisms among them: he does not use his apostolical power and authority, or lay his injunctions and commands upon them, which he might have done, but most affectionately beseeches them; styling them *brethren*, as they were in a spiritual relation, being children of the same father, members of the same body, and partakers of the same grace, and is a reason why they should not fall out by the way: and this obsecration is made *by the name of the Lord Jesus*; which he wisely judged must have its weight and influence on many of them, to whom that name must be dear and precious, and which they called upon and were called by; and shews, that he was not acting in his own name, and seeking his own profit; but was concerned in and for the name of Christ, and for his honour and interest, which lay at stake by their contentions. His earnest request to them is, *that ye speak*, says he, *the same thing*: profess the same truths, and express them in the same words; which shews the lawfulness, yea, necessity and usefulness, of confessions and articles of faith, being made and agreed to by members of churches; and which should be drawn up in a form of sound words, and abode by; for the introducing of new words and phrases is often the means of bringing in new doctrines, and of raising great contentions and animosities; wherefore using the same words to express truth by is a very proper and prudent expedient to prevent them: *and that there be no divisions*, or *schisms among you*: which are generally made by innovations in doctrine, or worship; by forming new schemes of religion, new articles of faith, and modes of discipline: but *that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment*; which regards not only the sameness of love and affection to one another, being, as the first Christians were, of one heart and of one soul; but their agreement in their judgments and sentiments, of both doctrine and discipline; and such an entire harmony and symmetry among them, as in the members of the body, where each member and bone being in their proper place, exactly answer to, and tally with each other; and which is the most effectual way to speak the same things, and so bar against all schisms and divisions; and such an agreement is absolutely necessary to the peace, comfort, and well-being of a church; for how should *two*, and much less more, *walk together*, unless they are *agreed*?

Ver. 11. *For it hath been declared unto me, of you, my brethren*, &c.] Lest the above advice of the apostle should be thought to be impertinent and needless, and to proceed upon groundless suspicions and jealousies of his, he signifies that he not only had some broad hints of their contentions and divisions, but the whole affair was laid open, and made manifest to him: the thing was a clear point to him; he had no reason at all to doubt of the truth of it; nor could they deny it, the proof was so strong, the evidence so full, being given *by them which are of the house of Chloe*. Some take Chloe to be the name of a place; a city so called is said to have been in Cappadocia; but it seems rather to have been the name of a woman. Horace[b] several times makes mention of a woman of this name, and so does Martial[c]. Pausanias[d] calls the goddess

[b] Carmin. l. 3. Ode 7, 9. 19.
[c] L. 4. Epigr. 22. & l. 9. Epigr. 13.
[d] L. 1. sive Attica, p. 28.

Ceres by it, the goddess of husbandry; the word signifying *green grass of the field*. The person the apostle speaks of was one that very probably lived at Corinth, and was a member of the church there, and at the head of a family of great worth and credit; who being grieved at the growing animosities, and disturbances there raised, wrote to the apostle, and gave him a distinct account of them, desiring him to use his interest to put a stop to them. He mentions this family by name, to shew that he had not took up an idle tale, and received reports from any body, nor from a single person only, but from a family of repute among them; and who could have no other views in the relation of it to him, than the good of the church, and the glory of God: and what they had made out clearly to him was, *that there are contentions among you;* about their ministers, as appears afterward, as well as about opinions in doctrines, and ceremonies in worship, which occasioned undue heats, and great indecencies, tending to make rents and schisms among them.

Ver. 12. *Now this I say that every one of you saith,* &c.] This the apostle affirms not upon his own personal knowledge, but upon the credit of the report the house of Chloe had made unto him; and his meaning is not that every individual member of this church, but that many of them, and the far greater number of them, were in the following factions, some being for one minister, and some for another: one part of them said, *I am of Paul;* he had been instrumental in their conversion: he had baptized some of them, and first laid the foundation of a Gospel church among them; was a solid, brave, and bold preacher of the Gospel, and was set for the defence of it; wherefore he was the minister for them, and they were desirous of being called and distinguished by his name: but there was another party that said, *and I of Apollos;* in opposition to Paul, whom they despised, as a man whose aspect was mean; his bodily presence weak, made no figure in the pulpit; his speech low and contemptible; his discourses plain, not having that flow of words, and accuracy of expression, as Apollos had; who was an eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures, who coming to Corinth after the Apostle Paul, many were taken with his way of preaching; he was the preacher for them, and they chose to be called after him, and in distinction from others: whilst another company of them said, *and I of Cephas;* or Peter, in opposition both to Paul and Apollos; who with them were new upstart ministers, in comparison of Peter, who was with Christ from the beginning, and saw his miracles, and heard his doctrines; and, besides, had the apostleship and Gospel of the circumcision, on which account they highly valued him; for these must be supposed to be the converted Jews among them, who still retained a regard to the ceremonies of the law; wherefore they fixed on Peter as their minister, and to be called by his name: but others said, *and I of Christ;* which some take to be the words of the apostle, declaring who he was of, and for, and belonged unto; intimating that they, as he, should call no man father, or master, on earth, or be called by any other name than that of Christ. Others consider them as the words of the Corinthians, a small part of them who were very mean and contemptible, and therefore mentioned last, who chose to be known and called by no other name than that of Christians; but I rather think that these design a faction and party, to be condemned as the others. These were for Christ, in opposition to Paul, Apollos, and Cephas, and any other ministers of the word. They were for Christ without his ministers; they were wiser than their teachers; they were above being under any ministrations and ordinances; as the others attributed too much to the ministers of the Gospel, these detracted too much from them, and denied them to be of any use and service. Some persons may be, in such sense, for Christ, as to be blame-worthy; as when they use his name to deceive men, or divide his interest.

Ver. 13. *Is Christ divided?* &c.] Some read the words as an assertion, *Christ is divided;* that is, his body, the church, is divided by such factions and parties; though in some copies μη, the note of interrogation, is put before the clause, and so to be rendered, *is Christ divided?* no; his human body was not to be divided; a bone of him was not to be broken; the seamless garment he wore was not to be rent asunder; nor is his mystical body, the church, to be torn in pieces by schisms and divisions; nor is any one part of his Gospel different from, or opposite to another part of it; his doctrine is the same as preached by one minister and another, and is all of a piece, uniform and harmonious. Christ is not divided from his father, not in nature; though he is to be distinguished from him, yet not to be divided; he is one in nature with him, though he is a distinct person from him; nor is he, nor can he, or will be ever separated from him; nor is he to be divided from him in his works and actions, with whom he was jointly concerned in creation, providence, and grace; and such are to be blamed as dividers of Christ from the father, who talk of Christ to the exclusion of the father, or to the dropping and neglect of any of his acts of grace; as his everlasting love to his chosen ones, the eternal election of them in Christ, the covenant of grace made with him, and the instance of his grace in the gift and mission of his son: nor is Christ divided from himself, not in his nature and person; the two natures, human and divine, are united in one person; they are to be distinguished, and not to be confounded, yet not to be separated as to make two distinct persons: nor in his offices; a whole Christ is to be received; Christ in his kingly as well as in his priestly office; to claim him as a Saviour and disown him as a King, is dishonourable to him; it is to make one end of his death void, as much as in such lies, which is, that he may be Lord of dead and living; and argues a carnal selfish spirit, and that faith in him is not right: such are to be blamed for being for Christ, and as dividers of him, who talk of being saved by him, and yet would not have him to rule over them. Nor is he divided from his spirit, not from the person of the spirit; he is to be distinguished from him as a person, but is one in nature with him; nor from his gifts and graces, which he has as man and Mediator without measure; nor from the work of the spirit; for it is his grace the spirit of God implants in the hearts of men; it comes from him, it centres in him, it makes men like him, and glorifies him; such who cry up Christ, and

cry down the work of his spirit upon the soul, are to be blamed for being for Christ, and to be reckoned dividers of them as much as in them lies: nor is Christ divided from his church and people; there is a close union between them, and he dwells in them, and among them; and they are to be blamed that talk of Christ, and never meet with his saints in public service and worship: nor is he divided from his ministers, word, and ordinances; Christ is the sum of the ministry of the word; the ordinances are instituted by him; he submitted to them himself, and is the substance of them, and has promised his presence in them to the end of the world: and what God has put together, let no man put asunder. *Was Paul crucified for you?* no; he had taught them another doctrine; namely, that Christ was crucified for them, that he died for their sins, and had bought them with the price of his own blood; and therefore they were not to be the servants of men, or to call any man master, or to be called by his name, or any other man's, only by Christ's, who had redeemed them by his blood; so that they were not their own, nor any other's, but his, and ought to glorify him with their souls and bodies, which were his. *Or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?* no; but in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. The apostle did not pretend to be the author of a new revelation, or the setter-up of a new religion, but was a preacher of the Gospel, and an administrator of the ordinances of Christ; wherefore he baptized not in his own name, but in the name of Christ; to whose worship and service such as are baptized are devoted, and not to the service of men, and therefore not to be called after their names.

Ver. 14. *I thank God that I baptized none of you, &c.*] The Alexandrian copy and the Syriac version read, *I thank my God;* not that the apostle disliked the ordinance of baptism, or the administration of it; and much less that he thought it criminal, or an evil in him to perform it; nor was he at any time displeased at the numbers of persons who desired it of him; but on the contrary rejoiced where proper subjects of it were brought to a submission to it; but inasmuch as some persons in the church at Corinth made such an ill use of his having baptized them, he was greatly thankful that it was so ordered in providence, that the far greater part of them were baptized by other ministers, either by those who were with him, or came after him; and that he baptized none of them with his own hands, *but Crispus and Gaius.* The former of these was the chief ruler of the Jewish synagogue at Corinth, who hearing the apostle, and believing in Christ, was baptized by him, Acts xviii. 8. and the latter was a very liberal and hospitable man, and was the apostle's host, whilst he was at Corinth; see Rom. xvi. 23.

Ver. 15. *Lest any should say that I had baptized in my own name.*] The Alexandrian copy, and some others, and the Vulgate Latin version, read, *lest any one should say that ye were baptized in my name;* and the Ethiopic version renders it, *that ye might not say we have been baptized in his name.* This gives the true reason why the apostle was so thankful he had baptized no more of the members of this church, lest either some should reproach him, as having done it in his own name, and as seeking his own honour and interest; or lest others should affect, from their being baptized by him, to be called by his name, as if he was the author and patron of a new sect.

Ver. 16. *And I also baptized the household of Stephanas, &c.*] The same name with *Stephanios,* or *Stephanio* in Pliny[e]. Before he says he had baptized none but Crispus and Gaius; but recollecting things, he corrects himself, and observes, that he had also baptized the household of Stephanas, who by the Greek writers is thought to be the same with the gaoler baptized by the apostle at Philippi, but was now removed from thence to Corinth, and was become a famous and useful man there. No argument can be formed from the baptism of his household in favour of infant-baptism, since it must be first proved that he had any infants in his family, and that these were baptized; and if his household and the gaoler's are the same, 'tis certain that his household were such who were capable of having the word of God spoke to them, and who actually did believe in God. And if they were not the same, yet 'tis clear that this household of Stephanas consisted of adult, converted, and very useful persons; they were the first-fruits of Achaia, and had addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints, ch. xvi. 15. *Besides,* that is, the above-mentioned persons, *I know not whether I baptized any other;* meaning at Corinth, for he might have baptized, and doubtless did baptize many more in other places, for any thing that is here said to the contrary: of this he would not be positive; for though he might fully know, and well remember, on recollection, who, and how many, were baptized by him with his own hands there, yet he could not tell but that some persons might have removed thither, and become members of the church in that place, who had been baptized by him elsewhere.

Ver. 17. *For Christ sent me not to baptize, &c.*] Some think the apostle refers to his particular mission from Christ, Acts xxvi. 16. in which no mention is made of his administering the ordinance of baptism; but no doubt he had the same mission the rest of the apostles had, which was to baptize as well as preach; and indeed, if he had not been sent at all to baptize, it would have been unlawful for him to have administered baptism to any person whatever; but his sense is, that baptism was not the chief and principal business he was sent about; this was to be done mostly by those preachers of the word who travelled with him, or followed after him: he was not sent so much about this work, *but to preach the Gospel:* for which he was most eminently qualified, had peculiar gifts for the discharge of it, and was greatly useful in it. This was what he was rather sent to do than the other, and this *not with wisdom of words.* Scholastic divinity, or the art of disputation, is by the[f] Karaites, a sect among the Jews, called חכמת הדברים, *wisdom of words:* this the apostle seems to refer to, and signifies he was not sent with, or to preach, with words of man's wisdom, with human eloquence and oratory, with great swelling words of vanity, but in a plain, humble, modest man-

[e] Nat. Hist. l. 7. c. 48.

[f] Sepher Cosri Orat. 5. Sign. 15, 16. fol. 277. 2. 278. 1.

ner; on which account the false teachers despised him, and endeavoured to bring his ministry into contempt with others: but this way and manner of preaching he chose for this reason, *lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect*: that is, either lest men's ears and fancies should be so tickled and pleased with the eloquence of speech, the elegancy of diction, and accuracy of expression, the cadency of words, and beauty of the oration, with the manner, and not with the matter of preaching, and so the true use, end, and design of the doctrine of a crucified Christ be defeated; or lest the success of the ministry should be attributed to the force of enticing words, and the strength and persuasion of oratory, and not to the energy of divine power attending the doctrine of the cross.

Ver. 18. *For the preaching of the cross*, &c.] Not of the Christian's cross, which he is to take up and bear for the sake of Christ; though this is a doctrine taught by Christ, and his apostles, and found to be true by the saints in all ages; and is what is had in great aversion and contempt, being very disagreeable to the natural man: but of the cross of Christ, the doctrine of salvation by a crucified Christ; or the doctrine of peace and reconciliation by the blood of his cross, and of righteousness, pardon, atonement, and satisfaction by the offering up of himself upon it as a sacrifice for sin, is here intended; and which *is foolishness* in the esteem of many; and that because man's wisdom has no hand either in forming the scheme of it, or in the discovery of it to the sons of men; and besides, being revealed, it is very disagreeable to the carnal reason of man. This way of preaching is very impolite and unfashionable, and therefore despised; it is a doctrine which is not received by the wise and learned, but has been in all ages loaded with reproach, stigmatized either as a novel or licentious doctrine, and attended with persecution; though the only doctrine God owns for conversion, which administers comfort to distressed souls, and is food for the faith of believers; yea, it is a display of the highest wisdom; is what angels approve of, and desire to look into; is wiser than the wisdom of men; it has made foolish the wisdom of this world, and is what is only able to make a man wise unto salvation; and yet this doctrine is accounted foolish, yea foolishness itself; but to whom is it so? *to them that perish*. All mankind are in a lost and perishing condition, by reason of sin, and want of righteousness. There are some who shall not perish; the Father has chose them unto salvation, the Son has redeemed them, and the Spirit sanctifies them; but there are others who do perish in their sins; wicked and ungodly men, carried away with their own lusts and blinded by Satan, the god of this world: these are they that are lost, to whom the Gospel is hid, and who judge it foolishness; but their judgment of it is not to be regarded, being no more capable to judge of the glory and wisdom of the Gospel, than a blind man is of colours: *but unto us which are saved*: who are chosen in Christ unto salvation; whose persons and grace are secured in Christ, and in the everlasting covenant; for whom Christ has wrought out salvation; and to whom it is applied by the spirit of God; and who are kept unto the full enjoyment of it by divine grace: to these *it is the power of God*: organically or instrumentally; it being the means of quickening them when dead in sin, of enlightening their dark minds, of unstopping their deaf ears, of softening their hard hearts, and of enemies making them friends to God, Christ, and his people: and it is likewise so declaratively, there being a wonderful display of the power of God in the ministration of it; as may be seen when observed who were the first preachers of it, men of no figure in life, of no education, illiterate mechanics, very mean and abject; into these earthen vessels were put the treasure of the Gospel, that the excellency of the power might appear to be of God, and not man; as also the doctrine they preached, a crucified Christ, disagreeable to the wisdom of men; the manner in which they spread it, not by force of arms, by carnal weapons, but spiritual ones; moreover, the opposition they met with from rabbins, philosophers, princes, kings, and emperors, and all the states and powers of the world; and yet in how short a time, maugre all opposition, did they carry the Gospel throughout the whole world, to the conversion of millions of souls, and the planting of churches everywhere; and which Gospel has continued and increased, notwithstanding the efforts of persecutors and false teachers, and all the power and artifice of men and devils; all which can be attributed to nothing else but the mighty power of God: add to this, that the Gospel is the power of God in the esteem of the saints, who know it to be so by inward experience; they have felt the power of it on their hearts; it has wrought effectually in them, and therefore they are the best judges, and are capable of giving the best account of it.

Ver. 19. *As it is written*, &c.] The passage referred to is in Isa. xxix. 14. where 'tis read, *the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid*: and is rendered by the Septuagint, *I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will hide the understanding of the prudent*: which is much the same with the apostle's version of it: and the sense of the prophecy is, that in the times of the Messiah, under the Gospel dispensation, the mysteries of grace should be hid from the wise rabbins among the Jews, the Scribes and Pharisees, who, with all their sagacity, parts, and learning, would not be able to comprehend the doctrines of the Gospel; by these their wisdom and understanding would be nonplussed, so that they would reject them as foolishness, because their carnal reason could not reach them; which shews what an infatuation they were given up to: and if this should be the case, as it was with the wise and learned philosophers among the Gentiles, it need not be wondered at; it was what was foretold in prophecy concerning the Jews, who had the oracles of God, and the advantage of a divine revelation; and therefore it need not be stumbling to them that are saved, that the Gospel should meet with so much scorn and contempt among them that perish in the Gentile world. These words are very pertinently cited by the apostle, since they are acknowledged by the Jews themselves to signify the departure of wisdom from the wise men of Israel, in the times of the destruction of the temple, as Jarchi on the place observes.

Ver. 20. *Where is the wise? where is the Scribe?* &c.] These are the apostle's own words; though he may allude to Isa. xxxiii. 18. where there are some phrases much like these, but the meaning is very different. Though they are interpreted by the Talmudists [g] in a sense pretty near the apostle's; for thus they remark upon them, "*where is the Scribe?* he that "counts all the letters which are in the law; *where is* "*the receiver*, or *weigher?* who weighs all the light "and heavy things in the law; "*where is he that* "*counted the towers?* he who counts, or teaches the "three hundred traditions:" so that they understand these of their Scribes and Misnic doctors, and such that are curious searchers into the hidden senses of Scripture. The apostle also seems to allude to a distinction that obtained among the Jews, of wise men, Scribes, and mystical interpreters of the word. They had their חכמי, *wise men*, which was a general name for men of learning and knowledge; and their סופרי, *Scribes*, who interpreted the law in the literal and grammatical sense; and their דרשני, *preachers*, or *disputers*, who diligently searched into the hidden meaning of the Scriptures, and sought for and delivered out the mystical and allegorical sense of them, and who used to dispute about them in their schools. These three are sometimes to be met with together, and as distinct from each other. They say [h] that " God shewed to the first man every "generation, ודורשיו, *and its expounders*, or *disputers*; "and every generation, וחכמיו, *and its wise men*; and "every generation, וסופריו, *and its Scribes*." And the apostle's sense is, *where is the wise?* the man that boasts of his superior wisdom and knowledge in the things of nature, whether among the Jews or Gentiles; *where is the Scribe?* the letter-learned man, who takes upon him to give the literal sense of the law; *where is the disputer of this world?* the Jewish world, who pretends to the knowledge of the more abstruse and secret senses of Scripture; where are these men? they are not to be found among those that God employs in the ministration of the Gospel; he has laid them aside, and chosen others, where are they? what use have they been of to men? are men under their instructions the better, either in principle or practice? where are the thousands that have been turned to God by their wisdom, as can be shewn by the faithful ministers of the Gospel? where are they? let them come and produce their cause, and bring forth their strong reasons against the Gospel they account foolishness, and try if these will stand before its superior power and wisdom; where are they? are they not fools, with all their wisdom and learning? The words may be rendered, *where is the searcher*, or *inquirer of this world?* and may design the same sort of persons whom the Jews call חכמי המחקר, *the wise men of search*, or *inquiry* [i], and sometimes אנשי המחקר, *the men of search*, or *inquiry* [k]; by whom they seem to intend such who search into the nature of things, who study natural philosophy. *Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?* by bringing in the Gospel scheme, which the men of the world, the greatest wits in it, are not able to understand; by laying their wisdom aside as useless in the business of salvation; by shewing it to be vain and empty, and of no service in things spiritual and divine; by detecting, through the ministration of the Gospel, the sophisms of men, and shewing that the schemes both Jews and Gentiles give into abound with folly, with stupid notions, and are full of gross errors and fatal mistakes.

Ver. 21. *For after that in the wisdom of God*, &c.] These words contain a reason proving the infatuation of men, with respect to *the wisdom of God*; by which may be meant either Christ, who is the wisdom of God, was in the world, and yet the world of the Jews, and their chief Rabbins among them, with all their wisdom, neither knew him, nor God his father; or the Gospel, which is also so called, and though this was come, both into the Jewish and Gentile world, yet neither of them, by their natural wisdom, knew the God of grace, so manifestly revealed in it; or rather the works of creation, in which there is such a visible display of the wisdom of God: yet *the world by wisdom knew not God*; the author of them: the Gentiles knew him not in any spiritual and saving manner, as in Christ, or the God of all grace; yea, they knew him not as the God of nature to be the one, only, true God; they knew him not so as to glorify him as God, or to worship him in a right way and manner: wherefore, *it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe*; it was his purpose and decree within himself; it was his sovereign good will and pleasure; it was what he, without any motion from, or merit in the creature, resolved of himself from all eternity that he would *save*, not the wise man, the Scribe, the disputer of this world, the rationalist, the talker, nor the worker, but *them that believe* in his son; that look unto him, venture on him, and commit the care and keeping of their souls to him, however weak, mean, and despicable they may otherwise be; or whether they believe with a weak, or a strong faith, so be it, it is but true: the Ethiopic version reads, *that believe in this foolish doctrine*; and this he determined to do, and did, *by the foolishness of preaching*; or by that sort of preaching, which both for the matter of it, Christ, that itself, and the manner of it, the world reckons foolishness; and which are the things of the Father's grace in election, of the Son's grace in redemption, and the Spirit's in regeneration: so the wise men of the world, with all their wisdom, are left ignorant of God, and perish in their sins, whilst the Gospel they despise is the power of God unto salvation to all that believe in Christ; this, through efficacious grace, becomes the means of regenerating and quickening men, shewing them their need of salvation, and where it is, and of working faith in them to look to Christ for it.

Ver. 22. *For the Jews require a sign*, &c.] The Jews had always been used to miracles, in confirmation of the mission of the prophets sent unto them, and therefore insisted on a sign proving Jesus to be the true Messiah; except signs and wonders were wrought, they would not believe; and though miracles were wrought

[g] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 106. 2. & Chagiga, fol. 15. 2.
[h] Bereshit Rabba Parash. 24. fol. 21. 1. Vid. T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 5. 1. & Sanhedrin, fol. 38. 2.
[i] Kimchi in Sepher Shorashim, rad. בחן, & in Psal. cii. 6.
[k] Aben Ezra in Psal. civ. 29.

in great numbers, and suchas never man did, they remained incredulous, and persisted in demanding a sign from heaven, and in their own way; and it was told them that no other sign should be given them, but that of the prophet Jonas, by which was signified the resurrection of Christ from the dead; this was great them, and yet they believed not, but went on to require a sign still; nothing but miracles would do with them, and they must be such as they themselves pleased: the Alexandrian copy, and some others, and the Vulgate Latin version, read *signs*, in the plural number: *and the Greeks seek after wisdom*; the wisdom of the world, natural wisdom, philosophy, the reason of things, the flowers of rhetoric, the ornaments of speech, the beauties of oratory, the justness of style and diction; as for doctrines they regarded none, but such as they could comprehend with, and account for by their carnal reason, every thing else they despised and exploded. Hence we often read[l] of חכמת יונית, *the Grecian wisdom*, or wisdom of the Greeks; which, the Jews say[m], lay in metaphors and dark sayings, which were not understood but by them that were used to it; the study of it was forbidden by them, though some of their Rabbins were conversant with it[n].

Ver. 23. *But we preach Christ crucified*, &c.] Regardless of the sentiments and opinions of Jews and Gentiles, of what the one required and the other sought after; and in opposition to all their senseless and groundless cavils, the apostle and his fellow-ministers continued preaching the doctrine of salvation by a crucified Christ, and him only; though it was *unto the Jews a stumbling-block*; as was prophesied it should be, and as it came to pass; for they not only stumbled at the meanness of his birth, parentage, and education, at his ministry, miracles, company and audience; but especially at his sufferings and death: it was a stumbling to them that he should die at all, for they understood out of their law, that Christ should abide for ever; and it was more so that he should die the death of the cross, by which, according to their law, he appeared to be accursed; and most of all this was stumbling to them, because they expected a temporal kingdom to be set up by him: *and unto the Greeks foolishness*; as that the son of God should be crucified; that riches should come through his poverty, and men be brought to a kingdom and glory through one so mean and abject; that there should be life for men in his death, and salvation through his crucifixion, or the shameful death of the cross; that blessings should come through his being made a curse; and that his death should be an expiatory sacrifice for the sins of men; and that justification should be by one that was condemned; and peace and pardon should be by his blood; and that he should be raised again from the dead. These things were the subject of their ridicule and banter, and, in their opinion, deserved rather to be laughed at than credited. The Alexandrian copy, and others, and the Vulgate and all the Oriental versions, read, *unto the Gentiles*.

Ver. 24. *But unto them which are called*, &c.] Effectually, by the grace of God, not merely externally, but internally; these have other sentiments of Christ, and the doctrine of salvation by him; for being called out of darkness, and savingly illuminated by the spirit of God, they see wisdom, beauty, glory, excellency, and suitableness in Christ, and in his Gospel; and having felt the power of it upon their souls, with them, *both Jews and Greeks*, of whatsoever nation they be, and whatsoever their prejudices have been, Christ, to them is, *the power of God, and the wisdom of God*: he is *the power of God*; this is opposed to the Jews who stumbled at his weakness, his sufferings and death, even the death of the cross; and is to be understood of him, not as God, in which sense he is Mighty, yea, the Almighty, and which appears by his works of creation and providence; but as Mediator, and of him in his low and mean estate, and even when he was crucified through weakness; in respect to that very thing in which he was weakness, and so stumbling, to others, he is to them that are called the power of God; as is clear by his bearing all the sins of his people in his own body, on the tree, the cross whereon he was crucified, and all the punishment due thereunto; and yet he failed not, nor was he discouraged, nor did he give out, till he had satisfied law and justice perfectly, and made a full end of sin, and an entire reconciliation for iniquity; as also by destroying, by his death, the devil, who had the power of death, and spoiling all his principalities and powers, triumphing over them on his cross; by redeeming his people from all their sins, and the curse of the law, and from him that was stronger than they; by abolishing death, and at last raising himself from the dead; all which shew him, even when and *though* crucified, to be the power of God, or to be possessed of Almighty power; for these are things which a mere creature could never have done: and he is *the wisdom of God*, also, in the account of these persons; and which likewise is to be understood, it being opposed to the opinions the Greeks had of him, not of him as the essential wisdom of God, as he is the wise Creator and Governor of the universe; but of him as Mediator, and in respect to that for which the Greeks accounted him foolishness: for in redemption and salvation by a crucified Christ, God hath abounded towards us in all wisdom and prudence: there is in this article a high display of the wisdom of God; for hereby justice was satisfied in that nature which sinned, and Satan destroyed in that nature which he himself had been the ruin of; hereby sin was condemned, and yet the sinner saved; pardon and justification came to be in a way of grace, and yet of strict justice; all the divine perfections harmonize, and are glorified, and God has hereby executed his wise designs and counsels of old; yea, even the wisdom of God is seen in Christ's dying the death of the cross, whereby he appeared to be made a curse for us, that he might redeem us from the curse of the law, and that the blessing of Abraham might come upon us.

Ver. 25. *Because the foolishness of God*, &c.] Not that there is any such thing as *foolishness* in God, nor the least degree of *weakness* in him; but the apostle

[l] T. Bab. Menachot, fol. 99. 2. Bava Kama, fol. 82. 2.
[m] Maimon. & Bartenora in Misn. Sota, c. 9. sect. 14.

[n] Shalshelet Hakabala, fol. 25. 1. Ganz. Tzemach David, par. 2. fol. 21. 2.

means that which the men of the world esteem so, and therefore, by an ironical concession, calls it by those names; by which is intended either Christ, who, as crucified, is counted foolishness; yet he *is wiser than men*: yea, even than Solomon, who was wiser than all men besides; Christ is greater than he in wisdom, having all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge in him; yea, in redemption by the blood of his cross, which is accounted such an egregious instance of folly, there is such a display of wisdom as surpasses all the wisdom of men and angels: and though he is, as crucified, esteemed as *the weakness of God*, yet in this respect, *is stronger than men*; stronger than the strong man armed; and has done that by his own arm, has brought salvation for his people, which neither men nor angels could ever have done: or all this may be understood of the Gospel of Christ, which is condemned as folly and weakness, and yet has infinitely more wisdom in it, than is to be found in the best-concerted schemes of the wisest philosophers; and has had a greater influence on the minds and manners of men than theirs ever had; it is the manifold wisdom of God, and the power of God unto salvation. Moreover, these words may be applied to the saints, called in ver. 27. *the foolish and weak things of the world*: and yet even these, in the business of salvation, how foolish soever they may be in other respects, are wiser than the wisest of men destitute of the grace of God; and however weak they are in themselves, in their own esteem, and in the account of others, they are able to do and suffer such things, through the strength of Christ, that no other men in the world are able to perform or endure. The phrases here used seem to be a sort of proverbial ones; and the sense of them is, that whatever, in things divine and spiritual, has the appearance of folly and weakness, or is judged to be so by carnal men, is wiser and stronger not only than the wisdom and strength of men, but than men themselves with all their wisdom and strength. It is very likely, that proverbial expressions of this kind, with a little alteration, were used by the Jews. The advice the young men gave to Rehoboam is thus paraphrased by the Targumist[o], חלשותי תקיפא כן גבורתיה דאבא, *my weakness is stronger than the strength of my father*; which is very near the same with the last clause of this verse.

Ver. 26. *For ye see your calling, brethren*, &c.] That is, those that were called by the grace of God among them; for as circumcision and uncircumcision stand for circumcised and uncircumcised persons, and election for elect persons, and righteousness for righteous persons, Rom. iii. 30. and xi. 7. 2 Pet. iii. 13. so here *calling* designs men called by grace; the manner of whose calling, and what sort of persons they were, the apostle signifies, they did or might, or ought, to see, observe, and consider; for respect is here had, not, as some have thought, to the first preachers of the Gospel, who were mechanics, fishermen, illiterate persons, very mean and despicable; but to the members of the church at Corinth, whether public preachers, or private members. The city of Corinth had in it many noble families, of high birth and quality, abounded with learned philosophers and rich merchants; and yet it was easy to be seen, *how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called*. The apostle does not say that there were none of the wise, the mighty, and noble called; for there were Crispus, and Sosthenes, rulers of the synagogue, and Gaius a rich hospitable man, and Erastus the chamberlain of the city, and it may be some others of a like or better figure in life; but there were not many of them; instances of this kind are but few recorded in the Scripture; as Joseph of Arimathea a rich counsellor, Paulus Sergius a Roman deputy, Dionysius the Areopagite, and some in Cæsar's palace; which shew that nobility, riches, and learning, as they do not at all contribute towards a man's salvation, so neither can they hinder it where grace takes place; but, generally speaking, God has thought fit, for wise reasons, to choose and call persons of different characters.

Ver. 27. *But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world*, &c.] So the Jews, in distinction from their wise Rabbins and doctors, call others, טפשין דעלמא, *the fools of the world*[p]; the persons whom God made choice of from all eternity, as appears by his calling them in time, are such who with respect to the wisdom of the world are foolish; have not those natural parts and abilities, that sagacity and penetration in things natural and civil, that knowledge and learning which many others have; and are therefore esteemed foolish by the men of the world, in comparison of whom, who are the wise and prudent, they are but babes: and God's end in his choice of them, and calling them, is *to confound the wise*: who sooner or later will be brought to shame and confusion, to see such ideots, as they took them to be, wiser than they in the business of salvation; having been directed and influenced by divine grace to choose that good part, which shall never be taken from them, when they will be stripped of their nobility, wealth, and wisdom; to see these men go into the kingdom of heaven, and they themselves shut out: *and God hath chosen the weak things of the world*; who cannot boast of their birth and pedigree, of their ancient and illustrious families; have no titles of honour to aggrandize them, nor estates, possessions, and worldly substance to support themselves with; and this he has done, *to confound the things which are mighty*; as Haman was by the advancement of Mordecai. It will be to the utter confusion of the rich and mighty, to see persons of the lowest class in life made kings and priests by Christ, set among princes, and upon the throne of glory: and they themselves fleeing, and calling to the mountains to fall upon them, and cover them from the sight of him that sits on the throne, and the Lamb.

Ver. 28. *And base things of the world*, &c.] Who are reckoned the filth of the world, and the off-scouring of all things; men of mean birth, education, and business of life: *and things that are despised*; and set at nought, as poor persons generally are; yet *God hath chosen* them; even the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of a kingdom: *yea, and things which are not*; some think the Gentiles are here intended, who by the Jews are called *things that are not*; as in the apocryphal book of Esther, xiv. 11. 2 Esdras vi. 56, 57. see

[o] In 2 Chron. x. 10.

[p] Zohar in Numb. fol. 63. 3, & 65. 4.

the note on Rom. iv. 17. for not non-entities, or such who are not in being, are meant; but who are not accounted of, or are reckoned as nothing: and these the Lord calls by his grace, as a fruit and evidence of electing love: *to bring to nought things that are*; who, on the account of their noble birth, large possessions, and high attainments in knowledge and learning, thought themselves something; all which will one day be abolished, and will stand them in no stead with regard to future happiness and glory. The Jews[q] have a saying quite contrary to all this, that "the *Shekinah*, " or presence of God, does not dwell on any but upon " a wise man, a mighty man, and a rich man."

Ver. 29. *That no flesh should glory in his presence.*] That is, *in the presence of God*, as some copies, and the Arabic and Ethiopic versions read; not in their blood, birth, families, lineage, and natural descent; nor in their might, power, and dominion; nor in their riches, wealth, and substance; nor in their wisdom, learning, and parts: for however these may be gloried in before men, yet not before God. These are of no account with him, nor will they be regarded by him, or men on account of them; and he has taken a method in choosing and calling the reverse of these, to stain the glory of all flesh, that no man may attribute his salvation to any thing of the creature, but wholly to the sovereign grace and good pleasure of God.

Ver. 30. *But of him are ye in Christ Jesus*, &c.] These words, as they direct to the proper object of glorying, Christ, so they shew the high honour the called ones are brought to in and through Christ, and are opposed to their outward meanness, folly, weakness, poverty, and contempt. They are first of God the father, of his own rich free grace and goodness, without any regard to any motive, merit, or desert of theirs, put into Christ by electing grace, in whom they are preserved and blessed; and which is their original secret being in him; and is made manifest by regenerating grace, by their being made new creatures; which also is not owing to their blood, or to the will of the flesh, or to the will of man, but to God and his free favour in Christ: and in consequence of their being in Christ, as their head and representative, he becomes all to them, which is here expressed; *who of God is made unto us wisdom*. Though they are foolish creatures in their own and the world's esteem, yet Christ is their wisdom; he is so *efficiently*, the author and cause of all that spiritual wisdom and understanding in divine things they are possessed of: he is so *objectively*, their highest wisdom lying in the knowledge of his person, blood, and righteousness, of interest in him, and salvation by him; with which knowledge eternal life is connected: and he is so *representatively*: he is their head, in whom all their wisdom lies; he acts for them as their wisdom to God, he is their Counsellor, their Advocate, who pleads and intercedes for them, and as their wisdom to men, and gives them a mouth and wisdom which their adversaries are not able to gainsay; and having the tongue of the learned, he speaks a word in season to themselves, when weary, distressed, and disconsolate, and for them in the court of heaven; he is their wisdom, to direct their paths, to guide them with his counsel, in the way they should go, safe to his kingdom and glory: *and righteousness*. He is the *author* of righteousness; he has wrought out and brought in one for them, which is well-pleasing to God, satisfying to his justice, by which his law is magnified and made honourable; which justifies from all sin, and discharges from all condemnation, is everlasting, and will answer for them in a time to come: this he has brought in by the holiness of his nature, the obedience of his life, and by his sufferings and death: and which is *subjectively* in him, not in themselves; nor does it lie in any thing wrought in them, or done by them; but in him as their head and representative, who by *imputation* is made righteousness to them; and they the same way are made the righteousness of God in him; or in other words, this righteousness, by an act of the father's grace, is imputed, reckoned, and accounted to them as their justifying righteousness: *and sanctification*: Christ is the sanctification of his people, through the constitution of God, the imputation of the holiness of his nature, the merits of his blood, and the efficacy of his grace, he is so *federally* and *representatively*: he is their covenant head, and has all covenant grace in his hands for them, and so the whole stock and fund of holiness, which is communicated to them in all ages, until the perfection of it in every saint: this is sanctification in Christ, which differs from sanctification in them in these things; in him it is as the cause, in them as the effect; in him as its fountain, in them as the stream; in him it is complete, in them it is imperfect for the present: and they have it by virtue of union to him; sanctification in Christ can be of no avail to any, unless it is derived from him to them; so that this sanctification in Christ does not render the sanctification of the spirit unnecessary, but includes it, and secures it: likewise Christ is the sanctification of his people *imputatively*, as the holiness of his human nature is, together with his obedience and sufferings, imputed to them for their justification; Christ assumed an holy human nature, the holiness of it was not merely a qualification for his office as a Saviour, or what made his actions and sufferings in that nature significant and useful, or is only exemplary to men; but is a branch of the saints' justification before God: the law required an holy nature, theirs is not holy; Christ has assumed one not for himself, but for them, and so is the end of the law in all respects: and this may be greatly designed in the whole of this passage; *wisdom* may stand in general for the wise scheme of justification, as it is laid in Christ; *sanctification* may intend the holiness of his nature; *righteousness* the obedience of his life; and *redemption* his sufferings and death, by which it is obtained: but then justification and sanctification are not to be confounded; they are two distinct things, and have their proper uses and effects; sanctification in the saints does not justify, or justification sanctify; the one respects the power and being of sin, the other the guilt of it. Moreover, Christ is the sanctification of his people *meritoriously*: through the shedding of his blood, whereby he has sanctified them, that is, expiated their sins, and made full atonement for them;

[q] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 92. 1.

see Heb. x. 10, 14. and xiii. 12. Once more, he is their sanctification *efficiently:* by his spirit, as the author, and by his word, as the means; he is the source of all holiness, it all comes from him, and is wrought by his spirit in the heart; which lies in filling the understanding with spiritual light and knowledge; the mind with a sense of sin, and a detestation of it; the heart with the fear of God; the affections with love to divine objects and things; the will with submission and resignation to the will of God in all respects; and is exercised in living a life of faith on Christ, and in living soberly, righteously, and godly, before God and man: and this, though imperfect now, will be perfected from and by Christ, without which it is impossible to see the Lord: *and redemption:* which he is *by the appointment* of his father, being fore-ordained to it before the foundation of the world; and this sense of the word *made* will agree with every clause in the text; and he is so *efficiently*, having obtained eternal redemption from sin, Satan, the law, and this present evil world, for his people; and *subjectively*, it being in him, and every other blessing which is either a part of it, and comes through it, or is dependent on it, as justification, adoption, and remission of sins. Moreover, this may have respect not only to redemption past, which is obtained by Christ; but to that which draws near, the saints are waiting for, and to which they are sealed up by the spirit of God; even their redemption and deliverance from the very being of sin, from all sorrow and sufferings, from death and the grave, and every thing that is afflicting and distressing.

Ver. 31. *That, according as it is written, &c.*] Jer. ix. 23, 24. *He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord;* not in his own wisdom, riches, and strength; but in Christ, as his wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.

CHAP. II.

THE apostle, in this chapter, pursues the same argument as before, that the Gospel needed not the wisdom and art of men: this he illustrates by his own example; and then he extols the Gospel above all the wisdom of men; and observes how it comes to be made known to men, even by the spirit of God: hence it follows, that it is to be taught in his words, and not in the words of men; and that it can be only known and judged of by the spiritual, and not by the natural man. He instances in himself, and in his own ministry, when at Corinth, where he preached the Gospel in a plain and simple manner, without using the ornaments of speech, and human wisdom, ver. 1. his reason was, because he had determined with himself to preach not himself, but a crucified Christ, ver. 2. His manner of behaviour is more largely declared, ver. 3. that he was so far from being elated with his human literature, and priding himself with that, and making use of it in an ostentatious way, that he was attended with much weakness, fear, and trembling; and his discourses were not adorned with the flowers of rhetoric, but were delivered with the power, evidence, and demonstration of the spirit, ver. 4. And his end and view in this method of preaching were, that the faith of his hearers should not be ascribed to human wisdom, but to a divine power, ver. 5. but lest the Gospel should be thought meanly and contemptibly of, because of the plain dress in which it appeared, the apostle affirms it to be the highest wisdom, as those who had the most perfect knowledge of it could attest; a wisdom superior to the wisdom of this world, or of its princes, since that comes to nothing, ver. 6. the excellency of which he expresses by various epithets, as the wisdom of God, mysterious wisdom, hidden wisdom, ancient wisdom, ordained before the world began, for the glory of the saints, ver. 7. a wisdom unknown to the princes of the world, who otherwise would not have been concerned in the crucifixion of Christ, ver. 8. and that this far exceeds the capacity of men, and could never have been found out by them, he proves, ver. 9. by a testimony out of Isa. lxiv. 4. and then proceeds to shew how it comes to be known by any of the sons of men, that it is by the revelation of the spirit of God, ver. 10. which is illustrated by the nature of the spirit of man within him, which only knows the things of a man; so in like manner only the spirit of God knows the things of God, and can make them known to others, ver. 11. And in this way he observes, that he and others became acquainted with these things; namely, by receiving not the spirit of the world, which at most could only have taught them the wisdom of the world, but the spirit of God, whereby they knew their interest in the blessings of free grace, published in the Gospel, ver. 12. And seeing the Gospel is made known by the spirit of God, it should be delivered, not in the words of man's wisdom, but in the words of the Holy Spirit, as the apostle affirms he and other ministers did deliver it, returning to his former argument, ver. 13. And also it follows from hence, that the things of the Gospel, which the spirit reveals, can't be known and received by the natural man, who has no discerning of them, and so no value for them, ver. 14. and can only be discerned, judged, and approved of by spiritual men, ver. 15. and who are not to be judged by natural and carnal men, because they have not the mind of Christ, and so can't instruct them: but spiritual men have it, such as the apostle and others, ver. 16.

Ver. 1. *And I, brethren, when I came to you, &c.*] This account the apostle gives of himself is occasioned, either by what he had said in the latter part of the preceding chapter, concerning the choice God has made of the foolish, weak, base, and despicable things of the world, and of his calling them by his grace both to fellowship with the saints in common, and therefore he accommodated his ministry unto them, and in particular to the ministry of the word, of which he himself was a like instance and an example; or else by what he had declared in ver. 17. of the same chapter, that he was sent to preach the Gospel, *not with wisdom*

of words, which he here reassumes, and affirms agreeably, that when he first came to Corinth, he *came not with excellency of speech, or of wisdom*: for though he was not only versed in Jewish learning, being brought up at the feet of Gamaliel; but had also a good share of Grecian literature, and was capable, upon proper occasions, to cite the Greek poets, as he does Aratus, Acts xvii. 28. and Menander, Tit. i. 13. and so could, had he thought fit, have adorned his discourses with pompous language, with the flowers of rhetoric, and the eloquence of the Grecians; yet he chose not such a high and florid style, and which savoured so much of human wisdom and art; for the subject he treated of required no such dress, nor any great swelling words of vanity, or a bombast style to set it off, and gain the applause and assent of men: for what he delivered were plain matters of fact, attested by God himself, *declaring unto you the testimony of God*: that is, the Gospel, which bears a testimony to the love, grace, and mercy of God, his kindness and good will to the sons of men, in giving and sending his only-begotten son to be the Saviour and Redeemer of them; and in which God bears a testimony of his son, of his sonship, deity, mediation, incarnation, obedience, sufferings, and death, of his resurrection, ascension to heaven, session at his right hand, intercession for his people, and his second coming to judgment, and of eternal life and salvation by him. All which being matter of fact, and depending upon the witness of God, which is greater than that of men, needed no art nor oratory of men to recommend it: it was enough in plain words, and easy language, to declare it, with the evidence by which it was supported. The Alexandrian copy, and some others, read, *the mystery of God*: and so the Syriac version רזא דאלהא, *the mystery of God*; one of Stephens's copies reads, *the mystery of Christ*; and the Vulgate Latin version, *the testimony of Christ*.

Ver. 2. *For I determined not to know any thing among you*, &c.] This was a resolution the apostle entered into before he came among them, that though he was well versed in human literature, and had a large compass of knowledge in the things of nature, yet would make known nothing else unto them, or make any thing else the subject of his ministry, *save Christ, and him crucified*: he had a spiritual and experimental knowledge of Christ himself, and which he valued above all things else; and this qualified him to make him known to others; and which knowledge he was very willing and ready to communicate by preaching the Gospel, which is the means of making known Christ as God's salvation to the souls of men; and on this subject he chiefly insisted, and in which he took great delight and pleasure; he made known the things respecting the person of Christ, as that he was God, the son of God, and truly man, God and man in one person; the things respecting his office, as that he was the Messiah, the mediator, prophet, priest, and King, the head, husband, Saviour, and Redeemer of his church and people; and the things respecting his work as such, and the blessings of grace procured by him; as that justification is by his righteousness, pardon by his blood, peace, reconciliation, and atonement by his sacrifice, and salvation alone and entirely by him. His determination was to preach none but Christ; not himself, nor man; nor the power and purity of human nature, the free will and works of the creature, but to exclude all and every thing from being partners with Christ in the business of salvation. This was the doctrine he chose in the first place, and principally, to insist upon, even salvation by Christ, and him, as *crucified*: that which was the greatest offence to others was the most delightful to him, because salvation comes through and by the cross of Christ; and he dwelt upon this, and determined to do so; it being most for the glory of Christ, and what was owned for the conversion of sinners, the comfort of distressed minds, and is suitable food for faith, as he knew by his own experience.

Ver. 3. *And I was with you in weakness*, &c.] Meaning either the weakness of his bodily presence, the contemptibleness of his voice, and the mean figure he made as a preacher among them, both with respect to the matter and manner of his ministry in the eyes of many; or his lowly and humble deportment among them, not exerting the power and authority Christ had given him as an apostle; but choosing rather to work with his own hands, as he did at Corinth, to minister to his own necessities, and those of others; or the many persecutions which he endured there for the sake of preaching a crucified Christ; and which he sometimes calls *infirmities*; see 2 Cor. xii. 9, 10. wherefore 'tis added, *and in fear, and in much trembling*; not only on account of the greatness and awfulness of the work in which he was engaged, and lest the souls he ministered unto should be drawn aside from the truth, and into a sinful compliance; but because of the violence of men against him, threatening his life, and lying in wait for it: hence, the Lord, to encourage him, spake in a vision to him, and bid him not be afraid, but boldly preach his Gospel, and not be silent; assuring him of his presence, and that no man should set on him to hurt him, for he had many chosen vessels there to call by his grace through his ministry, Acts xviii. 9, 10. which no doubt greatly served to remove the fears and tremor that attended him.

Ver. 4. *And my speech, and my preaching*, &c.] As he determined, so he acted. As the subject-matter of his ministry was not any of the liberal arts and sciences, or the philosophy and dry morality of the Gentiles, but salvation by a crucified Christ; so his style, his diction, his language used in preaching, *was not with enticing words of man's wisdom*; with technical words, words of art, contrived by human wisdom to captivate the affections; and with bare probable arguments only, a shew of reason to persuade the mind to an assent, when nothing solid and substantial is advanced, only a run of words artfully put together, without any strength of argument in them; a method used by the false teachers, and which the apostle here strikes at, and tacitly condemns: *but in demonstration of the spirit, and of power*: partly by making use of solid proofs out of the writings of the Old Testament, indited by the spirit of God, and which amounted to a demonstration of the truths he delivered; and partly by signs, and wonders, and miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, those extraordinary instances of divine power, which greatly confirmed the doctrines he preached: and besides all these, the spirit of God

wonderfully assisted him in his work, both as to words and matter; directing him what to say, and in what form, in words, not which human wisdom taught, but which the Holy Ghost taught; and accompanying his ministry with his power, to the conversion, comfort, edification, and salvation of many.

Ver. 5. *That your faith should not stand,* &c.] Or *be in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.* The spirit of God directed him, and he under his influence chose, and by his assistance pursued this way of preaching, with this view, and for this reason, that faith in Christ, and in the doctrines of his Gospel, which comes by hearing, might not be attributed to the force of human eloquence and oratory; or stand upon so sandy a foundation, as that which might, if that was the case, be puffed away by a superior flow and force of words; but that it might be ascribed, as it ought to be, to almighty power, stand in it, be supported by it, and at last be finished and fulfilled with it.

Ver. 6. *Howbeit we speak wisdom,* &c.] Though the wise philosophers among the Gentiles accounted the Gospel foolishness; and though the apostle, by an ironical concession, had called the ministry of it the foolishness of preaching, and the foolishness of God, and had thought best, for wise reasons, to deliver it in a plain and simple manner, without the embellishments of human wisdom; yet he vindicates it from the charge of folly: it was not folly, but wisdom, which he and his fellow-ministers preached, and that of the highest kind, as appears from what follows. Though it was not esteemed so by all men, yet *among,* or *with them that are perfect:* adult, at age, opposed to babes and children; such who have their understandings enlightened by the spirit of wisdom and revelation; who have their senses exercised to discern between divine and human wisdom; and who are perfect in a comparative sense, having more spiritual knowledge and understanding than others; for none, in the present state of things, are absolutely perfect in knowledge; they that know most, know but in part: now to such the Gospel and the doctrines of it appear to be the highest wisdom; for the apostle's sense is not that he and other Gospel ministers preached the more sublime doctrines of it to a select set of persons that had more judgment and a better understanding of things than others: if this could be thought to be the apostle's meaning, he might be supposed to allude to a custom among the Jews, not to deliver the sublime things of the law, but to persons so and so qualified. "Says R. Ame[r], they don't deliver the secrets of the "law, but to him who has the five things or charac- "ters in Isa. iii. 3." So they did not suffer the first chapter of Genesis and the visions of Ezekiel to be read until thirty years of age[s]; and from them the Pythagoreans took their notion of not declaring their mysteries but to τελειοις, *perfect* ones, the word here used[t]; but the apostle's sense is, that to such that were perfect, and even to every one that had the least degree of spiritual knowledge, the Gospel was wisdom. Some refer this clause not to persons, but things; and so the Arabic version reads it, *we speak wisdom concerning things that are perfect:* as the things of the Gospel are, such as a plenteous redemption, perfect righteousness, full pardon, plenary satisfaction, and complete salvation and happiness: *yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought:* meaning not the idolatry, superstition, curious and magic arts introduced by demons, which principalities and powers, with all their works, are spoiled and destroyed by Christ; but either the political wisdom and crafty schemes of the civil governors of the world, against Christ and his Gospel, who were by this time most, if not all of them, dead; or the vain philosophy of the wise and learned among the Gentiles, who every day were less and less in vogue, through the quick and powerful spread of the Gospel; or rather the highest pitch of wisdom and knowledge in divine things, which the doctors and Rabbins among the Jews attained to in the age before the Messiah's coming; called *this world* in distinction from the times of the Messiah, which in Jewish language was, *the world to come,* as Dr. Lightfoot observes; who with all their wisdom were confounded and brought to nought by the superior wisdom of the Gospel.

Ver. 7. *But we speak the wisdom of God,* &c.] Not of men, not of the wise politicians, the learned philosophers and Rabbins; that which human wisdom has no hand in forming, nor in revealing, nor in propagating, and which is disliked and disapproved of by it: the Gospel is the sole produce of divine wisdom, and in which there is a glorious display of it; even in those doctrines which are the most charged with folly, as salvation by a crucified Christ, justification by his righteousness, pardon by his blood, satisfaction by his sacrifice, &c. *in a mystery:* 'tis mysterious wisdom. The Gospel is full of mysteries; there is the mystery of God, of a trinity of persons in the divine essence; the mystery of Christ, of his person, as God manifest in the flesh, of his divine sonship, and incarnation in the womb of a virgin; the mystery of the spirit's grace in regeneration, of the saints' union to Christ, and communion with him, the resurrection of the same body, the change of living saints at Christ's coming, with many others: *even the hidden wisdom:* the Gospel lay hid in God, in the thoughts of his heart, in the deep things of his mind, the counsels of his will, and purposes of his grace; it was hid in Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; it was hid under the types and shadows of the ceremonial law; and is hid in the Scriptures, which must be diligently searched for it, as for hidden treasures. It was hid from angels, and from Adam, until revealed; it was in some measure hid from the Jews under the former dispensation, to whom it was made known; and in some sense from believers, under the present dispensation, who as yet know it but in part; and is entirely hid from natural men, even from the most wise and prudent among them. This epithet expresses the preciousness, secrecy, and also security of the Gospel; hidden things being commonly of value, and being kept secret, are also safe; hidden and secret wisdom has been always esteemed, both by Greeks and

[r] T. Bab. Chagiga, fol. 13. 1.
[s] Hieron. prefat. in Ezekiel & ad Paulin. Tom. III. fol. 3. 2.
[t] Hierocles in Pythag. Carmin. p. 307.

Jews: hence that saying[u] of the latter, "he that "would be rich in learning of the law, והחכמה שהיא "צפונה, *and that wisdom which is hidden*, in a hidden "and secret place, should hide and secrete himself "from the children of men." The apostle adds, *which God ordained before the world.* The Egyptians and Grecians boasted much of the *earliness* of their wisdom, but neither of them are to be mentioned with the Gospel for the antiquity of it; it is the birth of God's counsels of old, the produce of his purposes, which he purposed in Christ before the world was; a scheme of things he drew in his eternal mind; 'tis a transcript of the council of peace and covenant of grace, which were from everlasting; what the Jews[w] say of the law, is much more true of the Gospel, "that it was "treasured up with God (they say two thousand years, "and sometimes nine hundred and seventy-four ages), "before the world was created;" and often speak of it as one of the seven things created before the world was[x]. Moreover, this was *to our glory;* under the present dispensation, which by reason of the Gospel has a glory in it surpassing the former; it is to the glory both of the ministers of it, whose honour it is to be employed in preaching it, and in being by it the instruments of converting such who will be their glory another day, and to the glory of all believers who are by it called to the obtaining of the glory of Christ Jesus.

Ver. 8. *Which none of the princes of this world knew, &c.*] Meaning not the devils, as some have thought, who had they known what God designed to do by the death of Christ, would never have been concerned in bringing it about; nor so much the political governors of the Roman empire, particularly in Judea, as Herod and Pontius Pilate, who also were entirely ignorant of it; but rather the ecclesiastical rulers of the Jewish church-state, called עולם הזה, *this world*, in distinction from עולם הבא, *the world to come*, or times of the Messiah; see Heb. ii. 5. such as the priests, Scribes, and Pharisees, the Rabbins and learned doctors. These knew nothing of the wisdom of the Gospel, or the wise counsels of God concerning salvation by Christ; they knew not the Messiah when he came, nor the prophecies concerning him; the Jews and their rulers did what they did through ignorance, and fulfilled those things they knew nothing of; see Acts iii. 17, 18. and xiii. 27. *for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.* They would have received him, believed in him, and not put him to death: a very great character is here given of Christ, *the Lord of glory*, or the glorious Jehovah; reference seems to be had to Psal. xxiv. 7. where he is called, *the King of glory*, and is an argument of his true and proper deity: he is so called because possessed of all glorious perfections, and is the brightness of his father's glory; the same honour and glory are due to him as to the father; and the same ascriptions of glory are made to him by angels and men. This is an instance of what the ancients call a communication of idioms or properties, whereby that which belongs to one nature in Christ, is predicated of his person, as denominated from the other: thus here the crucifixion of him, which properly belongs to his human nature, and that to his body only, is spoken of his person, and that as denominated from his divine nature, *the Lord of glory;* and he being so, this rendered his crucifixion, sufferings, and death, in human nature, efficacious to answer all the purposes for which they were endured.

Ver. 9. *But as it is written, &c.*] Not in an *apocryphal* book, called the Apocalypse of Elijah the prophet, as some have thought, but in Isa. lxiv. 4. with some variation; and is brought to prove that the Gospel is mysterious and hidden wisdom, unknown to the princes of this world, and ordained before the world was, for the glory of the saints: for the following words are not to be understood of the glories and happiness of the future state; though they are indeed invisible, unheard of, and inconceivable as to the excellency and fulness of them, and are what God has prepared from all eternity, for all those on whom he bestows his grace here; but of the doctrines of grace, and mysteries of the Gospel, as the context and the reason of their citation abundantly shew; and are what *eye hath not seen, nor ear heard;* which could never have been seen to be read by the eye of man, nor the sound thereof ever heard by the ear of man, had not God been pleased to make a revelation of them; and though they are to be seen and read in the sacred writings, and to be heard either read or expounded, with the outward hearing of the ear; yet are neither to be seen nor heard intellectually, spiritually, and savingly, unless God gives eyes to see, and ears to hear; the exterior senses of seeing and hearing are not sufficient to come at and discover the sense of them; flesh and blood, human nature cannot search them out, nor reveal them, no nor the internal senses, the intellectual capacity of men: *neither have entered into the heart of man;* this clause is not in the original text; but is a phrase often used by the Jews, for that which never came into a man's mind, was never thought of by him, or he ever had any conceptions, or the least notion and idea of; so the elders of the city, at the beheading of the heifer, are represented not only as saying, *our hands have not shed this blood, neither have our eyes seen it;* but also neither עלתה על לבינו, *hath it entered into our hearts*, that the sanhedrim hath shed blood[y]; and elsewhere[z] it is said, this matter is like to a king, שעלה בלבו, *into whose heart it entered*, to plant in his garden, &c. *The things which God hath prepared for them that love him:* in the original text it is, *for him that waiteth for him;* the sense is the same, for such as hope in the Lord and wait for him, are lovers of him; and the meaning is, that God has prepared and laid up in his own breast, in his counsels and covenant, in the types, shadows, and sacrifices of the old law, in the promises and prophecies of the Old Testament, such doctrines and mysteries of grace as were not so seen, heard, known, and understood by the Old-Testament prophets and saints; and has reserved for his people under the Gospel dispensation, the times

[u] Caphtor, fol. 41.
[w] T. Bab. Zebachim, fol. 116. 1. Zohar. in Exod. fol. 20. 4. & 35. 1, 4 & 65. 3. & in Numb. fol. 66. 3.
[x] T. Bab. Pesachim. fol. 54. 1. Nedarim, fol. 39. 2. Zohar. in Lev. fol. 14. 4. Targum Jon. ben Uzziel in Gen. iii. 24.
[y] T. Bab Sota, fol. 46. 2.
[z] Sepher Bahir in Zohar in Gen. fol. 31. 1.

of the Messiah, a more clear discovery of them: so the Jews themselves own that these words belong to the world to come [a], which with them commonly signifies the days of the Messiah; though here they think fit to distinguish them, and interpret the phrase, *eye hath not seen*, of the eye of the prophets: their words are these [b]; "all prophesied not, but of the "days of the Messiah; but as to the world to come, "*eye hath not seen, O God, besides thee.*" The gloss on it is, "the eye of the prophets hath not been able to "see it." Indeed, the mysteries of the Gospel are more clearly discerned now, than by the prophets formerly.

Ver. 10. *But God hath revealed them unto us*, &c.] Should it be said, that since this wisdom is so hidden and mysterious, the doctrines of the Gospel are so unknown, so much out of the sight and understanding of men, how come any to be acquainted with them? The answer is ready, God has made a revelation of them, not only in his word, which is common to men, nor only to his ministers, but to private Christians and believers, *by his spirit*; which designs not the external revelation made in the Scriptures, though that also is by the spirit; but the internal revelation and application of the truths of the Gospel to the souls of men, which is sometimes ascribed to the father of Christ. Matt. xvi. 17. sometimes to Christ himself, Gal. i. 12. and sometimes to the spirit of Christ, Eph. i. 17. and who guides into all truth, John xvi. 13, and here to the father by the spirit: *for the spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God*; which does not suppose any ignorance of these things in the spirit, antecedent to his searching of them; but his complete and perfect knowledge of them; even as God's searching of the hearts of men expresses his omniscience, and thorough knowledge of all that is in them: the *all things* the spirit searches into, and has a perfect knowledge of, do not design in the utmost extent every thing which comes within the compass of his infinite understanding; but every thing that is in, or belongs to the Gospel of Christ, even the more mysterious and sublime, as well as the more plain and easy doctrines: for the *deep things of God* intend not the perfections of his nature, which are past finding out unto perfection by men; nor the depths of his wise and righteous providence; but the mysterious doctrines of the Gospel, the fellowship of the mystery which was hid in God, his wise counsels of old concerning man's salvation, the scheme of things drawn in his eternal mind, and revealed in the word.

Ver. 11. *For what man knoweth the things of a man*, &c.] The thoughts of a man's heart, the conceptions of his mind, the schemes he is drawing there, his designs, purposes, and intentions; these can never be known by another man, no, nor by angels or devils; not by any creature; by none *save the spirit of a man which is in him?* which is only conscious to, and can only make known the things that are in him: *even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the spirit of God*; and which, as it proves how secret, hidden, unknown, the mysteries of grace are, until revealed by the Spirit; so it gives full evidence to the deity of the Holy Ghost, and clearly shews he must be God, who is in him, knows the thoughts of his heart, the counsels of his mind, his purposes and decrees, and what is contained in them.

Ver. 12. *Now we have received not the spirit of the world*, &c.] Meaning either Satan, the god of the world, the spirit that is in it, and rules over it; or the sinful carnal disposition of the men of the world, which is a spirit of covetousness, uncleanness, pride, malice, and error; or rather the carnal wisdom of the world, which is common to worldly men, lies in the knowledge of worldly things, and is pursued and exercised for worldly advantages: *but the spirit which is of God*; the Holy Ghost, which proceeds from the Father and the Son, is the gift of God to his people, and whom they receive through the doctrine of faith into their hearts, as a spirit of illumination, faith, comfort, adoption, truth, and as a seal and earnest of future glory: *that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God*; who has given himself, his son, and all things freely along with him, as a justifying righteousness, remission of sins, adoption, and eternal life; all which were provided for them in the council and covenant of peace, and made up that grace given unto them freely in Christ before the world began; for there was not only an eternal purpose to bestow these gifts, in the mind of God, and a promise of them in covenant, but a real donation of them to them, as considered in Christ so early: besides, God gave his son, and Christ gave himself for them before they knew any thing of the matter; and therefore must be unknown, until made known by the spirit of God, who is sent unto them, and into their hearts, for this purpose, to make them known; which he does, by shewing all this grace, and by opening and applying the truths of the everlasting Gospel: and this knowledge is not a mere notional one, but spiritual, experimental, and approbational, joined with affection and admiration; and is a knowledge of interest in these things, and which makes both humble and obedient.

Ver. 13. *Which things also we speak*, &c.] Namely, the things which have not been seen by the eye, heard by the ear, or understood by the heart of man; the things God has prepared for his people; the deep things of God; the things of God which are only known to the spirit; the things that are freely given to them of God, and made known to them by the spirit of God: these things are spoken out, preached, and declared to the sons of men, *not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth*; which are learned in the schools of the philosophers, put together by human art, and *in the taught words of human wisdom*, as the clause may be rendered; such as are taught and acquired by human learning, so artificially formed in their order and structure as to work upon the affections of men, captivate the mind, and persuade to an assent. *But which the Holy Ghost teacheth*; or *in the taught words of the Holy Ghost*; in the language of the Scriptures, endited by the spirit of God; or such as the Holy Spirit taught them, suggested to them, directed them to the use of; for he not only supplied them with matter, but furnished them with words, with proper

[a] Zohar in Exod. fol. 64. 4. & 67. 2.
[b] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 34. 2. Sabbat, fol. 63. 1. Sanhedrin, fol. 99. 1. Maimon. in Misn. Sanhed. c. 11. sect. 1. & Hilch. Teshuva, c. 8. sect. 7. & Jarchi in Isa. lxiv. 4.

and spiritual oratory: *comparing spiritual things with spiritual;* the things of the spirit of God, the doctrines of the Gospel, with the spiritual writings of the Old Testament, whereby their truth and harmony are demonstrated; speaking as the oracles of God, and prophesying or preaching according to the analogy of faith; and adapting spiritual words to spiritual truths, clothing them with a language suitable and convenient to them, not foreign and flourishing, but pure, simple, and native; or accommodating and communicating spiritual things, as to matter and form, to spiritual men; which sense the Arabic version favours and confirms, such being only capable of them; and with these there's no need to use the eloquence, oratory, wisdom, and words of men.

Ver. 14. *But the natural man,* &c.] Not a babe in Christ, one that is newly born again, for though such have but little knowledge of spiritual things, yet they have a taste, and do relish and desire, and receive the sincere milk of the word, and grow thereby; but an unregenerate man, that has no knowledge at all of such things; not an unregenerate man only, who is openly and notoriously profane, abandoned to sensual lusts and pleasures; though such a man being sensual, and not having the spirit, must be a natural man; but rather the wise philosopher, the Scribe, the disputer of this world; the rationalist, the man of the highest attainments in nature, in whom reason is wrought up to its highest pitch; the man of the greatest natural parts and abilities, yet without the spirit and grace of God, mentioned ch. i. 20. and who all along, both in that chapter and in this, quite down to this passage, is had in view: indeed, every man in a state of nature, who is as he was born, whatever may be the inward furniture of his mind, or his outward conduct of life, is but a natural man, and such an one *receiveth not the things of the spirit of God;* not the things relating to the deity, personality, and perfections of the Holy Spirit, though these the natural man knows not, nor receives; nor the things done by him, particularly the operations of his grace on the souls of men in regeneration, concerning which he says, as Nicodemus did, *how can these things be?* but the truths of the Gospel before spoken of; so called, because they are contained in the Scriptures endited by the spirit of God, are the deep things of God, which he searches into and reveals; and because they are made known by him, who is given and received for that end and purpose, that the saints might know them; and because they are delivered by the preachers of the Gospel, in words which he teacheth; now these the natural man receives not in the love of them, so as to approve of and like them, truly to believe them, cordially embrace them, and heartily be subject to them, profess and obey them, but on the contrary abhors and rejects them: *for they are foolishness unto him;* they are looked upon by him as absurd, and contrary to reason; they don't agree with his taste, he disrelishes and rejects them as things insipid and distasteful: he regards them as the effects of a crazy brain, and the reveries of a distempered head, and are with him the subject of banter and ridicule: *neither can he know them;* as a natural man, and whilst he is such, nor by the help and mere light of nature only; his understanding, which is shut unto them, must be opened by a divine power, and a superior spiritual light must be thrown into it; at most he can only know the literal and grammatical sense of them, or only in the theory, notionally and speculatively, not experimentally, spiritually, and savingly: *because they are spiritually discerned;* in a spiritual manner, by a spiritual light, and under the influence, and by the assistance of the spirit of God. There must be a natural visive discerning faculty, suited to the object; as there must be a natural visive faculty to see and discern natural things, so there must be a spiritual one, to see, discern, judge, and approve of spiritual things; and which only a spiritual, and not a natural man has.

Ver. 15. *But he that is spiritual,* &c.] Meaning not any particular individual person, not the pope of Rome, as his adherents vainly imagine, whom they fancy to be a supreme and infallible judge in things spiritual, from whose judgment is no appeal, and who himself comes not under the judgment of any; for he's so far from being a spiritual man, or having judgment in spiritual things, that he stands described as the man of sin, the son of perdition, the wicked one, the beast, to whom a mouth is given, speaking great things and blasphemies; but a set of men are here meant, and not such who are only outwardly reformed in their lives and conversations, who are at best but moral, and not spiritual men; nor all that have a form of godliness, an appearance of spirituality; there may be such who may have this, and yet deny the power of it, in which the principle and essence of spirituality lies; nor all such who have spiritual gifts, which may be where there is no spiritual grace; or that have a greater degree of spiritual knowledge than others, or that even have a greater degree of real grace than others; for though these are certainly spiritual men, 1 Cor. iii. 1, 2. Gal. vi. 1. yet they are not the only ones; others that have less knowledge and grace, are spiritual also, and are comprehended in this character; much less does it design such who have no flesh or sin in them, for there are none without sin in the present state; and if this was essential to a spiritual man, there would be no spiritual man in the world; such are only the saints in heaven, who are without fault before the throne; and after the resurrection will have spiritual bodies, as well as their spirits or souls are now made perfect: but here a spiritual man intends every man that is born of the spirit; seeing what is born of the spirit, is spirit, or spiritual; from whence the regenerate man is denominated spiritual, he is such an one that is quickened by the spirit of God, and lives spiritually by faith on Christ; he breathes after spiritual things, salvation by Christ, and an interest in him, communion with God, conformity to Christ, pardon of sin, a justifying righteousness, and eternal life: he has spiritual senses, and these in exercise; he has a spiritual sight of things, of himself, and his lost state by nature, and of the person, grace, and things of Christ; he has a spiritual hearing of the Gospel, by which faith comes; he hears so as to live, and he lives so as that he hears the joyful sound with understanding, approbation, and acceptance; he has a spiritual taste of things, of the grace of God, the fruit of Christ, and the truths of the Gospel; and he smells a sweet savour in

them; he has a spiritual feeling, he feels the weight and burden of sin, the gracious influences and operations of the spirit, and handles Christ, the word of life: he talks the spiritual language of Canaan, and his speech bewrays him to be a spiritual man; and he walks spiritually by faith on Christ, and in the paths of holiness, righteousness, and truth: he is one that is renewed by the Holy Spirit, in the spirit of his mind; has a new heart, and a new spirit put within him; and is become a new creature in Christ: he has the good work of grace wrought in his soul; and in him grace is the reigning principle; in him the spirit of God himself dwells, and he is led by him out of himself to Christ, and into all truth, and walks after him, and not after the flesh: his conversation is spiritual and heavenly; he is spiritually-minded, he minds not the things of the flesh, but the things of the spirit; and though there is a great deal of carnality in him, in his thoughts, his words, and actions, yet this is matter of grief to him, and is his daily complaint: and such an one *judgeth all things;* or *discerneth all things:* not all things in nature, or which fall within the compass of human knowledge; there are many things he may have no knowledge of, nor judgment in, being for the most part not the wise and prudent, but the foolish things of the world who are spiritual; but things divine and spiritual, the things of the spirit of God, the doctrines of the Gospel before spoken of; and these not every difficult passage of Scripture, or knotty point of controversy, but the several articles of faith, necessary and essential to salvation; these are plain and easy to him, they stand before him in a clear light; as that salvation is alone by Christ, pardon by his blood, justification by his righteousness, *&c.* these he has seen and tasted of, and relishes, and can discern things that differ, and approve those which are more excellent; he can distinguish truth from error, and the voice of Christ from the voice of a stranger; and knows when the Gospel is preached, and when not, of which he judges by the word of God and his own experience: not that every spiritual man has a like degree of spiritual knowledge and judgment, but every one discerns and judges according to the measure of the gift of Christ: *yet he himself is judged of no man;* or *discerned of no man;* that is, not of any natural man; who is not capable of discerning and judging who and what he is; only a spiritual man can discern and judge of his spiritual light, grace, and state; as the churches of Christ do, when persons are proposed to them for communion; the other knows him not, but takes him to be a weak, or a wicked man, an hypocrite and a deceiver; and it is a small thing with him to be judged of man's judgment; he cares not what judgment the natural man passes upon him; nor does his faith in things spiritual stand upon the authority and judgment of men; nor will he submit to it; nor can he be reproved, convinced, and refuted by such a person: for though a thousand sophistic arguments may be used with him which he cannot answer, he has a witness within himself to the truths of the Gospel, which opposes itself, and stands its ground against all objections; as with respect to the impurity of human nature, the impotency of man to do any thing that is spiritually good of himself, the insufficiency of his righteousness to justify him before God, the proper deity and real excellency of Christ, his blood and righteousness, and the internal work of the spirit of God on the heart; sooner may a rock be removed out of its place, than a truly spiritual man can be convicted by a natural man of the falsehood of these things, of which he has had an inward experience, as well as is instructed in them by the word of God; nor can he be better taught and instructed by the natural man.

Ver. 16. *For who hath known the mind of the Lord, &c.*] The deep counsels of his heart, the scheme of salvation by Jesus Christ, as drawn in his eternal mind, the sense of the spirit of God in the writings of the Old Testament, the things of the spirit of God, or the doctrines of grace more clearly revealed under the Gospel dispensation; not any natural man, by the light of nature and strength of reason, has known any of these things. The apostle either cites or alludes to Isa. xl. 13. *that he may instruct him?* not the Lord, who needs no instruction from any, nor can any teach and instruct him, nor would any be so bold and insolent as to attempt it; nor does the knowledge of the mind of the Lord qualify any for such a work; since if he knows ever so much of it, he can't know more than the Lord himself: but the spiritual man, whom a natural man, being ignorant of the mind of the Lord, cannot instruct; and so the words give a very proper and sufficient reason why the spiritual man is not discerned, judged, convinced, and instructed by the natural man: *but we have the mind of Christ;* the same with *the mind of the Lord;* which proves that Christ is the Lord, or Jehovah, and so truly and properly God; and which is to be understood, not only of the apostles and ministers of the Gospel, but of all true believers; and therefore want no instruction, as they can have none from the natural man; though chiefly of the former, whereby they were abundantly qualified for the further instruction even of spiritual men.

CHAP. III.

In this chapter the apostle returns to the charge of schisms and contentions upon the Corinthians, which were the occasion of the epistle; and reproves them for their divisions, which were about their ministers; and gives them their just and due character, and who, though they were useful and commendable in their places, were not to be gloried in; and especially it was a great piece of weakness and folly, to set up one against another, when they had an equal interest in them all. Having, in the latter part of the preceding chapter, made mention of the spiritual man, the apostle tells the Corinthians, to whom he writes, that he could not address them as spiritual, but as carnal; and not as perfect men, among whom he spake the wisdom of God, but as babes in Christ, ver. 1. and this rudeness and ignorance of theirs account for his con-

duct towards them, in delivering the plain and easy, and not the sublime doctrines of the Gospel to them, because they were not able to bear them; nor were they yet able, notwithstanding the length of time, the proficiency they had made, and the many teachers they had had among them, ver. 2. and to prove that they were carnal, and not spiritual, he instances in their envy, strife, and contentions, which were carnal works, or works of the flesh, ver. 3. and gives some particulars of their contentions about their ministers, which put it out of all doubt that they were carnal, ver. 4. and reproves them for such contentions, and argues the folly and sinfulness of them; partly from the character of their preachers, as servants and ministers, who were the instruments of their faith and conversion, through the grace of God, and therefore not to be set up at the head of them as their lords and masters, ver. 5. and partly from the unprofitableness of their ministry, without a divine blessing, ver. 6, 7. and also from the unity and equality of the ministers among themselves, though their labours and reward were different, ver. 8. and therefore parties and factions were not to be made on their account; and besides, as they were labourers with God, and the church were his husbandry and building, in which they were employed, ver. 9. though they might differ in some superstructure points, yet they agreed in the foundation; and the apostle instances in himself, under the character of a wise master-builder, laying the foundation, and others building on it, ver. 10. and declares what this foundation was, which he and other Gospel ministers agreed in laying; nor was there any other that could be laid, to any good purpose besides, which is Jesus Christ, ver. 11. and then distinguishes between the different sorts of builders, the one laying on the foundation things of the greatest worth and value, and others things very trifling and useless, ver. 12. and intimates that there would be a time, when there would be a revelation and declaration of every man's work, of what sort it is, ver. 13. so that, according to their different structures, there will be a different reward, as is suggested, ver. 8. for though both sorts of preachers are upon the foundation, and so their persons will be safe, yet what they have built upon that foundation, according to the nature of it, shall either abide or be destroyed, ver. 14, 15. wherefore inasmuch then as the church of Christ is a temple, a building laid on such a foundation as Christ, it ought not to be defiled by factions and divisions, by errors and heresies: especially since it is holy, and the spirit of God dwells in it; and whoever does defile it shall surely be destroyed; and therefore the apostle dissuades from it, both from the turpitude of the action, and the danger of it, ver. 16, 17. he cautions against the wisdom of this world, which was the cause of their divisions; as being self-deceiving, and contrary to true wisdom, ver. 18. and as being foolishness in the account of God, which he proves by some passages of Scripture, ver. 19, 20. and concludes, therefore, that no man ought to glory in men, in the best of men, not even in ministers, ver. 21. so as to separate and divide them, one from another, and set up one above another, since they, and all things else, were theirs, ver. 22. the ground and evidence of which their right and property in them are given, they being Christ's, and Christ's God's, ver. 23.

Ver. 1. *And I, brethren, could not speak unto you,* &c.] Though the apostle was a spiritual man himself, had spiritual gifts, even the extraordinary gifts of the spirit, could judge all things, had the mind of Christ, and was able to speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, yet could not speak it to them, *as unto spiritual;* not but that they had the spirit of God in them, and a work of grace upon them; for they were, as the apostle afterwards says, the temple of God, and the spirit of God dwelt in them; they were washed, sanctified, and justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of our God; but had not that spiritual discerning, or judgment in spiritual things, which some believers had, at least when the apostle was first with them; and now they were under great spiritual declensions, and had not those spiritual frames, nor that spiritual experience and conversation, which some other Christians had: *but as unto carnal;* not that they were in a carnal state, as unregenerate men are; but had carnal conceptions of things, were in carnal frames of soul, and walked in a carnal conversation with each other; though they were not in the flesh, in a state of nature, yet the flesh was in them, and not only lusted against the spirit, but was very predominant in them, and carried them captive, so that they are denominated from it: *even as unto babes in Christ;* they were in Christ, and so were new creatures; they were, as the Arabic version reads it, *in the faith of Christ;* though babes and weaklings in it, they were believers in Christ, converted persons, yet children in understanding, knowledge, and experience; had but little judgment in spiritual things, and were unskilful in the word of righteousness; at least this was the case of many of them, though others were enriched in all utterance and knowledge, and in no gift came behind members of other churches.

Ver. 2. *I have fed you with milk,* &c.] It is usual with the Jews to compare the law to milk, and they say [c], that "as milk strengthens and nourishes an infant, so the law strengthens and nourishes the soul;" but the apostle does not here mean חלב של תורה, *the milk of the law,* as they [d] call it, but the Gospel; comparable to milk, for its purity and wholesomeness, for the nourishing virtue there is in it, and because easy of digestion; for he designs by it, the more plain and easy doctrines of the Gospel, such as babes in Christ were capable of understanding and receiving: *and not with meat:* the more solid doctrines of the Gospel, and sublime mysteries of grace; the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom; such truths as were attended with difficulties, to which the carnal reason of men made many objections, and so were only fit to be brought before such who are of full age, young men, or rather fathers in Christ; who have had a large experience, and a long time of improvement in spiritual knowledge, and have their senses exercised to distinguish between truth and error. The reason he gives for this his conduct is, *for hitherto ye were not able to bear it:* they could not receive, relish, and digest

[c] Kimchi in Isa. lv. 1. Abarbinel, Mashmia Jeshua, fol. 66. 1.

[d] Jarchi in Cant. v. 12.

it; it was too strong meat for them, they being weak in faith, and but babes in Christ; wherefore he prudently adapted things to their capacities, and that in perfect consistence with that faithfulness and integrity, for which he was so remarkable: for the Gospel he preached to them, which he calls *milk*, was not another Gospel, or contrary to that which goes by the name of *meat*; only the one consisted of truths more ealy to be understood, and was delivered in a manner more suited to their capacities than the other: he adds, *neither yet now are ye able*; which carries in it a charge of dulness and negligence, that they had been so long learning, and were improved no more in the knowledge of the truth; were as yet only in the alphabet of the Gospel, and needed to be afresh instructed in the first principles of the oracles of God; for any thing beyond these was too high for them. The apostle seems to allude to the manner and custom of the Jews, in training up their children to learning; as to their age when they admit them scholars, their rule is this[e], "they introduce children (into the school) to "be taught when six or seven years of age, לפי כח "הבן ובנין גופו, *according to the child's strength, and* "*the make of his body*, and less than six years of age "they don't take any in." But sooner than this, a father is obliged to teach his child at home, concerning which they say[f], "from what time is his father obliged "to teach him the law? as soon as he begins to "speak, he teaches him the law Moses commanded "us, and *hear O Israel*, and after that he instructs "him, מעט מעט פסוקים פסוקים, *by little and little*, "*here and there a verse*, till he is six or seven years "of age, and, הכל לפי בוריו, *all this according to the* "*clearness of his* understanding;" *i. e.* as he is able to take things in; and even till twelve years he was to be used with a great deal of tenderness: "says R. "Isaac[g], at Usha they made an order, that a man "should *use his son gently*, until he is twelve years of "age;" the gloss upon it is, "if his son refuses to "learn, he shall use him בנחת ובדברים רכים, *with* "*mildness and tender language*."

Ver. 3. *For ye are yet carnal*, &c.] The Syriac reads it, בבסר אנתון, *ye are in the flesh*: a phrase the apostle elsewhere uses of men in an unregenerate state; but this is not his meaning here, as before explained, but that carnality still prevailed among them, of which he gives proof and evidence: *for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?* They envied each other's gifts and knowledge, strove about words to no profit, entered into warm debates and contentions about their ministers, and went into factions and parties, which were distinguished by the names they were most affected to; in all which they gave too clear evidence of their prevailing carnality, that they too much walked as other men, who make no profession of religion; that they were led by the judgment of men, and were carried away with human passions and affections; and in their conduct could scarcely be distinguished from the rest of the world. The things that are here mentioned, and with which they are charged, are reckoned by the apostle among the works of the flesh, Gal. v. 19, 20. the phrase, *and divisions*, is omitted in the Alexandrian copy, and in some others, and in the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions.

Ver. 4. *For while one saith, I am of Paul*, &c.] This shews what their envying and strife, and divisions were about, and from whence they sprung; and which serves to strengthen the proof, and support the charge of carnality brought against them; for when one sort made a party for Paul, and set up him as their minister above all others; and said *another, I am of Apollos*, preferring him for his eloquence above Paul, or any other preacher, as appears from ch. i. 12. there was a third sort for Cephas, whom they cried up as superior to the other two, or any other man; and a fourth were for Christ, and despised all ministers whatever: *are ye not carnal?* all this was a demonstration of it: they could never clear themselves from it, they must be convicted in their own consciences of it; to which the apostle appeals: the Alexandrian copy and the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions read, *are ye not men?*

Ver. 5. *Who then is Paul? and who is Apollos?* &c.] The apostle's name being used, and he a party concerned, could speak the more freely upon this head, and ask what they thought of himself, and other preachers, whether they were more than men? what authority and power they had, whether they looked upon them as the authors of a new religion, or the founders of a new sect, that were to go by their names? and directs them what light to consider them in, how that they were *but ministers by whom ye believed*; they were servants to Christ and to his churches, and not lords; they did not assume any dominion over men, or pretend to lord it over God's heritage; there is but one Lord and master, and that is Christ, whom they served, and taught others to obey; they were only instrumental in the hand of God, by whom souls were directed, encouraged, and brought to believe in Christ; as for faith itself, that is the gift of God, the operation of his power, and of which Christ is the author and finisher; they laid no claim to this as their work, or imagined they had any dominion over it; that they could either implant it, or increase it of themselves; but thought it honour enough done them, that it came by their ministry; and that that, and the joy of it, were helped and furthered by their means: the Vulgate Latin version reads, *his ministers whom ye believed*; that is, the ministers of Christ, whom they believed in; not in the ministers, but Christ; the Arabic version renders it, *but two ministers, by whom ye believed*; referring to Paul and Apollos, who are meant: *even as the Lord gave to every man*: gifts to minister with, and success to his ministry; making him useful to this and the other man, to bring him to the faith of Christ; all which is owing to the free grace and sovereign good will and pleasure of God.

Ver. 6. *I have planted*, &c.] That is, ministerially; otherwise the planting of souls in Christ, and the implanting of grace in them, are things purely divine, and peculiar to God, and the power of his grace: but his meaning is, that he was at Corinth, as in other places, the first that preached the Gospel to them:

[e] Maimon. Talmud Tora, c. 2. sect. 2.
[f] Ib. c. 1. sect. 6.
[g] T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 50. 1.

and was an instrument of the conversion of many souls, and of laying the foundation, and of raising and forming a Gospel church-state, and of planting them in it; *Apollos watered:* he followed after, and his ministry was blessed for edification; he was a means of carrying on the superstructure, and of building up souls in faith and holiness, and of making them fruitful in every good word and work: each minister of the Gospel has his proper gifts, work, and usefulness; some are planters, others waterers; some are employed in hewing down the sturdy oaks, and others in squaring and fitting, and laying them in the building; some are *Boanergeses,* sons of thunder, and are mostly useful in conviction and conversion; and others are *Barnabases,* sons of consolation, who are chiefly made use of in comforting and edifying the saints: *but God gave the increase:* for as the gardener may put his plants into the earth, and water them when he has so done, but cannot cause them to grow, this is owing to a divine blessing; and as the husbandman tills his ground, casts the seed into it, and waits for the former and latter rain, but can't cause it to spring up, or increase to perfection, this is done by a superior influence; so ministers of the Gospel plant and water, cast in the seed of the word, preach the Gospel, but all the success is from the Lord; God only causes it to spring up and grow; 'tis he that gives it its increasing, spreading, fructifying virtue and efficacy.

Ver. 7. *So then, neither is he that planteth any thing,* &c.] Not that he is the happy instrument of beginning the good work: *neither he that watereth:* who is the means of carrying of it on: not that they are simply and absolutely nothing, without any restriction and limitation; they are men, they are Christians, they are ministers, and useful ones, by whom others believe; they are labourers together with God, ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God, and so to be accounted of; but they are nothing in themselves, nor in their own account, or with respect to God: they are nothing of themselves as ministers; they have nothing but what they have received; all their gifts are from God, nor can they exercise them aright without the grace of God, not being able to think a good thought as of themselves; nor are they any thing in making their planting and watering effectual; and so no glory belongs to them; nothing is to be ascribed to them, they have no part or lot in these things: *but God that giveth the increase;* he gives them their abilities, assists them in the exercise of their gifts, makes their ministrations useful, and he has, as he ought to have, all the glory.

Ver. 8. *Now he that planteth, and he that watereth are one,* &c.] Not in every respect so; they were different as men, they were not the same individual persons, nor in the same office: Paul was an apostle, Apollos only a preacher of the Gospel; nor had they the same measure of gifts, nor did they labour alike, or were of the same usefulness; but they had one and the same commission to preach the Gospel; and the Gospel they preached was the same; and so were their views, aims, and ends, which were the glory of God, and the good of immortal souls; and they had the same love and affection for one another; they were one in their work, judgment, and affection; and which carries in it a strong reason and argument why the members of this church should not contend and divide about them: *and every man shall receive his own reward:* either from men, that double honour he is worthy of, maintenance and respect; or rather from God, not a reward of debt, for his labours are by no means meritorious of any thing at the hands of God, from whom he has all the grace, strength, and abilities he labours with; but of grace, even the reward of the inheritance, because he serves the Lord Christ; which is by bequest, through the death of the testator, and common to all the children of God, and heirs of glory: *according to his own labour;* and not another's; and not according to the success of it, but according to that itself; not that that is the measure of the reward, for the reward infinitely exceeds it; but is that to which God has graciously annexed the promise of the reward, as an encouragement to it.

Ver. 9. *For we are labourers together with God,* &c.] The ministers of the Gospel are labourers in the Lord's vineyard, and not loiterers; their work is a laborious work, both to body and mind; which lies in close study and meditation, in diligent reading and constant prayer, in frequent ministration of the word, and administration of ordinances; besides reproofs, admonitions, and exhortations, counsels, and instructions, which are often necessary: 'tis a work, which no man is sufficient for of himself; what requires diligence, industry, and faithfulness; is honourable, and, when rightly performed, deserves respect: nor do they labour alone, but with God; not as co-ordinate, but as subordinate workers; for though they labour in planting and watering, yet they bear no part with him in giving the increase; he is the husbandman, the chief master-builder, they are labourers under him; however, he works with them; hence their labours are not in vain, and they have great encouragement to go on in their work; and they are God's labourers with one another, which is a sense of the phrase not to be overlooked. The apostle often, in his epistles, speaks of his fellow-workmen, and fellow-labourers, who wrought together with him under God: *ye are God's husbandry;* or *tillage;* he is the proprietor of the field, the occupier of it, the husbandman who breaks up the fallow ground of the hearts of his people; he casts in the seed of grace, he makes the ground good, and causes it to bring forth fruit; the churches of Christ are his property, land of his manuring, and all the fruit belongs unto him; they are gardens of his planting, and vineyards of his watering, and which he keeps night and day, lest any hurt: *ye are God's building;* as the former metaphor is taken from agriculture, this is from architecture: believers in a church-state are God's house, in which he dwells, and which he himself has built; he has laid the foundation, which is Jesus Christ; he makes his people lively stones, and lays them on it; he raises up the superstructure, and will complete the building, and ought to bear all the glory, and in all which he makes use of his ministers as instruments.

Ver. 10. *According to the grace of God which is given unto me,* &c.] Lest the apostle should be thought to be too much elated with the characters he had given of himself, and other ministers, or to assume too much

to himself, in what he was about to say of himself, he ascribes all the gifts he had, and the usefulness he was of, as a labourer and builder in the church of God, to rich grace; by which he was called unto, and qualified for such work: *as a wise master-builder.* This same phrase, σοφος αρχιτεκτων, *a wise master-builder,* is used by the Septuagint interpreters, in Isa. iii. 3. by which they render חכם חרשים, *the cunning artificer, or the wise man of the carpenters, or artificers.* The architect of all is God the Father, Son, and Spirit; God the Father is the builder of all things; Christ builds his church on himself the rock; and the saints are built up an habitation for God, through the Spirit; ministers are builders under God, instruments he makes use of, and who would labour in vain, unless the Lord build the city: such an one was the apostle, though he calls himself a master-builder with respect to inferior ministers; he being in the highest office in the church, as an apostle, and not a whit behind the chief of them: and was the chief apostle of the Gentiles, and was principally concerned in preaching the Gospel to them, and in raising churches among them. The allusion is to the Jews, who use to call the Rabbins and doctors, and the disciples of the wise men, *builders:* they ask in a certain place [h], מאי בנאין, "*who are the builders?* says "R. Jochanan, these are the disciples of the wise men, "who employ themselves in the building of the world "all their days [i]." That is, the law, as one [k] of their writers explains this building; hence they are sometimes called builders of the law, and which was looked upon to be an high character: it is said [l] of a certain person, that "R. Zeira praised him, and called him, "בנייה דאורייתא, *a builder of the law.*" But the apostle was a Gospel builder, a builder of Gospel churches in Gospel truths, and in faith and holiness; these were foolish builders, but he a wise one; and his wisdom lay in the knowledge of Christ, in preaching him, and in winning souls unto him; and particularly in that he took care in his ministry, to lay a good foundation: *I have laid the foundation;* meaning not only that as at other places, so at Corinth, he first preached the Gospel to them, and was the first instrument of their conversion, and laying the foundation of a Gospel church-state; but that in his preaching he laid Christ as the one and only foundation, for men to build their faith and hope upon, for everlasting life and happiness, mentioned in the following verse: *and another buildeth thereupon;* which designs not a private Christian, who was directed in the apostle's ministry to build his soul upon the rock of ages, Christ the sure foundation laid in Zion; though there is a truth in this, the apostle laid Christ as a foundation, and encouraged others to build their faith and hope upon him, as to eternal salvation; and many were enabled to do so, which was the happy fruit of his ministry, and what gave him pleasure; and in this sense he also himself built upon this foundation, for this can't be said of another, to the exclusion of himself; he would never lay a foundation, and direct others to build on it, and not build upon it himself; but another minister of the Gospel is meant, as Apollos, or any other who might follow him, and be a means of carrying on the building upon the foundation he had laid, and of edifying and establishing souls upon it; and of rearing up superstructure truths, upon the foundation one: *but let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon;* that he builds by line, evenly, according to the analogy of faith; that he builds in proportion to the foundation; and lays such things upon it as are becoming it, and suitable to it.

Ver. 11. *For other foundation can no man lay, &c.*] Men may attempt to lay other foundations than Christ, and build upon them, but to no purpose; they will be of no avail; all besides him are sandy foundations; such as fleshly privileges, a carnal descent, a religious education, an external profession of religion, a man's own righteousness, and the absolute mercy of God; but men ought to lay no other, nor can they, that will be of any advantage to themselves or others: *than that which is laid;* by Jehovah the Father, both in his eternal counsels and covenant, when he set forth and appointed Christ to be the Saviour and Redeemer of his people; and in the fulness of time, when he sent him forth under the same characters; and by the Spirit of God, when he reveals Christ to them, and forms him in them; and by the ministers of the Gospel, who jointly agree to lay him ministerially, as the foundation for souls to build their hope upon: hence he is called the *foundation of the apostles and prophets,* as here, *which is Jesus Christ:* he is the foundation personally considered, as God-man and Mediator, on which the church, and every believer is built; he is the foundation of the covenant of grace, and of eternal salvation; of the faith and hope, peace, joy, and comfort of all the saints; and of the building of God, that house not made with hands, that city which has foundations, eternal glory in the other world; and he is the foundation doctrinally considered; or the doctrines of his proper deity, of his divine and eternal sonship, of his incarnation, of his Messiahship, of his obedience, sufferings, death, and resurrection from the dead, of justification by his righteousness, pardon by his blood, and atonement by his sacrifice, *&c.* are fundamental ones: the Jews were wont to call the principal articles of their religion, יסודי, *foundations:* Maimonides has entitled one of his tracts, יסודי התורה, *the foundations of the law;* but the doctrines respecting the person, offices, and grace of Christ, are the only foundation of the Gospel.

Ver. 12. *Now if any man build upon this foundation, &c.*] The different materials laid by one and the same man, on this foundation, or the different doctrines advanced upon it, are some of them comparable to *gold, silver, precious stones;* for their intrinsic worth and value; for the purity and sincerity of them; for their weight, importance, solidity, and substantiality; for their durableness; for the great esteem they are had in by those, who know the worth of them; and for the great usefulness they are of unto them, being rich in themselves, and enriching to them; and these are the great, momentous, and valuable truths of the Gospel, which agree with and are suitable to the foundation they are built upon: so the Jews [m] compare

[h] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 114. 1.
[i] Jarchi, Maimon. Sampson, & Bartenora in Misn. Mikvaot, c. 9. sect. 6.
[k] Jochasin, fol. 81. 1.
[l] T. Hieros. Gittin, fol. 43. 4.
[m] Koheleth Jaacob in Caphtor, fol. 109. 2.

their oral and written law, the former to gold, and the latter to precious stones, but the metaphors much better suit the doctrines of the Gospel: others are like to *wood, hay, stubble*: by which are meant, not heretical doctrines, damnable heresies, such as are diametrically opposite to, and overturn the foundation; for one and the same man builds the former, as these, and is himself saved at last; neither of which is true, of such that deliver doctrines of devils: but empty, trifling, useless things are meant; such as fables, endless genealogies, human traditions, Jewish rites and ceremonies; which through the prejudice of education, and through ignorance and inadvertency, without any bad design, might by some be introduced into their ministry, who had been brought up in the Jewish religion; as also the wisdom of the world, the philosophy of the Gentiles, oppositions of science falsely so called, curious speculations, vain and idle notions, which such who had their education among the Greeks might still retain, and be fond of; and through an itch of vain glory, mix with their evangelic ministrations; and in a word, every thing that may now be advanced in the Gospel ministry, not so honourable to the grace of God, or so becoming the person, blood, and righteousness of Christ, nor so consistent with the spirit's work of grace, may be meant hereby; the same minister at different times, and sometimes at one and the same time in his ministry, lays the foundation, Christ, and builds on it for a while excellent valuable truths, raises a superstructure of gold, silver, and precious stones, and then covers the edifice with trifling, impertinent, and inconsistent things, with wood, hay, and stubble; and so at last, of this promising fine stately building, makes a thatched house.

Ver. 13. *Every man's work shall be made manifest,* &c.] The doctrine he preaches shall be sooner or later made manifest to himself, and to his hearers; who shall see the inconsistency, irregularity, and deformity of such a building; at first so well laid, then piled up with such excellent materials, and at last covered in with such trifling or incoherent stuff: *for the day shall declare it;* meaning not the day of judgment, though that is often called the day, or that day, and will be attended with fire, and in it all secrets shall be made manifest; but the apostle intends a discovery that will be made of doctrines in this world, before that time comes: wherefore this day rather designs a day of tribulation; as of persecution, which tries men's principles, whether they are solid or no; and of error and heresy, when men are put upon a re-examination of their doctrines, whereby persons and truths that are approved are made manifest; or of some great calamity, such as the destruction of Jerusalem, whereby many wrong notions the Jews yet retained were discovered: but it is best of all to understand this day of the Gospel day, and of the progress of Gospel light, especially in some particular periods of it; as in the primitive times, at the reformation from popery, and the more remarkable Gospel daylight, which will be in the latter times, when the impertinence and inconsistency of many things which now obtain in the ministry will be seen; see Ephes. v. 13. *Because it shall be revealed by fire;* not that day, but the man's work, or doctrine: *and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is;* by *the fire* is meant, not the general conflagration of the world, when that, and all that is therein, will be burnt up; much less the fire of purgatory, the *papists* dream of, for the punishment of evil actions; for the apostle is not speaking of the actions of men, good or bad, but of the doctrines of ministers; rather the fire of tribulation and affliction, which, as it is for the trial of the grace of faith, so of the doctrine of faith, whereby it becomes much more precious than of gold that perisheth; or of some fiery dispensation of God's vengeance, as on Jerusalem; though the word of God, which is as fire, seems to be intended; which in some certain times so blazes forth, and will more especially in the latter day, that by the light of it, both ministers and churches will be able to see clearly the bright shining lustre of the gold, silver, and precious stones; and with so much heat, as to burn up the wood, hay, and stubble; when the difference between these things will be most easily discerned.

Ver. 14. *If any man's work abide,* &c.] That is, if any minister's doctrine will bear the test of day-light, to be looked into, and abide the fire of the word; as gold, silver, and precious stones will, or such doctrines as are comparable to them, which will shine the brighter for being tried by this fire: *which he hath built thereupon;* upon the foundation Christ, in entire consistence with, and proportion to it, and highly becoming it: *he shall receive a reward;* either from the churches of Christ here, who shall honour and respect him for his faithful labours in the ministry; or from Christ hereafter, who will say, well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.

Ver. 15. *If any man's work shall be burnt,* &c.] If any minister's doctrine he has preached shall be destroyed and disappear, shall be disapproved of, and rejected by the churches, not being able to bear the light and heat of the fire of God's word: *he shall suffer loss;* of all his labour and pains he has been at, in collecting together such trifling, useless, and inconsistent things; and of all that glory and popular applause he might expect from men, on account of them, and which was the snare that drew him into such a way of preaching: *but he himself shall be saved;* with an everlasting salvation; not by his ministerial labours, much less by his wood, hay, and stubble, which will be all burnt up; but through his being, notwithstanding all the imperfections of his ministry, upon the foundation Christ: *yet so as by fire;* with much difficulty, and will be scarcely saved; see 1 Pet. iv. 17, 18. Zech. xiii. 9. with great danger, loss, and shame; as a man that is burnt out of house and home, he escapes himself with his own life, but loses all about him; so the Syriac version reads it, איך דמן נורא, *as out of the fire:* see Zech. iii. 2. Jude 23. Or the sense is, that he shall be tried by the fire of the word, and convinced by the light of it of the errors, irregularities, and inconsistencies of his ministry; either in his time of life and health, or on a death-bed; and shall have all his wood, hay, and stubble burnt up, for nothing of this kind shall he carry with him in his judgment to heaven; only the gold, silver, and precious stones; and will find that the latter doctrines, and not the for-

mer, will only support him in the views of death and eternity.

Ver. 16. *Know ye not that ye are the temple of God,* &c.] The apostle having spoken of the saints as God's building, of himself as a wise master-builder, of Christ as the only foundation, and of various doctrines as the materials laid thereon, proceeds to observe to this church, and the members of it, that they being incorporated together in a Gospel church-state, were the temple of God; and which was what they could not, or at least ought not, to be ignorant of: and they are so called, in allusion to Solomon's temple; which as it was a type of the natural, so of the mystical body of Christ. There's an agreement between that and the church of Christ, in its maker, matter, situation, magnificence, and holiness; and the church is said to be the temple of God, because it is of his building, and in which he dwells: what the apostle here says of the saints at Corinth, the Jewish doctors say of the Israelites [*], היכל יהוה אתם, *the temple of the Lord are ye*: and which being usually said of them in the apostle's time, he may refer unto; and much better apply to the persons he does, of which the indwelling of the spirit was the evidence: *and that the spirit of God dwelleth in you*; in particular members, as a spirit of regeneration, sanctification, faith, and adoption, and as the earnest and pledge of their future glory; in their ministers to fit and qualify them for their work, and carry them through it; and in the whole church, to bless the word and ordinances, for their growth, comfort, and establishment. This furnishes out a considerable proof of the deity and distinct personality of the spirit, since this is mentioned as an evidence of the saints being the temple of God, which would not be one, if the spirit was not God, who dwells therein; and since a temple is sacred to deity, and therefore if he dwells here as in a temple, he must dwell here as God; and since he is mentioned as distinct from God, whose spirit he is, and dwelling, a personal action is ascribed to him, he must be a distinct divine person.

Ver. 17. *If any man defile the temple of God,* &c.] By the wisdom of the world, through philosophy, and vain deceit; by bringing in false doctrines, errors, and heresies, and hereby corrupt their minds from the simplicity that is in Christ; and make rents, factions, and divisions among them: *him shall God destroy*; body and soul in hell; for as their wicked principles and heretical notions are pernicious to others, they are damnable to themselves, and will bring upon them that judgment which lingereth not, and that damnation which slumbereth not. The false prophet, as well as the beast, and the devil, shall be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone. God is not only an avenger of all immoralities committed against his righteous law, but of all false doctrine and false worship, and of every thing that is contrary to the Gospel, and to the order and ordinances of it. The reason of this is, *for the temple of God is holy*; alluding to the holiness of Solomon's temple, "into which a man might not go with "his staff, nor with his shoes on, nor with his purse, "nor with dust upon his feet, nor might he make it a "thoroughfare, and much less spit in it [*]." And yet, how was it polluted in our Lord's time by the Jews, who made it a den of thieves, instead of an house of prayer? *which temple ye are.* This is added for further confirmation, and to assert their holiness in doctrine, worship, and conversation, and to deter the false teachers from making use of any means to corrupt them in either.

Ver. 18. *Let no man deceive himself,* &c.] With vain notions of serving God and religion, and of doing the churches good by his carnal and worldly wisdom, and with false hopes of escaping the vengeance of God for sowing the tares of error, heresy, and discord among his people. *If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world*; either a member of them, or a preacher among them, who thought himself wise in worldly wisdom; or was desirous to be thought so by others; or would be a truly wise man in this world, whilst he lives in it, and before he goes out of it: *let him become a fool that he may be wise*; not that, properly speaking, folly is the way to wisdom; but that that man that would be wise in a spiritual sense, must first learn to know himself; must be convinced of, and acknowledge his own folly, embrace the Gospel of Christ, which is esteemed foolishness by the world; submit to the ordinances of Christ, which are despised by men; and take up the cross of Christ, and follow him, bear reproach and persecution for his sake, than which nothing is more ridiculous with carnal men: he must deny his worldly wisdom, his carnal and righteous self, and wholly rest and rely on Christ, and his righteousness, for eternal life and happiness, and so will he become truly wise unto salvation. The Jews [*] have a saying, "that every one המנבל עצמו, *that makes him-"self a fool*, for the words of the law, at the end, shall "be exalted."

Ver. 19. *For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God,* &c.] The wisdom of the Jewish, or Gentile world. It is had in no account with him; it is despised and neglected by him; he makes it foolish, destroys it, and brings it to nothing; he lays it aside as useless, to make men wise unto salvation, and by the foolishness of preaching saves them that believe; he passes by the wise and prudent, and hides the things of the Gospel from them; so that, with all their learning and wisdom, they can neither apprehend nor comprehend the mysteries of grace, whilst he reveals them unto babes, and chooses the foolish things of this world to spread the knowledge of himself, his son, his Gospel, and the truths of it, and whom he makes successful, to the confusion of the wise and learned. *For it is written*, כדכתיב, an usual form of citing Scriptures with the Jews; it is in Job v. 13. *he taketh the wise in their own craftiness*, or *by* it. What Eliphaz says of the wise politicians of the world, who are often disappointed of their crafty devices, and cannot perform the enterprises they have took in hand, but their schemes are broken, and the snares they laid for others they are taken in themselves, is applied by the apostle to the Jewish doctors, or the Gentile philosophers, or rather to the false teachers among the Christians; whose

[*] R. Alshech in Hag. ii. 5.

[*] Misn. Beracot, c. 9. sect. 5.

[*] Raya Mehimna in Zohar in Numb. fol. 104. 2.

schemes they have formed to corrupt the churches, and demolish the Gospel, prove their own destruction; nor will they, with all their cunning, be able to get out of the hand of God, and escape his awful vengeance. The allusion is either to the taking of wild beasts and birds in snares and nets, or to the taking of men in flight, laying hold of them with the hand, and grasping them hard, that they cannot get loose. The Targum interprets the words of the wise men of Pharaoh, and of the Egyptian astrologers.

Ver. 20. *And again*, &c.] Not in the same place, nor in the same book, but in the Psalms, in Psal. xciv. 11. This form of citing Scriptures answers to ועוד, *and moreover*, used by the Jewish doctors when the matter does not so clearly appear from the first proof, and therefore they produce another[q]: and so here the apostle, for the further confirmation and illustration of this point, that the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God, to the testimony of Eliphaz, adds this of *David*, *the Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain*: in the Psalms it is, *the Lord knoweth the thoughts of men, that they are vanity*: which the apostle not only cites, but explains and teaches; as that by *men* is meant men of wisdom and knowledge, of the greatest capacities, whose thoughts, reasonings, schemes, and devices, the omniscient God not only knows, but makes known, and discovers them, sooner or later, to be vain and fruitless, yea, vanity itself; and notwithstanding all their machinations and contrivances, his counsel shall stand, his Gospel shall be maintained, his truths shall prevail, and his ordinances shall be continued, and his work go on.

Ver. 21. *Therefore let no man glory in men*, &c.] The apostle means ministers, who are but men, even the best of them, and therefore not to be gloried in; and has chiefly respect to the false teachers, whose wisdom, learning, and eloquence, the Corinthians were greatly taken with, and boasted of; it was so ensnaring to them, that they even idolized them for it, called them their masters, pinned their faith on their sleeve, gave up themselves to them, and were greatly under their authority, influence, and direction, which is here condemned; and which was so far from being right, that they ought not to behave in such manner to the best of ministers, nor to glory in any one above another; no, not in Paul, nor Apollos, nor Cephas; *for all things are yours*: all the ministers, and all they are endowed with; these were all for their use and service, for their benefit and advantage; wherefore it was very wrong to set up one above, or against another, or for any party to engross any one minister, when he belonged to them all; and great weakness to reject others, when they had a common right and property in them.

Ver. 22. *Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas*, &c.] These are particularly named, because their disputes were chiefly about them; but what is said of them is true of all other, and all the ministers of Christ, that they are the church's. The gifts which Christ received for them, and has bestowed on them, are not their own, but the church's, and are given to them, not so much for their own use, as for the good and benefit of others. They are made able ministers of the New Testament, not by themselves, nor by man, but by God; who disposes of them as blessings to his churches, and gives them to be pastors and teachers of them, to feed them with knowledge, and with understanding; they are qualified by the spirit of God for the service of the saints, and are separated by him to it, and are constituted overseers of the flock by his direction; they are placed as stewards of the mysteries and manifold grace of God, to dispense them with wisdom and faithfulness to all in his family, and are the servants of the churches for Jesus' sake, and therefore not to be gloried in; though to be respected in their place and station: *or the world*: this, with what follows, is an amplification of the account, and is as if the apostle should say, you should be so far from glorying in man, in a few poor weak instruments, and especially in that in them, which with God is foolishness and vanity, that not only all the ministers of the word are yours, but even the whole world is yours; though called out of it, esteemed the filth of it, and have so little a share of it. The world was made for the sake of the saints, and is continued on their account; when they are called by grace, it will soon be at an end. It is their Lord's, and so theirs, both as Creator and Mediator: the good things of the world are enjoyed by the saints in a peculiar way, as covenant-mercies and blessings, so as they are not by others. The evil things of it, as the sins and lusts of it, are escaped by them; and the afflictions they meet with in it are made to work for their good; and as they are heirs of the world, as Abraham was, so they shall inherit it in a much better form than it now is; the present heavens will pass away, the earth and all therein will be burnt up, and new heavens and a new earth arise, in which will dwell none but righteous persons: the world, in its present state, is an inn, suited to the condition of the saints, as pilgrims and strangers; but then it will be as a palace, fit for the spouse and bride of Christ. *Or life*; in every view of it: the life of Christ, which he lived here on earth, in obedience to his father's will, and which he now lives in heaven, where he ever lives to make intercession for his people, and for their good; that fulness of life that is in him, and that eternal life which is through him, are all theirs. The lives of the ministers of the Gospel are for their profit and advantage; and they are spared and continued on their account; their own lives are theirs, though not to live to themselves, nor to the lusts of men, but by faith on Christ, and to the glory of God, and which is what they desire. *Or death*; the death of Christ was for them, in their room and stead, for their sins, to make satisfaction to divine justice for them; and the benefits of it are enjoyed by them. The death of good men, ministers, martyrs, and confessors, is theirs, serves to confirm their faith, animate their zeal, and encourage them to hold fast the profession of their faith without wavering. Their own death is a blessing to them; the sting is taken away by Christ; the curse is removed; 'tis no penal evil to them; 'tis a deliverance of them from all the sorrows and troubles of this life, and is their passage into endless glory and happiness. *Or things present*: whether prosperous or

[q] Vid. Surenhusii Biblos Katallages, p. 11, 531.

adverse; and these, whether they be their own or others, all work together for their good. *Or things to come:* future troubles and exercises; or future good things, either in this world, or in the world to come: the invisible glories of a future state: *all are yours:* which is repeated for confirmation-sake, and to observe, that if there was any thing that was omitted, or could not be thought to be included in any of the above expressions, that also was theirs.

Ver. 23. *And ye are Christ's,* &c.] This is the ground and foundation of all things being theirs, and shews in what way they come by them, and what gives them their claim and property: they are Christ's, he has an interest in them, and they in him; they are his, not only by creation, as all men are, but by the father's special gift of them to him, as his spouse and bride, his children, his sheep, his portion, and his jewels; they are his through the purchase of his own blood, and by a voluntary surrender of themselves unto him, under the influence of his spirit and grace; they are his by their profession of him; they avouch themselves to be the Lord's and call themselves by his name; and they are his by his possession of them, and dwelling in their hearts by faith; and all they have are his. Their worst things are his; their sins are accounted to him, and laid on him by imputation, and have been bore and done away by him: their griefs and sorrows are his, their reproaches his, and their afflictions and sufferings his. Their best things are his; their temporal mercies come from him, and through him; and all their spiritual blessings, they are blessed with in him; and all the good things done by them are done in his strength, by the assistance of his spirit, and in virtue of his grace. *And Christ is God's;* he is his son, his own, his only-begotten and well-beloved son, as he is a divine person; and as man he is his creature, made by him, and inferior to him; he is the head of him, as the man is of the woman; and as Mediator, he is his righteous servant, whom he has chosen, called, brought forth, upheld, and in whom he is glorified: so that, upon the whole, the saints should not glory in men, though ever so great and good, but in God, and in Christ, as of God, made unto them wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.

CHAP. IV.

THE chief heads of this chapter are the account that ought to be had of the ministers of the Gospel; cautions against censoriousness, rash judgment, pride, and self-conceit; the uncomfortable circumstances and situation of the ministers of the Gospel for the sake of preaching it; the apostle's fatherly affection to the Corinthians, and his authority over them; his resolution in submission to the will of God of coming to them, and the manner in which it might be expected he would come. The apostle exhorts to have in proper esteem the preachers of the Gospel, and that because they are Christ's ministers and stewards of his grace, and faithful in the discharge of their duty, ver. 1, 2. And as for himself, whom he includes in the number of the faithful dispensers of the word, he cared not what judgment was passed upon him; nor should he think fit to be set down by it, partly because it was human, and arose from an ill spirit; and partly because he judged himself; as also because his conscience testified that he faithfully discharged his office; and besides, the Lord was his judge, ver. 3, 4. who in his own time would judge him; and he, as every other faithful minister, shall have praise of God, and therefore before that time judgment was not to be passed by men, ver. 5. and then gives a reason why he had mentioned his own name, and the name of Apollos, under such figurative expressions as he had done in the preceding chapter, that they might be examples of modesty and humility for others to follow, ver. 6. and expostulates with those who were vainly puffed up in their fleshly minds; that seeing they were no better than others, and what gifts they had were not of themselves, but of God, they had no reason to glory and vaunt it over others, ver. 7. and in an ironical way expresses the exalted and flourishing condition they were in, and which he rather wishes than asserts, and which carries in it a sort of a denial of it, ver. 8. and goes on to represent the miserable condition that the faithful preachers and followers of Christ were in, and that in order to abate the pride and swelling vanity of these men, ver. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13. shewing, that it was far from being a reigning time in the churches of Christ; his end in mentioning which, as well as the sharpness he had used in reproving, were not in order to expose them to shame, but for their admonition, ver. 14. and that he did not take too much upon him in dealing thus freely and roundly with them, appears from the spiritual relation he stood in to them, as a father, ver. 15. and therefore it became them as children to submit to him, and imitate him, ver. 16. and an instance of his paternal care of them, and love to them, was his sending Timothy among them, whose character he gives, and whose work and usefulness he points out to them, ver. 17. and closes the chapter with a promise of coming to them, if it was agreeable to the will of God; and the rather he was bent upon it, because some had given out he would not come, and rejoiced at it; wherefore, in order to try them, whether they were only verbal or powerful professors, he was desirous of coming to them, ver. 18, 19. since religion did not lie in talking, but in an inward powerful experience of things, ver. 20. which he feared was wanting in some by their outward conversation; and therefore puts a question in what way they would chose he should come unto them, and hence should accordingly order their conversation and behaviour, ver. 21.

Ver. 1. *Let a man so account of us,* &c.] Though the apostle had before said that he, and other ministers of the Gospel, were not any thing with respect to God, and, with regard to the churches, were theirs, for their use and advantage; yet they were not to be trampled upon, and treated with contempt, but to be known, esteemed, and honoured for their works' sake, and in their respective places, stations, and characters; and

though they were but men, yet were not to be considered as private men, and in a private capacity, but as in public office, and as public preachers of the word; and though they were not to be regarded as lords and masters over God's heritage, but as servants, yet not as every one's, or as any sort of servants, but *as the ministers*, or servants, *of Christ;* as qualified, called, and sent forth by him to preach his Gospel; as ambassadors in his name, standing in his place and stead, and representing him, and therefore for his sake to be respected and esteemed; and as such who make him the subject of their ministry, preach him and him only, exalt him in his person, offices, blood, righteousness and sacrifice, and direct souls to him alone for life and salvation: *and stewards of the mysteries of God;* though they are not to be looked upon as masters of the household, that have power to dispose of things in the family at their own pleasure; yet they are to be regarded as stewards, the highest officers in the house of God; to whose care are committed the secret and hidden things of God; whose business it is to dispense, and make known, the mysteries of divine grace; such as respect the doctrine of the Trinity, the incarnation of Christ, the union of the two natures, divine and human, in his person, the church's union to him, and communion with him, with many other things contained in the Gospel they are intrusted with.

Ver. 2. *Moreover, it is required in stewards*, &c.] Upon mentioning that part of the character of Gospel preachers, as stewards, the apostle is put in mind of, and so points out that which is principally necessary in such persons: as, *that a man be found faithful;* to the trust reposed in him; to his Lord and master that has appointed him to this office; and to the souls that are under his care: and then may a minister be said to be so, and which is his greatest glory, when he preaches the pure Gospel of Christ without any human mixtures, the doctrines and inventions of men; and the whole Gospel, declaring all the counsel of God, keeping back nothing which may be profitable to souls; when he seeks not to please men, but God; and not his own glory, and the applause of men, but the honour of Christ, and the good of souls: and such a faithful steward was the apostle himself.

Ver. 3. *But with me it is a very small thing*, &c.] It stood for little or nothing, was of no account with him, what judgment and censures were passed on him by men with regard to his faithfulness in the ministry, not even by the Corinthians themselves: *that I should be judged of you;* not that the apostle declined, or despised the judgment of a church of Christ, rightly disposed, and met together in the fear of God, to try, prove, and judge of his ministry, and his fidelity in it; but he made no account of theirs, and slighted it, as being under bad influence, the influence of the false teachers, who had insinuated many things among them to the prejudice of the apostle's character; wherefore he set it at nought and rejected it, and rightly refused to submit to it, and, indeed, to any mere human judgment: *or of man's judgment:* 'tis in the Greek text, *or of man's day;* in distinction from the day of the Lord, or the day of judgment; and because that men have their stated days for judgment, and because of the clearness of evidence, according to which judgment should proceed. This is not a Cilicism, as Jerom thought, but an Hebraism; so the Septuagint render יום אנוש, in Jer. xvii. 16. *ἡμέραν ἀνθρώπου, man's day;* and very frequently in the Talmud [t] is the distinction of דיני שמים, *the judgments of God*, and דיני אדם, *the judgments of men;* the former the apostle was willing to be subject to, but not to the latter; he appealed from men to God; he cared not what any man thought or said, or judged of him; he not only was indifferent to the judgment of the Corinthians concerning him, whether they praised or dispraised him, but of any other person; and so the Syriac version renders it, או כן כל בר אנש, *or of any man:* he adds, *yea I judge not mine own self;* for though as a spiritual man he judged all things, and so himself, his conduct, state, and condition; examined his own heart and ways, and was able to form a judgment of what he was and did; yet he chose not to stand and fall by his own judgment; and since he would not abide by his own judgment, who best knew himself, much less would he be subject to theirs, or any human judgment, who must be greater strangers to him; and this he said, not as conscious to himself of any unfaithfulness in his ministerial work.

Ver. 4. *For I know nothing by myself*, &c.] Which must be understood with a restriction to the subject he is upon, faithfulness in the ministry; otherwise he knew much by himself of in-dwelling sin, and the corruption of his nature, which he sometimes found very strong and prevalent in him, and of the daily infirmities of life; but as to his ministerial service, he was pure from the blood of all men; he honestly declared what he knew to be the mind of God, and concealed nothing that might be useful to men; in this he had a clear conscience, void of offence both towards God and men. *Yet am I not hereby justified;* from all fault and blame, which might possibly escape his knowledge and observation; for in many things all offend, and no man can understand all his errors; and there might be some mistakes which the apostle was not privy to, or conscious of; and were he even free from all, he declares, that such an unstained integrity, in the discharge of his ministerial work, was not the matter of his justification before God, nor did he depend upon it: *but he that judgeth me is the Lord;* either who adjudges me to eternal life, justifying me through the righteousness of his son, in which alone I desire to be found, living and dying; or he that knows my heart, and all my ways, will be my judge at the last day; and to his judgment I appeal and submit, and sit easy in the mean while under all the censures and calumnies of men. The apostle did, as his Lord and Saviour had done before him, who, when he was reviled and reproached by men, conscious of his own innocence and integrity, committed himself to him that judgeth righteously.

Ver. 5. *Therefore judge nothing before the time*, &c.] This is said to prevent rash and precipitate judgment, and agrees with that well-known Jewish maxim, הוו מתונין בדין, *be slow in judgment* [z]; not hasty to pass

[t] T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 22. 2. 29. 1. 47. 2. 55. 2. 56. 1. 91. 1. 98. 1. & Bava Metzia, fol. 82. 2.

[z] T. Bab. Sanhed. fol. 7. 2. & Pirke Abot, c. 1. sect. 1.

sentence; 'tis best to leave things to the great day of account, than to be free in censuring one another. There is a *time* fixed for the awful judgment, though of that day and hour knows no man: judge nothing *until the Lord come;* who at the fixed time will certainly come to judgment, and that suddenly, at unawares, in an hour no man knows of: *who will bring to light the hidden things of darkness;* meaning not so much vices, immoralities, wickedness of all sorts committed in the dark, and which it is a shame to speak of; but those hidden things of dishonesty, those secret arts and private methods which false teachers have made use of to conceal themselves, and carry on their base designs to the injury of truth, the souls of men, and the cause of Christ: *and will make manifest the counsels of the heart;* what were the views and intentions, the aims and ends of these men in taking upon them to be preachers of the word; when it will appear that these were not the glory of God, and the good of the souls ofmen, but filthy lucre, popular applause, or some such mercenary view, and sinister end. *And then shall every man have praise of God.* Every regenerated soul; every one that is a Jew inwardly; every one that has the circumcision of the spirit; and particularly every faithful minister, who is more especially designed; to whom it will be said, *well done good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.* The apostle, in these words, has respect to the false teachers who sought the praise of men, and not the honour which comes from God; and which the true ministers of the word will have another day, however despised and dispraised by men now.

Ver. 6. *And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred,* &c.] Not what he had said concerning the different factions at Corinth, one being for Paul, and another for Apollos, and another for Cephas, as if these several parties did not really go by those names, but by those of others, the false teachers; only the apostle, to decline every thing that looked like reflection, *put* these, as the Syriac version renders it, *upon* his own *person*, and Apollos's, the sooner and better to put an end to such divisions; for it is certain, from his way of arguing and reasoning, that these are not fictitious names, but they were really divided, and were quarreling among themselves about himself, Apollos, and Cephas: but his meaning is, when he says, *I have in a figure transferred to myself and Apollos* these things; that he had *brought these comparisons*, as the Arabic version reads it, concerning himself and Apollos; namely, that one was a planter, and another a waterer; that they were both labourers and builders, ministers or servants, and stewards: and these similies, and such a figurative way of speaking he had made use of, as he says, *for your sakes;* for the sake of the members of this church, that they might have right notions of them, and accordingly account of them, and behave towards them: or, as he adds, *that ye might learn in us not to think* of men *above that which is written;* meaning, either in the word of God in general; or in some particular passages of Scripture he might have respect to; or rather in the above places in this, and the foregoing chapter, where he gives the fore-mentioned characters of ministers; where, in the apostles themselves, in their own words, from their own account, they might learn, on the one hand, not to ascribe too much to them, nor, on the other hand, to detract from their just character and usefulness: and also, *that no one of you be puffed up for one against the other;* speak great swelling words of vanity, and envy, for one minister against another; when they are all one, bear the same character, are in the same office, and are jointly concerned in the same common cause of Christ and the good of immortal souls.

Ver. 7. *For who maketh thee to differ* from another, *&c.*] This question, and the following, are put to the members of this church, who were glorying in, and boasting of the ministers under whom they were converted, and by whom they were baptized, to the neglect and contempt of others; when the apostle would have them consider, and whatever difference was made between them and others, was made, not by man, but God; that whatever good and benefit they had enjoyed under their respective ministers, were in a way of receiving, and from God; and therefore they ought not to glory in themselves, nor in their ministers, but in God, who had distinguished them by his favours: whatever difference is made among men, is of God; it is he that makes them to differ from the rest of the creation; from angels, to whom they are inferior; and from beasts, to whom they are superior; and from one another in their person, size, shape, and countenance, which is a physical, or natural difference. It is God that makes them to differ from one another in things of a civil nature; as kings and subjects, masters and servants, high and low, rich and poor, bond and free, which may be called a political, or civil difference; and there is an ecclesiastical difference which God makes in his own people, who have gifts differing one from another; there are diversities of gifts, administrations, and operations among them, and all from the same spirit: but the grand distinction God has made among men, lies in his special, distinguishing, and everlasting love to some, and not others; in his choice of them in Christ unto everlasting salvation; in the gift of them to Christ in the eternal covenant; in the redemption of them by his blood; in his powerful and prevalent intercession for them; in God's effectual calling of them by his grace; in his resurrection of them from the dead to everlasting life, placing them at Christ's right hand, and their entrance into everlasting glory; when the distinction will be kept up, as in the above instances, throughout the endless ages of eternity; all which is owing, not to any thing of man's, but to the free grace, sovereign will, and good pleasure of God. *And what hast thou that thou didst not receive?* whatever mercies and blessings men enjoy, they have in a way of receiving, and from God the father of all mercies: all natural and temporal mercies are received from him; even such as respect the body, the make, form, and shape of it, perfection of limbs, health, strength, food, raiment, preservation of life, continuance in being, with all the comforts of it: and such as relate to the soul, its formation, which is by the father of spirits, its powers and faculties, natural light, reason, and understanding, all its endowments, abilities, all natural parts, and sharpness of wit; so that no man ought to glory in his wisdom,

as if it was owing to himself, when it is all of God. All supernatural and spiritual blessings are received from God; such as a justifying righteousness, sanctifying grace, remission of sin, the new name of adoption, strength to perform good works, to bear and suffer reproach and persecution for Christ, and to persevere to the end, with a right and title to eternal glory. *Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?* To glory in any mercy, favour, or blessing received from God, as if it was not received from him, but as owing to human power, care, and industry, betrays wretched vanity, stupid and more than brutish ignorance, horrid ingratitude, abominable pride and wickedness; and is contrary to the grace of God, which teaches men humility and thankfulness. To God alone should all the blessings of nature, providence, and grace be ascribed; he ought to have all the glory of them; and to him, and him only, praise is due for them. That proud Arminian, Grevinchovius[t], in answer to this text, said, "I make "myself to differ; since I could resist God, and "divine predetermination, but have not resisted, why "may not I glory in it as of my own?"

Ver. 8. *Now ye are full*, &c.] That is, in their own opinion: these words, and some following expressions, are an ironical concession. They were not full of God, and divine things; nor of Christ, and of grace out of his fulness; nor of the Holy Ghost, and of faith, as Stephen and Barnabas are said to be; nor of joy and peace in believing; nor of goodness and spiritual knowledge; but they were full of themselves, and were puffed up in their fleshly minds with an opinion of their abilities, learning, oratory, and eloquence, of their ministers, and of their own great improvements in knowledge under their ministrations. They fancied they had got to a perfection in knowledge, and were brimful of it; and as the full stomach, from which the metaphor is taken, loathes the honeycomb, so these persons loathed the apostle's ministry, and the pure preaching of the Gospel; imagining that they had attained to something above it, and stood in no need of it; when, alas! they were but babes, children in understanding, and needed milk instead of strong meat; so far were they from being what they thought themselves to be. *Now ye are rich*; not in faith; nor in good works; nor in spiritual gifts and knowledge, though some among them were; but that is not here intended: the meaning is, they were rich, and abounded in knowledge, in their own account. Like the Laodiceans, they conceited themselves to be rich, and increased with goods, when they were poor, and wretched, and miserable. *Ye have reigned as kings without us.* The saints, in the best sense, are kings, made so by Christ; and have not only the name, and the ensigns of royalty, as crowns and thrones prepared for them, but kingdoms also: they have a kingdom of grace, which they enjoy now, and shall never be removed; in which they reign as kings under the influence of the spirit of God, over the corruptions of their own hearts, which are laid under the restraints of mighty grace; and over the world, which they have under their feet; and over Satan, who is dethroned and cast out of them; and they shall inherit the kingdom of glory hereafter; but nothing of this kind is here intended. The sense of the words is, that these persons imagined that they had arrived to such a pitch of knowledge, as to be independent of the apostles; needed no instructions and directions from them, and were in great tranquillity and ease of mind, and attended with outward prosperity, so that they lived, as kings, the most happy life that could be desired; upon which the apostle expresses his hearty wish for them: *and I would to God ye did reign*: not in carnal security, and in affluence of worldly enjoyments, which the apostle was not desirous of for himself, and other his fellow-ministers; nor in a spiritual sense, merely as believers in common, and as he then did; but with Christ in his kingdom-state here on earth: *that we also might reign with you*: for all the saints will be together when Christ takes to himself his great power, and reigns; they'll all reign with him on earth a thousand years; this is a faithful saying, nothing more true, or to be depended on, that those that suffer with him shall also reign with him; and not a part of his people only, but the whole body: hence the apostle wishes, that this reigning-time for the church of Christ was come, then he and the rest of the apostles would reign also: but, alas! it was a plain case, from the condition they were in, of which the following words give a narrative, that this time was not yet.

Ver. 9. *For I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last*, &c.] Meaning either in time, in respect to the prophets and patriarchs under the former dispensation; and to the apostles, who were sent forth by Christ when on earth; when he, and Barnabas, and others, had received their mission since his ascension; or in state and condition, who though they were set in the first place in the church, yet were the least in the esteem of men; and were treated as the most mean, vile, and abject of creatures; were set or shewed forth to public view, and made a gazing-stock by reproaches and afflictions. And *as it were appointed to death*; were continually exposed unto it; were in death oft, always carrying about with them the dying of the Lord Jesus; and were all the day long killed for his sake; all which the apostle not only thought, but believed, were not casual things, fortuitous events, but the determinations and appointments of God; and were brought about in his wise providence to answer some valuable ends; which made him the more easy under them, and reconciled unto them. *For we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men.* The word translated *spectacle* signifies a *theatre*; and the allusion is to the Roman theatres, in which various exercises were performed, for the gratification of the numerous spectators, who were placed around in a proper distance to behold; and not so much to the gladiators who fought, in such places, for the diversion of the multitude, as to those unhappy persons, who were cast to the wild beasts, let loose upon them to devour them; which horrid barbarities were beheld by the surrounding company with great pleasure and satisfaction; and such a spectacle were the apostles in their sufferings and persecutions to the *whole* world,

[t] Contr. Ames. p. 253.

distinguished into *angels* and *men*. By *angels* may be meant the devils, who stirred up the princes of this world against the apostles, to persecute and afflict them; than which nothing was a greater pleasure to these envious and malicious spirits: though good angels may be also included, as witnesses of the faith, courage, and constancy of the saints, and as comforters of them in all their tribulations; but evil angels seem chiefly designed: and by *men* are meant wicked men, who are as much pleased to behold the barbarities and butcheries committed upon the people of God, as the Romans in their theatres were to see the tragical scenes that were acted there.

Ver. 10. *We are fools for Christ's sake*, &c.] They were so in the esteem of men, for their close attachment to a crucified Christ; and for preaching the doctrine of salvation by him; and for enduring so much reproach, affliction, and persecution, for his sake and the Gospel's: *but ye are wise in Christ*. This is ironically said; for his meaning is not that they were truly wise in Christ, in the knowledge and faith of him, in preaching his Gospel, or professing his name; but they were so in their own eyes, and made use of much worldly wisdom and carnal policy in their profession of religion. Their ministers took care to preach, and they to profess Christ, in such a manner as to retain the favour of the world, and to escape reproach and persecution. *We are weak*: in your account; our bodily presence is weak, and speech contemptible; we are men of mean capacities and abilities; nor are we able to express ourselves in that strong and masculine way, with those masterly strokes of eloquence and oratory your ministers do; or we are pressed down with infirmities, and afflictions, and persecutions. *But ye are strong*: your ministers are men of great parts, strong voice, masculine language, and powerful oratory; and you abound in outward prosperity, and are free from persecution for the cross of Christ. *Ye are honourable*: high in the favour and esteem of men for your wisdom and learning, your riches and wealth, power and grandeur. *But we are despised*: are in dishonour and disgrace, for the mean appearance we make, the Gospel we preach, and the cross we bear.

Ver. 11. *Even unto this present hour*, &c.] What is about to be related was not what befell the apostles now and then, and a great while ago; but what for a considerable time, and unto the present time, was more or less the common constant series and course of life they were inured to: *we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked*: wanted the common necessaries of life, food to eat, and raiment to put on, and gold and silver to purchase any with; which might be, when, as it was sometimes their case, they were in desert places, or on the seas; or when they fell among thieves; or had given all away, as they sometimes did, for the relief of others; or when they were not, as sometimes, taken notice of, and provided for, where they ministered, as they ought to have been. *And are buffeted*: not only by Satan, as the apostle was, but by men; scourged, whipped, and beaten by them; scourged in the synagogues by the Jews with forty stripes save one; and beaten with rods by the Romans, and other Gentiles. *And have no certain dwelling-place*: were in an unsettled state, always moving from one place to another, and had no place they could call their own; like their Lord and master, who had not where to lay his head; and like some of the Old-Testament saints, who wandered about in sheep-skins and goat-skins, in deserts, and in mountains, in dens and caves of the earth.

Ver. 12. *And labour, working with our own hands*, &c.] As the apostle did at Corinth, Acts xviii. 3. and elsewhere; partly to minister to his own necessities, and those of others; and partly that he might not be burdensome to the churches; and also to set an example of diligence and industry to others; though he had a right and power to claim a maintenance of those to whom he ministered. *Being reviled, we bless*: as Christ commanded, Matt. v. 44. and the apostle himself directed and exhorted to, Rom. xii. 14. *being persecuted, we suffer it*: that is, patiently: neither resisting our persecutors, nor murmuring and repining at our unhappy circumstances; but taking all in good part, as what is the will of God, and will make for his glory.

Ver. 13. *Being defamed, we entreat*, &c.] Being blasphemed, as the word signifies, being evil-spoken of, our good name taken away, and characters hurt; we entreat or pray to God for them, that he would convince them of their evil, give them repentance unto life, and remission of their sins, according to Christ's direction, Matt. v. 44. and in imitation of his example, Luke xxiii. 34. or we entreat them; so the Syriac version reads it, בעינן מנהון, *we beseech them*: not to blaspheme and speak evil of us, since it will be to their own hurt; we give them smooth words, and soft language, not rendering railing for railing, or reviling for reviling: *we are made as the filth of the world, and the off-scouring of all things unto this day*; referring, as some think, to Lam. iii. 45. or to the lustrations and expiations among the Heathens, who when any calamity was upon them, particularly a plague among them, used to take one of the refuse of the people, and sacrifice him by way of expiation; or any living creature, as a sheep, which with imprecations they cast into a river, or into the sea, fancying it carried away all the contagion along with it; hence, by way of reproach, such that were under disgrace, and were ejected, and exiled, were called περικαθάρματα, *purgations*: the refuse of the people, by which the rest were purged [a]; or the reference is to any dirt, or filth in common, swept out of houses, and trodden under foot; and so expresses the mean and abject condition of the apostles, and with what disdain and contempt they were treated in the world: all which shews that they were far from reigning as kings; and whilst this was their case, who were at the head of the interest of Christ, it must be a vain conceit of the Corinthians, that they reigned as kings without them.

Ver. 14. *I write not these things to shame you*, &c.] Though they had a great deal of reason to be ashamed of the vain opinion they had of themselves, and that they suffered the faithful ministers of Christ to want the necessaries of life, when they abounded so much with the good things of it; and though the apostle's view in giving this narrative was to bring them under

[a] Vid. Turnebi Adversaria, l. 19. c. 22. & 26. 7. & 27. 16.

a sense of their faults, and to a conviction of them, and so to shame for them, in order to their future reformation and amendment; yet it was not merely to put them to the blush, but to admonish and instruct them, that he enlarged on these things: *but as my beloved sons I warn you:* they being his children in a spiritual sense, for whom he had the strongest love and affection, as their spiritual father; and as it was his place, and became him standing in such a relation to them, he warned, admonished, and put them in mind of their obligations and duty to him.

Ver. 15. *For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ,* &c.] Or *schoolmasters:* by whom he means the false teachers, whom, for argument-sake, he admits to be instructors in Christ, or ministers of his, as in 2 Cor. xi. 23. and who were many, and of whose number the Corinthians boasted; though they were not so numerous as here supposed; for the expression is hyperbolical: perhaps some reference may be had to the multitude of *schoolmasters,* tutors, and governors, and who also were called אבות, *fathers,* which those that were Jews of this church at Corinth had before they believed in Christ; as the members of the great sanhedrim, the great number of doctors, wise men, Scribes and Pharisees, who pretended to instruct them: now though it should be allowed, that the present teachers among them were instrumental in instructing them further in the knowledge of Christ; or as the Arabic version reads it, *in the love of Christ;* yet they had no hand in their conversion; the apostle first preached the Gospel to them, and ministerially laid Christ the foundation among them, and directed them unto him, and was the minister by whom they believed; these teachers at most and best built on his foundation, and that only wood, hay, and stubble; and whereas they were only a sort of schoolmasters, and not fathers, they taught with mercenary views, and for lucre's sake, and with severity, as such men do; and not with such a single eye to their good, and with that tenderness and affection a parent has, and in which relation he stood to them: *yet have ye not many fathers;* as it is in nature, so it is in grace; how many masters and instructors soever a child may have, whether together or successively, he has but one father; and so how many after-instructors, either nominally or really, believers may have to lead them on, or who pretend to lead them on to a further knowledge of Christ; yet have they but one spiritual father, who has been the happy instrument and means of their conversion, as the Apostle Paul was to the Corinthians; *for in Christ Jesus have I begotten you through the Gospel;* which is to be understood of regeneration, a being born again, and from above; of being quickened when dead in trespasses and sins; of having Christ formed in the soul; of being made a partaker of the divine nature, and a new creature; which the apostle ascribes to himself, not as the efficient cause thereof, for regeneration is not of men but of God; not of the will of the flesh, of a man's own free will and power, nor of the will of any other man, or minister; but of the sovereign will, grace, and mercy of God, Father, Son, and Spirit. The father of Christ begets us again according to his abundant mercy; and the son quickens whom he will; and we are born again of water and of the spirit, of the grace of the spirit; hence the washing of regeneration, and renewing work are ascribed to him: but the apostle speaks this of himself, only as the instrument or means, which God made use of in doing this work upon the hearts of his people; and which the other phrases shew: for he is said to do it *in Christ;* he preached Christ unto them, and salvation by him, and the necessity of faith in him; he directed them to him to believe in him, and was the means of bringing of them to the faith of Christ; and it was the power and grace of Christ accompanying his ministry, which made it an effectual means of their regeneration and conversion: and which were brought about *through the Gospel;* not through the preaching of the law; for though by that is the knowledge of sin, and convictions may be wrought by such means; yet these leave nothing but a sense of wrath and damnation; nor is the law any other than a killing letter: no regeneration, no quickening grace, no faith nor holiness come this way, but through the preaching of the Gospel; in and through which, as a vehicle, the spirit of God conveys himself into the heart, as a spirit of regeneration and faith; and God of his own will and rich mercy, by the word of truth, by the Gospel of grace and truth, which came by Christ, so called in distinction from the law which came by Moses, begets us again as his new creatures; which shews the usefulness of the Gospel ministry, and in what account Gospel ministers are to be had, who are spiritual fathers, or the instruments of the conversion of men.

Ver. 16. *Wherefore, I beseech you,* &c.] Though he might have used the power and authority of a father, yet he chose rather to entreat and beseech them; saying, *be ye followers of me;* for who should children follow, but their parents? The Vulgate Latin, adds, *as I am of Christ:* so Chrysostom in his time read it; and Beza says he found it so written in one Greek exemplar; and so it is in one of Stephens's; it seems to have crept in from ch. xi. 1. However, though it might not be now expressed by the apostle, it is to be supposed; for he never desired any to follow him any more, or further than he followed Christ; particularly he was desirous that these his spiritual children would follow him, and abide by him in the doctrine of a crucified Christ, he had preached among them, and not the false apostles, who had represented his ministry as weak and foolish; and in his life and conversation, especially in his humble carriage and deportment among them, and in his tender love and affection for them; observing their growing pride, haughtiness, and vain opinion of themselves, and those unnatural divisions and animosities which were fomented among them; and also in bearing reproach and persecution cheerfully and patiently, for the Gospel of Christ; a detail of which he had given them in some preceding verses.

Ver. 17. *For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus,* &c.] This is an instance of his care of them, concern for them and respect unto them; that he not only writes unto them, giving his best advice and counsel, promising to come unto them; but in the mean while sends Timothy to them, whose character is here given as one dear to him, and in all things trusty and faithful: *who is my beloved son;* so, in his epistles to him, he

often styles him his son, his own son in the faith, his dearly-beloved son; not that he was the instrument of his conversion, for he was a disciple of Christ before the apostle was acquainted with him; see Acts xvi. 1. but either because of his age, he being younger than he; or because of his great affection for him; and chiefly because, as a son with a father, he served him in the Gospel, Phil. ii. 22. and since he was so familiar with him, and so much loved by him, it might reasonably be thought he full well knew his ways and methods of doctrine and practice. *And faithful in the Lord*: a faithful steward of the mysteries of grace; faithful in the Gospel of Christ, and to the souls of men; a faithful minister of the Lord's; one who had been tried, proved, and found faithful, and therefore might be trusted to, and depended upon: *who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways*; his way of preaching, and the doctrines he taught; and what should be the manner of life and conversation agreeably thereunto, and to his own; and all those rules and orders he gave for the discipline and management of the affairs of churches; all which he had formerly delivered to them, though they, through length of time, and the ministry of the false teachers among them, had greatly forgotten them: wherefore Timothy is sent, not to teach them new ways, nor, indeed, to teach at all, whose youth they might be tempted to despise; but only to put them in mind of what the apostle had formerly taught them: and which are recommended by their being such ways, *which be in Christ*; the doctrines he had preached among them, the sum and substance of them were Christ, and him crucified; the ordinances he had delivered to them were what he had received from Christ; and all the rules and methods he had proposed to them for the regulation of their conduct, and the management of their ecclesiastical affairs, were such as were agreeably to the mind of Christ, and tended to his glory; he took no step, nor proposed any to be taken, but in Christ, and for the good of his interest: and he adds, *as I teach everywhere, in every church*; the faith he delivered everywhere was one and the same; the son of God, preached by him, was not yea and nay; the trumpet he blew always gave a certain sound; the rules prescribed by him, and orders he laid down, for the conduct of life, and government of churches, were exactly alike in all places; he taught no doctrines at Corinth, nor enjoined the observance of any rule, but what all other churches were taught and directed to; his plan of doctrine and discipline was the same everywhere.

Ver. 18. *Now some are puffed up*, &c.] Some with their gifts, learning, and eloquence, and with the high station they were in, in the church; believing they should continue therein undisturbed, thinking themselves safe and secure through the absence of the apostle, and which they flattered themselves would always be the case: *as though I would not come to you*: and others that were for Apollos and Cephas against Paul, were puffed up against their fellow-members on the same account; hoping they should never see him more, to put them in any other situation than what they were in, by demolishing their factions and parties; and others, as the incestuous person, and those that took encouragement to sin by his example, were also puffed up upon this score, and mourned not over, nor repented of their iniquities, but remained secure and hardened; believing the apostle would never more come among them, to call them to an account for their mal-practices.

Ver. 19. *But I will come to you shortly*, &c.] This he said as threatening them, but not by way of prophecy; for it is not certain that he ever did come to them after this; but by way of promise, as it was then the real intention, inclination, and resolution of his mind, though with this condition, *if the Lord will*; which is rightly put, and what the apostle had a continual regard unto, in all things he was concerned; see Rom. i. 10. Heb. vi. 3. and though it is not absolutely necessary that this should be expressed by us always in so many words; though should it, as the sentence is short and full, there would be no impropriety in it; yet this should always be the sense of our minds and conduct in all the affairs of life; see Jam. iv. 13, 14, 15. *and will know not the speech of them that are puffed up, but the power*; meaning chiefly the false teachers; and that his concern would be, not so much to observe their masterly language, the eloquence of their speech, the quaintness of their expressions, the cadency of their words, how nicely they were put together, and how fitly pronounced; but what life there was in their ministry, what power went forth with their words, and how effectual their preaching was to the conversion of sinners, and the edifying of the church of God.

Ver. 20. *For the kingdom of God*, &c.] By *the kingdom of God* is not meant the kingdom of heaven, or the ultimate glory and happiness of the saints; though that is a kingdom prepared by God, which he gives to his children, calls them to by his grace, and will give them an abundant entrance into, when time shall be no more with them; and though that is not attained to *in*, or *by word*, by mere talk and profession; not every one that says Lord, Lord, shall enter into it; or that professes the name of Christ, and prophesies in it; but *in* or *by power*; through the power of God, beginning, carrying on, and finishing a work of grace upon the soul, and keeping it, through faith, unto salvation: nor the kingdom of grace, or that internal principle of grace in the soul, which reigns, and by which Christ reigns there, and by which the saints appear to be kings as well as priests unto God: though this also does not lie *in word*, in a profession of faith, in talking about love, and in making pretensions to the knowledge of divine things; nor merely in deeds, and outward actions, in bodily exercise, in a form of godliness, and a round of religion, and a shew of righteousness; *but in power*; in internal powerful godliness; for true godliness is a powerful thing; faith is powerful, and so is love; and so is prayer, and preaching; and so is all religion, internal and external, where there is the life and truth of grace, and that in exercise. But I rather think the Gospel is here meant, often in Scripture called the kingdom of God, and the doctrines of it, the mysteries of the kingdom; because it is a message from the King of kings; the means of setting up the kingdom of grace in the heart; its subjects are things concerning the kingdom of God; it is what has brought life and immortality, or an immor-

tal life to light; and gives the best account of the invisible glories of the heavenly state, and points out the saints' meetness for it, and title to it; declaring that except a man is born again, and has a better righteousness than his own, even that of Christ's, he shall neither see nor enter into the kingdom of heaven. Now the Gospel is not in *word*: though it lies in the word of God, the Scriptures of truth: and treats of the essential word of God, the Lord Jesus Christ; and cannot be preached without words, even the words of men; yet is not to be preached with wisdom of words, with enticing words of man's wisdom, or in the words which man's wisdom teacheth; nor does the efficacy of it lie in, or depend upon the words of the preacher, or on mere moral suasion: for whenever it is effectual, it comes not *in word only, but also in power*; 1 Thess. i. 5. and by *power* is meant, not a power of working miracles the first preachers of the Gospel had, and by which it was greatly confirmed; nor a godly life and conversation which that enforced upon, and engaged both ministers and people to; but the powerful efficacy of the spirit, attending the preaching of the Gospel to the quickening of dead sinners, the enlightening of blind eyes, and unstopping of deaf ears; the softening of hard hearts, the delivering of persons from the slavery of sin and Satan, the transforming and renewing of them both inwardly and outwardly; and to the comforting, enlivening, strengthening, and establishing of the saints; all which can never be ascribed to the persuasive language of men, but to the power of God; and which is the more apparent when 'tis observed what mean and despicable instruments in the eyes of men are made use of: what the doctrines are that are preached, not being of man, nor agreeably to his carnal reason, but esteemed foolishness by him; and the manner in which they are propagated, not in a carnal way, by outward force, but by the foolishness of preaching: and the opposition made to it both by the enmity of man's heart unto it, by the men of the world, and by Satan and his principalities and powers.

Ver. 21. *What will ye? &c.*] Or *how will ye, that I should come unto you?* as the Arabic and Ethiopic versions read it: since the apostle had determined upon his coming to them: and had made mention of it, he puts it to them, in what manner they themselves would choose he should come unto them; *shall I come unto you with a rod*; either as a schoolmaster, as were their false teachers, with a *ferula*; or as a father with a rod of correction and chastisement, assuming his paternal authority, putting on severe looks, and using roughness; or rather as an apostle with the apostolical rod; by which is meant not excommunication, which is what belongs to a whole community, and not any single person; but a power of inflicting punishment on the bodies of delinquents, by smiting with diseases, and even with death itself; for as the prophets of the Old Testament had a power from God of inflicting diseases and death upon offenders; so had the apostles of the New, as appears from the instances of Ananias, and Sapphira, and Elymas the sorcerer: *or in love, and in the spirit of meekness?* with the affection of a father, with a pleasant countenance, and a meek spirit; in opposition to that roughness and sharpness, he had an authority, as an apostle of Christ, to use in proper cases; and therefore as the latter would be most eligible by them, his suggestion is, that they would behave accordingly, that there might be no occasion to come to them in the former manner, which was not desirable by him. There seems to be an allusion to a practice among the Jews, in the punishing of a drunkard or gluttonous person; the rule for which was this [w]; "they first correct him בדברים או בשבט, "*with words, or with a rod*, as it is written, Deut. "xxi. 18. *and have chastened him*: but if he adds and "repeats (*i. e.* goes on in his sin), then they stone him." Or rather the allusion is to the judges in the sanhedrim, one of the instruments or ensigns of whose office was a *rod* or *staff* to smite with; it is said [x] of R. Hona, when he went to the sanhedrim, he used to say, bring me the instruments of the Tabernæ (the place where the sanhedrim sat); what are they? *the staff* (in Cocceius's edition it is חוטרי, *the rods*, and the sandals, the trumpets, and the thongs); the gloss is, *the thong* for scourging, *the staff* (or *rods*) for beating the rebellious until they return, the *trumpets* for excommunication, and the *sandals* for plucking off the shoe: things in which the judges of the court were concerned, and here the apostle proposes to come as a judge; see ch. v. 3, 12.

CHAP. V.

In this chapter the apostle blames the Corinthians for conniving at a sin committed by one of their members; declares what he was determined to do, and what should be done by them in this case; and in general advises to shun conversation with wicked men; in ver. 1. mention is made of the sin committed by one among themselves, and which was publicly known, and commonly talked of; and which in general was fornication, and particularly incest, a man lying with his father's wife; and which is aggravated by its being what was not named, or could not be named among any virtuous persons among the Gentiles without offence: and yet the members of this church, at least the majority of them, were unconcerned at it, and were so far from mourning over it, and taking any step to remove the person from them that had done it, that they were swelled with pride, and gloried on account of their gifts, and perhaps on account of this man, who had committed the iniquity, ver. 2. This affair being related to the apostle, though at a distance; and he well knowing all things concerning it, as though he was present, resolved what should be done in this case by himself, ver. 3. and that was to deliver the man to Satan, in the name, and with the power and autho-

[w] R. Elias in Adderet apud Trigland. de sect. Karæor. c. 10. p. 167.

[x] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 7. 2.

rity of Christ, when the members of this church were gathered together, and his spirit with them; the end of which was for the destruction of the man's body, and the salvation of his soul, ver. 4, 5. and then the apostle returns to blame them for their glorying in men, and in external gifts, and pleading these as a reason why the man should be continued, and not removed from them; not considering the danger they were exposed to, and which he illustrates by the simile of leaven, a little of which affects the whole lump: suggesting thereby the danger they were in by continuing such a wicked person among them, ver. 6. wherefore pursuing the same metaphor, taken from the Jewish passover, he exhorts to remove from them the man that had sinned, as the Jews at the passover removed the leaven out of their houses: that so they might appear to be a church renewed, and purged, and clear of leaven, keeping the true and spiritual passover, which they were under obligation to do, since Christ, the antitype of the passover, was sacrificed for them, ver. 7. wherefore it became them to keep the feast of the Lord's supper; and indeed, to have the whole course of their conversation so ordered, as to avoid sin and sinners, and to behave in truth and uprightness, ver. 8. when the apostle goes on to put them in mind of what he had formerly written unto them, as suitable to the present case, which was, that they should not keep company with wicked men, particularly with fornicators, such as this man, though in a more heinous manner, ver. 9. and explains what was his meaning; not that they were to have no manner of conversation with persons of such a character, and of such-like evil characters, in things of a civil nature, for then there would be no living in the world, ver. 10. But his sense was, that they should keep no company with persons guilty of the sins mentioned, who bore the name of Christian brethren, and were members of the same church-state with them, from whose communion they ought to be removed; and indeed, so much familiarity with them should not be indulged, as even to eat with them, ver. 11. The reason of this difference, which he made between wicked men, who were not members of the church, and those that were, is because he had nothing to do, nor they neither, with them that were without the church, as it was their business only to take cognizance of them that were within, ver. 12. but neither of them had any thing to do, to judge and censure those that did not belong to the church, but should leave them to God, the righteous Judge; and then closes all, ver. 13. with what he had chiefly in view throughout the whole chapter, and that is, that they would remove from their communion the wicked person who had been guilty of the sin first mentioned.

Ver. 1. *It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you*, &c.] The apostle having reproved the Corinthians for their schisms and divisions about their ministers, proceeds to charge them with immoralities committed among them, and which were connived at, and took no notice of by them; and particularly a very notorious one, which he here mentions with its aggravated circumstances. It was done among them; not only by one of their citizens, nor merely by one of their hearers, but by one of their members, and so was cognizable by them as a church; for though they had nothing to do with them that were without, yet they were concerned with them that were within: this was a public offence; it was known by every one, and it was in every body's mouth; it was heard in all companies; it was *commonly*, ὅλως, *universally* talked of, and reported; it was generally known at Corinth, and in all Achaia, so that the church could not plead ignorance, nor could they be excused from blame in not as publicly declaring their abhorrence of the fact, as it was committed, which was fornication: fornication, ὅλως, *generally* taken, might be committed among them in all the branches of it, as that may include simple fornication, adultery, incest, and all acts of uncleanness; wherefore the apostle proceeds to describe that particular instance of fornication, that one of their members was guilty of: *and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife*; not but that such unnatural copulations were practised, as among the Indians, Moors, Bactrians, Ethiopians, Medes, and Persians, as reported by sundry writers [y]; and among the Arabians, before prohibited by Mahomet [z]; but then such marriages and mixtures were not allowed of among the more civil and cultivated nations, as the Grecians and Romans, and never mentioned but with detestation and abhorrence: and if this man was a Jew, it was an aggravation of his sin, that he should be guilty of a crime decryed by the Gentiles, as well as it was a violation of a known law of God given to the Jews, Lev. xviii. 7. and, according to the Jewish writers [a], such a man was doubly guilty: their canon is, "הבא על "אשת אב, *he that lies with his father's wife* is guilty, "on account of her being his father's wife, and on account of her being another man's wife, whether in his "father's life-time, or after his death, and whether "espoused or married;" and such an one was to be stoned. Of this kind was this man's crime; he had his father's wife, not his own mother, but his stepmother; for there's a distinction between a mother and a father's wife, as in the above canon. "These "are to be stoned, he that lies with his mother, or "with his father's wife." Whether this man had married his father's wife, or kept her as his concubine, continuing in an incestuous cohabitation with her, is not certain, and whether his father was dead or living; which latter seems to be the case from 2 Cor. vii. 12. his iniquity was abominable and intolerable, and by no means to be winked at in a church of Christ.

Ver. 2. *And ye are puffed up*, &c.] Either with the gifts, learning, and eloquence of their preachers, and particularly of this man, who, by some, is thought to be one of their teachers; and though he was guilty of so foul a crime, yet they still applauded him, and cried him up for a wonderful preacher: or one party

[y] Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 1. c. 24. Curtius, l. 8. c. 2. Philo, de special. leg. p. 778. Tertul. Apolog. c. 9. Min. Fœlix, p. 34. Clement. Alex. Pædagog. p. 109. Origen. contr. Cels. l. 6. p. 321. Hieron. adv. Jovin. l. 2. fol. 26.

[z] Koran, c. 4. Vid. Pocock. spec. Arab. Hist. p. 337, 338.

[a] Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 7. sect. 4.

was puffed up against another; that which was opposite to the party this man belonged to, boasting over the other as free from the scandal that was exposed unto; or the other were puffed up with their lenity and forbearance, boasting of it as an act of humanity and good nature, and an instance of charity, shewing that they were not severe upon one another, for mistakes in life: or else were puffed up and gloried in the thing itself, as an instance of Christian liberty, and their freedom from the law, through a sad mistake of it; and in which they might be strengthened by a notion of the Jews, that it was lawful for proselyted Gentiles to do such things, for so says Maimonides[b]. "The sentence of the law is, that it is free for a Gentile אשת אביו, *to marry his mother*, or his sister that "are made proselytes; but the wise men forbid this "thing, that they may not say we are come from a "holiness that is heavy, to one that is light." But this writer concludes that a proselyte might marry his father's brother's wife, *and his father's wife;* and so says his commentator[c], and observes, that it was the opinion of R. Akiba, which Rabbi was cotemporary with the Apostle Paul: so that this notion prevailed in his days, and does in some measure account for the commission of such a sin by a church-member, and the church's negligence about it: *and have not rather mourned;* not only personally, and separately, but as a body: they ought to have met together as a church, and humbled themselves before God for this scandalous iniquity done in the midst of them, and pray unto him, *that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you:* not by excommunication, for that they could and ought to have done themselves; but by the immediate hand of God, inflicting some visible punishment, and taking him away by an untimely death, which the Jews call כרת, *cutting off*, by the hand of God: and such a punishment, they say, this crime deserved; according to them, there were six-and-thirty cuttings-off in the law, or so many things which deserved death by the hand of God; and the two first that are mentioned are these, he that lies with his mother, or with his *father's wife*[d].

Ver. 3. *For I verily, as absent in body,* &c.] As he really was, being now at Philippi, if any dependence is to be had upon the subscription of this epistle: or rather at Ephesus; however, wherever he was, 'tis certain he was not at Corinth: *but present in spirit:* in his affection to them, care of them, and concern for their good, and the glory of God: *have judged already:* he had considered of the matter, thought very deliberately about it, and was now come to a point, to a determination concerning it, what to do in it: *as though I were present;* upon the spot, in person, to do what he had resolved upon: *to him that hath so done this deed;* this infamous one, and in so scandalous a manner, and which was continued in: what that was which the apostle, upon mature deliberation and judgment, determined to do with this wicked man, is expressed in ver. 5. which is to be connected with this, the whole fourth verse being to be read in a parenthesis, and that was to deliver him to Satan.

Ver. 4. *In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,* &c.] These words contain an account of the several things and circumstances, that should attend the awful act of the apostle, in delivering this man to Satan; it would be done *in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;* by his command, power, and authority, and for his glory; in whose name all miraculous actions, as this was one, were performed: *when ye are gathered together;* as a church, in a public manner, in one place; not to do this business, for this was purely apostolical; but to be witness of this wonderful operation, to acknowledge the justice of God in it, and that they might fear and take warning by it: *and my spirit;* meaning that though he was absent in body, he should be present in spirit; and that the extraordinary gift of the spirit of God bestowed on him would be visibly exercised upon this man before them all, as if he himself was in the midst of them; and this not by any power of his own, but *with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ;* to which all such miraculous effects, as this hereafter related, are to be ascribed.

Ver. 5. *To deliver such an one unto Satan,* &c.] This, as before observed, is to be read in connexion with ver. 3. and is what the apostle there determined to do with this incestuous person; namely, to deliver him unto Satan; by which is meant, not the act of excommunication, or the removing of him from the communion of the church, which is an act of the whole church, and not of any single person; whereas this was what the church had nothing to do with; it was not what they were to do, or ought to do, but what the apostle had resolved to do; and which was an act of his own, and peculiar to him as an apostle, see 1 Tim. i. 20. Nor is this a form of excommunication; nor was this phrase ever used in excommunicating persons by the primitive churches; nor ought it ever to be used; it is what no man, or set of men, have power to do now, since the ceasing of the extraordinary gifts of the spirit, which the apostles were endowed with; who, as they had a power over Satan to dispossess him from the bodies of men, so to deliver up the bodies of men into his hands, as the apostle did this man's: *for the destruction of the flesh;* that is, that his body might be shook, buffeted, afflicted, and tortured in a terrible manner; that by this means he might be brought to a sense of his sin, to repentance for it, and make an humble acknowledgment of it: *that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus;* that he might be renewed in the spirit of his mind, be restored by repentance, and his soul be saved in the day of Christ; either at death, when soul and body would be separated, or at the day of the resurrection, when both should be reunited; for the flesh here means, not the corruption of nature, in opposition to the spirit, as a principle of grace, but the body, in distinction from the soul: nor was the soul of this man, only his body, delivered for a time unto Satan; the end of which was, that his soul might be saved, which could never be done by delivering it up to Satan:

[b] Hilchot Issure Bia, c. 14. sect. 12, 13.
[c] Auctor Caseph Misna in ib.
[d] Misn. Ceritut, c. 1. sect. 1.

and very wrongfully is this applied to excommunication; when it is no part of excommunication, nor the end of it, to deliver souls to Satan, but rather to deliver them from him. The phrase seems to be Jewish, and to express that extraordinary power the apostles had in those days, as well in giving up the bodies to Satan, for a temporal chastisement, as in delivering them from him. The Jews say, that Solomon had such a power; of whom they tell the following story[e]: "one day he saw the angel of death grieving; "he said to him, why grievest thou? he replied, "these two Cushites have desired of me to sit here, "*he delivered them to the devil*; the gloss is, these seek "of me to ascend, for their time to die was come; "but he could not take away their souls, because it "was decreed concerning them, that they should not "die but in the gate of Luz, מסרינהו שלמה לשעירים, "*Solomon delivered them to the devils*, for he was king "over them, as it is written, 1 Chron. xxix. 13, for "he reigned over them, that are above, and them that "are below." The phrase is much the same as here, and the power which they, without any foundation, ascribe to Solomon, the apostles had: this is their rod which they used, sometimes in striking persons dead, sometimes by inflicting diseases on them themselves, and at other times by delivering them up into the hands of Satan to be afflicted and terrified by him, which is the case here. And it may be observed, that the giving up of Job into the hands of Satan, by the Lord, is expressed in the Septuagint version by the same word as here; for where it is said, Job. ii. 10. *behold, he is in thine hand*; that version renders it, *behold*, παραδίδωμι σοι αὐτὸν, *I deliver him to thee*, that is, to Satan; and which was done, that his body might be smote with sore boils by him, as it was; only his life was to be preserved, that he was not suffered to touch.

Ver. 6. *Your glorying is not good*, &c.] Their glorying in their outward flourishing condition, in their riches and wealth, and in their ministers, in their wisdom and parts, when under such an humbling dispensation; and especially if their glorying was in the sin itself, and their connivance at it, it was far from being good, it was very criminal, as the consequence of it was dangerous: *know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?* This, in nature, is what every body knows; and the proverb, which is much used by the Jews[f], was common in the mouths of all, and the meaning of it easy to be understood: thus, whether applied to the leaven of false doctrine, nothing is more manifest, than when this is let alone, and a stop is not put to it, it increases to more ungodliness; or to vice and immorality, as here; which if not taken notice of by a church, is not faithfully reproved and severely censured, as the case requires, will endanger the whole community; it may spread by example, and, under the connivance of the church, to the corrupting of good manners, and infecting of many.

Ver. 7. *Purge out therefore the old leaven*, &c.] Meaning either the incestuous person, whose crime might well be compared to sour *leaven*, and be called *old*, because of his long continuance in it; whom the apostle would have removed from them; this is properly the act of excommunication, which that church was to perform, as a quite distinct thing from what the apostle himself determined to do. The allusion is to the strict search the Jews made[g], just before their passover, after leaven, to purge their houses of it, that none of it might remain when their feast began; which they made by the light of a lamp, on the night of the fourteenth of the month Nisan, in every secret place, hole, and corner of the house: or this may be an exhortation to the church in general with respect to themselves, as well as this man, to relinquish their old course of sinning, to *put off concerning the former conversation the old man*, Ephes. iv. 22, the same with the old leaven here; it being usual with the Jews[h] to call the vitiosity and corruption of nature שאור שבעיסה, *leaven in the lump*; of which they say[i], "the evil imagination of a man, as *leaven* "*in the lump*, enters into his bowels little, little, (very "little at first,) but afterwards it increases in him, "until his whole body is mixed with it." *That ye may be a new lump*; that they might appear to be what they professed to be, new men, new creatures in Christ, by their walking in newness of life; and by removing that wicked person, they would be as the apostles were, when Judas was gone from them, all clean through the word of Christ: *as ye are unleavened*; at least professed to be. They were without the leaven of sin; not without the being of sin in their hearts, nor without the commission of it, more or less, in their lives; but were justified from it by the righteousness of Christ, and had the new creature formed in their souls, or that which was born of God in them, that sinned not. The apostle compares the true believers of this church to the unleavened bread eaten at the passover, for the grace of their hearts, and the simplicity of their lives; as he does the incestuous man to the old leaven, that was to be searched for, and cast out at the feast: *for even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us.* This is observed, to shew the pertinency of the similes of leaven and unleavened, the apostle had made use of; and to make some further improvement of them, for the use, comfort, and instruction of this church; saying, that Christ is *our passover*, the Christians' passover; the Jewish passover was a type of Christ; wherefore Moses kept it by faith, in the faith of the Messiah that was to come; see Heb. xi. 28. as it was instituted in commemoration of the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt, so likewise to prefigure Christ, and the redemption of his people by him. The Jews have a saying[k], "that in the month "Nisan they were redeemed, and in the month "Nisan they will be redeemed;" which was the month in which the passover was kept; and for

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[e] T. Bab. Succa, fol. 53. 1.

[f] Neve Shalom apud Caphtor, fol. 41. 1.

[g] Misn. Pesachim, c. 1. sect. 1, 2. Maimon. Hilch. Chametz Umetzah, c. 2. sect. 3, 4.

[h] T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 7. 4. T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 17. 1. Bereshit Rabba, fol. 29. 4. Caphtor, fol. 38. 2. & 41. 1. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 73. 2. 84. 4. 86. 1. 87. 3. 95. 3, 4. & 119. 4. Baal Hatturim in Lev. ii. 11.

[i] Zohar in Exod. fol. 71. 3.

[k] T. Bab. Roshhashana, fol. 11. 1, 2. Raya Mehimna in Zohar in Exod. fol. 49. 3.

the confirmation of which, they mention the following texts, Mic. vii. 15. Isa. liv. 8. Exod. xii. 42.—There is an agreement between the passover, and Christ, in the sacrifice itself, and the qualities of it; it was a *lamb*, as Christ is the Lamb of God, of his appointing and providing, and fitly so called, for his innocence and harmlessness, his meekness, humility, and patience; it was a lamb *without blemish*, as Christ is, without spot and blemish, without the spot of original sin, or blemish of any actual transgression; it was *a male*, as Christ is the son of man, the head of the body, and the first-born among many brethren; it was a male *of the first year*; in which it might prefigure Christ in the flower of his age, arrived at man's estate, and having had experience of a variety of sorrows and afflictions. There is also some likeness between them in the separation and slaying of it. The passover-lamb was to be *taken out from the sheep, or from the goats*: as Christ's human nature was chosen out from among the people, and, in God's eternal counsel and covenant, separated from the rest of the individuals of human nature, and taken into a federal union with the son of God, and pre-ordained before the foundation of the world, to be the Lamb slain; it was also wonderfully formed by the Holy Ghost in the virgin's womb, and separated and preserved from the infection of sin; and in his life and conversation here on earth, he was separated from sinners, from being like them, and is now made higher than the heavens. This lamb was kept up from the *tenth* of the month, to the *fourteenth*, before it was killed; which might typify the preservation of Christ, in his infancy, from the malice of Herod, and, in his riper years, from the designs of the Jews upon him, until his time was come; and 'tis to be observed, that there was much such a space of time between his entrance into Jerusalem, and his sufferings and death; see John xii. 1, 12. The lamb was *slain*, so the Prince of life was killed; and *between the two evenings*, as Christ was in the end of the world, in the last days, in the decline of time, of the age of the world, and even of the time of the day, about the *ninth* hour, or three o'clock in the afternoon, the time between the two evenings; the first evening beginning at noon as soon as the sun began to decline, the other upon the setting of it. There is likewise a comparison of these together to be observed, in the dressing and eating of it. The passover-lamb was not to be eaten *raw nor sodden*; so Christ is to be eaten not in a carnal, but in a spiritual way, by faith; it was to be *roast with fire*, denoting the painful sufferings of Christ on the cross, and the fire of divine wrath that fell upon him; it was to be eaten *whole*, as a whole Christ is to be received by faith, in his person, and in all his offices, grace, and righteousness; not a *bone* of it was to be *broken*, which was fulfilled in Christ, John xix. 36. it was to be eaten with *unleavened bread*, which is spiritualized by the apostle in the next verse; and also with *bitter herbs*, expressive of the hard bondage and severe afflictions, with which the lives of the Israelites were made bitter in Egypt; and significative of the persecutions and trials that such must expect, who live godly and by faith in Christ Jesus: it was eaten only by Israelites, and such as became proselytes, as Christ, only by true believers; and if the household was too little, they were to join with their *neighbours*; which might typify the calling and bringing in of the Gentiles, when the middle wall of partition was broken down, Christ, his flesh and blood being common to both. The first passover was eaten in haste, with their loins girt, their shoes on, and staves in their hands, ready to depart from Egypt to Canaan's land; denoting the readiness of believers to every good work; having their feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace; their loins girt about with truth, their lights burning, and they like men waiting for their Lord's coming; hasting unto the day of the Lord, being earnestly desirous of being absent from the body, that they might be present with him: in a word, the receiving of the blood of the passover-lamb into a bason, sprinkling it on the lintel, and two side-posts of the doors of the houses, in which they ate it, which the Lord seeing passed over those houses, when he passed through Egypt to destroy the first-born, whence it has its name of the passover, were very significative of the blood of sprinkling, even the blood of Christ upon the hearts and consciences of believers; whereby they are secured from avenging justice, from the curse and condemnation of the law, and from wrath to come, and shall never be hurt of the second death. Thus Christ is our antitypical passover, who was *sacrificed*, whose body and soul were offered as an offering and sacrifice unto God *for us*, that he might be proper food for our faith; and also in our room and stead, to make satisfaction to divine justice for all our sins and transgressions.

Ver. 8. *Therefore let us keep the feast*, &c.] Not the feast of the passover, which was now ceased, though this is said in allusion to it; when the master of the house used to say [l], "every one that is hungry, let him "come and eat; he that hath need, let him come "ויפסח, *and paschatize*, or *keep the feast of the pass-"over*;" but rather the feast of the Lord's supper is here meant, that feast of fat things Isaiah prophesied of; in which are the richest entertainments, even the flesh and blood of Christ; though it seems best to understand it of the whole course of a Christian's life, spent in the exercise of spiritual joy and faith in Christ; *he that is of a merry heart*, as the believer of all men in the world has reason to be of, *hath a continual feast*, Prov. xv. 15. of spiritual mirth and pleasure, rejoicing always in Christ, as he ought to do: which feast, or course of life, is to be kept *not with old leaven*; in the old, vain, sinful manner of conversation, as before; *neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness*; not in malice to any man, or one another, nor in any sort of wickedness, living in no known sin, and allowing of it: *but with the unleavened bread of sincerity*; as opposed to malice, of sincere love to God and Christ, and to his people: *and of truth*; of Gospel doctrine, discipline, and conversation.

Ver. 9. *I wrote unto you in an epistle*, &c.] Not in this same epistle, and in this chapter, ver. 2, 7. as some think; for what is here observed is not written in either of those verses, but in some other epistle he had sent them before, as is clear from ver. 11. which either

[l] Haggada Shel Pesach, p. 4. Ed. Rittangel.

came not to hand, or else was neglected by them; and so what he here says may be considered as a reproof to them, for taking no notice of his advice; but continuing to shew respect to the incestuous person, though he in a former epistle had advised them to the contrary: no doubt the apostle wrote other epistles to the Corinthians, besides those that are in being; see 2 Cor. x. 10, 11. nor does such a supposition at all detract from the perfection of Scripture; for not all that were written by him were by divine inspiration; and as many as were so, and were necessary for the perfection of the canon of Scripture, and to instruct us in the whole counsel of God, have been preserved; nor is this any contradiction to this epistle's being his first to this church; for though it might not be his first to them, yet it is the first to them extant with us, and therefore so called: what he had written to them in another epistle was not *to company with fornicators*; which he had not so fully explained, neither what fornicators he meant, nor what by keeping company with them; he therefore in this distinguishes upon the former, and enlarges his sense of the latter; declaring that they were not so much as to eat with such persons; which shews, that this prohibition does not regard unclean copulation, or a joining with them in the sin of fornication, they had been used to in a state of unregeneracy, for some sort of companying with fornicators is allowed of in the next verse; whereas no degree of a sinful mixture with them would ever be tolerated: but that it is to be understood of a civil society and familiar conversation with them; which might bring a reproach upon religion, be a stumbling to weak Christians, and be of dangerous consequence to themselves and others; who hereby might be allured and drawn by their example into the commission of the same sinful practices. The apostle seems to allude to the customs and usages of the Jews, who abstained from all civil commerce and familiar acquaintance with unbelievers. They say, "that every one that does not "study in the law, אסיר למקרב לגביה ולמעבד ביה "סחורתא וכ״ש למהך עמיה באורחא, *it is forbidden to "come near him, and to exercise merchandise with him, "and much less to walk with him in the way*, because "there is no faith in him [m]."

Ver. 10. *Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world*, &c.] By *the fornicators of this world* are meant, such as were guilty of this sin, who were the men of the world, mere worldly carnal men, who were never called out of it, or ever professed to be; in distinction from those that were in the church, that had committed this iniquity; and the apostle's sense is, that his former prohibition of keeping company with fornicators was not to be understood as referring to such persons as were out of the church, as if no sort of civil conversation and commerce were to be had with men of such, and the like infamous characters: *or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters*: that is, of this world; for this clause is to be understood of each of these; so we read [n] of בצעין דעלמא, *the covetous of the world*; by *the covetous* are meant, either such who are given up to inordinate lusts, who work all uncleanness with greediness, and can never be satisfied with their filthy enjoyments; or such who are greedily desirous of riches and wealth, and of increasing their worldly substance by any method, right or wrong; and who not only withhold that which is meet from others, but will not allow themselves what is proper and necessary: *extortioners* are either *ravishers*, as the word may be rendered: such who by force violate the chastity of others, youths or virgins; or robbers, who, by violence and rapine, take away that which is the right and property of others; or such who oppress the poor, detain their wages by fraud, or lessen them, and extort that by unlawful gain, which is unreasonable: *idolaters* are those who worship the false deities of the Heathens, or any idol, graven image, or picture of God, or men, or any creature whatsoever, or any but the one Lord God. The apostle, under these characters, comprises all manner of sin against a man's self, against his neighbour, and against God; against himself, as fornication; against his neighbour, as covetousness and extortion; and against God, as idolatry: and since the world abounded with men guilty of these several vices, all kind of civil correspondence with them could not be avoided, *for then must you needs go out of the world*; meaning not out of Greece, or of any of the cities thereof, into other parts, but out of the world itself; they must even destroy themselves, or seek out for a new world: 'tis an hyperbolical way of speaking, shewing that the thing is impracticable and impossible, since men of this sort are everywhere; and were all trade and conversation with them to be forbidden, the families of God's people could never be supported, nor the interest of religion maintained; a stop would soon be put to worldly business, and saints would have little or nothing to do in the world; wherefore, as the Arabic version reads it, *business would compel you to go out of the world*.

Ver. 11. *But now have I written unto you*, &c.] Which shews, that what he had written before was at another time, and in another epistle; but not that what he was now writing was different from the former, only he explains the persons of whom, and the thing about which he had before written: *not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother, be a fornicator*; or *if any man that is a brother is called*, or *named a fornicator; or covetous, or an idolater; or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner, with such an one, no, not to eat*. The apostle's meaning is, that in his prohibition of keeping company with men of the above character, he would be understood of such persons as were called brethren; who had been received into the church, and had been looked upon, and had professed themselves to be such; and who might be mentioned by name, as notoriously guilty of fornication, covetousness, idolatry, and extortion, mentioned in the former verse; to which are added two other sins any of them might be addicted to, as *railing* either at their fellow brethren and Christians, or others giving reproachful language to them, and fixing invidious characters on them: *and drunkenness*: living in the frequent commission of that sin, and others before spoken of; and that such persons remaining impenitent and

[m] Zohar in Lev. fol. 33. 2.

[n] Zohar in Exod. fol. 31. 2.

incorrigible, still persisting in such a vicious course of life, after due admonition given them, were not only to be removed from their religious society, from the communion of the church, and be debarred sitting down, and eating with them at the Lord's table, or at their love-feasts, but also were to be denied civil conversation and familiarity with them, and even not suffered to eat common food at the same table with them: which though lawful to be used with the men of the world, yet for some reasons were not advisable to be used with such; partly for vindicating the honour of religion, and preventing the stumbling of the weak; and partly to make such offenders ashamed, and bring them to repentance. The apostle alludes to the behaviour of the Jews, either to persons that were under any pollution, as a woman in the days of her separation, when her husband לא יאכל עמה, *might not eat with her* off of the same plate, nor at the same table, nor on the same cloth; nor might she drink with him, nor mix his cup for him; and the same was observed to persons that had issues on them [o]: or rather to such as were under נדוי, *the sentence of excommunication*, and such an one was obliged to sit the distance of four cubits from others, and who might not eat nor drink with him; nor was he allowed to wash and shave himself, nor a sufficiency of food, nor any to sit with him within the space of four cubits, except those of his house [p].

Ver. 12. *For what have I to do to judge*, &c.] To admonish, reprove, censure, and condemn: *them also that are without?* without the church, who never were in it, or members of it; to whom ecclesiastical jurisdiction does not reach; and with whom the apostle had no more concern, than the magistrates of one city, or the heads of one family have with another: *do not ye judge them that are within?* and them only? The apostle appeals to their own conduct, that they only reproved, censured, and punished with excommunication, such as were within the pale of the church, were members of it, and belonged unto it; nor did they pretend to exercise a power over others; and it would have been well if they had made use of the power they had over their own members, by admonishing and reproving such as had sinned; by censuring delinquents, and removing from their communion scandalous and impenitent offenders; and therefore they need not wonder that the apostle only meant fornicators, &c. among them, and not those that were in the world, by his forbidding to company with such: reference seems to be had to ways of speaking among the Jews, who used not only to call themselves the church, and the Gentiles the world, and so *them that were without*, both their land and church; but even those among themselves that were profane, in distinction from their wise and good men. They say [q], "if a man puts his phylacteries on his forehead, "or upon the palm of his hand, this is the way of "heresy (or as in the Talmud [r], the way of the Karaites); if he covered them with gold, and put them "upon his glove (or on his garments without, so Bartenora, or, as Maimonides interprets it, his arm, shoulder, or breast), lo, this is דרך החיצונים, *the way of them that are without*: on which the commentators [s] say, "these are the children of men, who walk after their "own judgment, and not the judgment of the wise "men:" and Maimonides [t] says, they are such who deny the whole law, and neither believe any thing, either of the written or the oral law.

Ver. 13. *But them that are without God judgeth*, &c.] Or *will judge*, in the great day of judgment; wherefore though such persons did not fall under the censures and punishment of the apostle, nor of a church of Christ, yet they shall not go unpunished; God will call them to an account for their fornication, covetousness, idolatry, extortion, &c. and will judge, condemn, and punish them, according to their works; and therefore since they don't fall under the cognizance of the churches of Christ, they are to be left to the tribunal of God; and all that the saints have to do is to watch over one another, and reprove, rebuke, and censure, as cases require, and as the case of this church did. *Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person*: not that wicked thing, as some read it, but that wicked one; meaning not the devil, who is sometimes so called; a sense of the words proposed by Calvin, not asserted; but that wicked man, that incestuous person, whom the apostle would have removed from among them, by excommunication; which was what became them as a church to do, and which lay in their power to do, and could only be done by them, and was to be their own pure act and deed: reference seems to be had to those passages in Deut. xvii. 7. and xxi. 21. and xxii. 21. and xxiv. 7. where the Septuagint render the phrase, ἐξαρεῖς τὸν πονηρὸν ἐξ ὑμῶν αὐτῶν, *thou shalt put away that wicked one from among yourselves*.

CHAP. VI.

THE principal view of this chapter is to dissuade Christians from going to law with one another before Heathens, and also from fornication: the apostle begins with the first of these, and argues against it, from its being a daring, dangerous, and scandalous practice; and from the different characters of the persons, before whom controversies about civil things among Christians should and should not be brought: the one being *saints*, and so conscientious persons, and would do the right thing; the other *unjust*, and so justice could not be expected to be done by them, ver. 1. and that the former, and not the latter, should be appointed judges in such cases, is argued from the greater to the lesser; that seeing these will judge the world, much

[o] Maimon. Hilch. Issure Bia, c. 11. sect. 17, 18, 19. & Tumaot Okelin, c. 16. sect. 11. & R. Abraham in ib.

[p] T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 16. 1. & Piske Tosaph. in ib. art. 67, 68.

[q] Misn. Megilla, c. 4. sect. 8.

[r] T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 24. 2.

[s] Jarchi, Bartenora, & Yom Tob, in Misn. Megilla, c. 4. sect. 8.

[t] In ib.

more then should they be employed in matters of less consequence, ver. 2. and by the same sort of argument it is further urged, that even angels themselves shall be judged by the saints; then much more might affairs appertaining to this life, be brought before them, and be decided by them, ver. 3. yea, even the things that were litigated by them, and which they had power of judging in, were such as might be determined by the men of the least capacity among them, and therefore had no need to bring them before Heathen magistrates, ver. 4. besides, it could not be spoken of, but to their shame, that after all their boast of their gifts, learning, and eloquence, there was not one man of wisdom and ability among them, to judge in matters of civil property, ver. 5. and this evil of commencing law-suits in Heathen courts of judicature, is aggravated by its being done, not between Christians and Heathens, but between one Christian brother and another, and that before men that were infidels, ver. 6. and which to do, shewed a great deficiency of love, wisdom, and care; and much better it was to take and suffer wrong, than to be guilty of such criminal conduct, ver. 7. yea, those that drew their brethren before such judgment-seats, did them wrong, both by bringing them thither, and by getting their cause in an unjust manner, ver. 8. wherefore, to deter from such unrighteous procedures, the apostles declares, that all injurious persons, and wicked men in any way, and of any sort, should not inherit the kingdom of God, ver. 9, 10. and whereas some of those the apostle writes to had been such, but now through the grace of God were otherwise, this should be considered as an argument, why they should not contend with one another before persons destitute of the grace they were partakers of, ver. 11. and now the apostle having mentioned fornication as a sin which excluded from the kingdom of God, and this being reckoned by the Gentiles an indifferent thing; he first observes of indifferent things in general, that are really so, that though they are lawful to be used, it is not expedient to use them at all times, and under all circumstances; and especially care should be taken, that by the use of them, we don't become slaves unto them, ver. 12. and then particularly instances in meats, which without distinction might be lawfully eaten, they being made for the belly, and the belly for them; which was answering the original design of them, though hereafter both will be destroyed; yet fornication must not be put upon a level with them, and reckoned indifferent as they are; since the body was not made to be abused and defiled, or for fornication: but to be redeemed and sanctified by the Lord, and to serve him, and who was appointed for the redemption and sanctification of that, ver 13. moreover, the sin of fornication is dissuaded from, by the consideration of the resurrection of the body as a glorious one, by the power of God, of which Christ's resurrection is a pledge; and therefore should not be defiled with this sin, ver. 14. as also from the bodies of the saints being the members of Christ; and therefore should not be made the members of an harlot by fornication, these things being utterly absurd and inconsistent, ver. 15. which is illustrated by observing, that he that is joined in unlawful copulation with an harlot, becomes one flesh with her, ver. 16. which is confirmed by a passage cited out of Gen. ii. 24. which regards carnal copulation in general; but one that is in union with Christ, and is become a member of him, is one spirit with him; and therefore since there is such a spiritual union between them, fornication, which joins, unites, and makes a man one with an harlot, should be carefully avoided, ver. 17. and in order the more to deter from this sin, the apostle observes, that it is not like some other sins, which are without the body, but this is by it, and with it, and against it; it is dishonourable, and may be hurtful to it, ver. 18. to which he adds, that the bodies of the saints are the temples of the Holy Ghost, where he dwells, and therefore should not be polluted with fornication, ver. 19. and closes all with an argument, taken from their bodies not being their own property, to use and abuse at pleasure, but the purchase of Christ's blood; and therefore it was incumbent upon them to glorify him with them, as well as with their spirits, and not defile them with fornication.

Ver. 1. *Dare any of you, having a matter against another*, &c.] Any thing in difference, an action, cause, or suit. The apostle having dispatched the affair of the incestuous person, and blamed this church for their conduct therein: and having given them instructions what they should do, proceeds to lay before them another evil among them he had to complain of; which was, when any difference arose among them about their worldly concerns, they would *go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints*; a method of proceeding condemned by the Jews, who would not suffer any causes of theirs to be tried before Gentiles, only before Israelites; their canon runs thus*, "he "that tries a cause before the judges of the Gentiles, "and before their tribunals, although their judg"ments are as the judgments of the Israelites, lo, this "is an ungodly man; and it is as if he blasphemed "and reproached, and lift up his hand against the "law of Moses our master, as it is said, Exod. xxi. 1. "*now these are the judgments which thou shalt set be*"*fore them*: before them, ולא לפני גוים, *and not before* "*the Gentiles*; before them, ולא לפני הדיוטות, *and not* "*before idiots*, private or illiterate men." They looked upon such an action as bad as profaning the name of God; hence they say*, "we must not try a cause in "the courts of the Gentiles, for they come from the "strength of judgment; this is Esau an hairy man, "for they have no concord nor mercy——and he that "comes before them מחלל השם, *profanes the name of* "*God*, who is gracious and merciful, and honours the "name of an idol—wherefore he that brings a cause "before the Gentiles, is the occasion of spreading the "property of judgment in the world——therefore let "a cause be tried before the Israelites, for they are the "secret of mercy; and not before the Gentiles, nor "before idiots:" they affirm* it to be a greater sin than murder, and that not only profanations of the

* Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrin, c. 26. sect. 7. Vid. T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 88. 2.
* R. Abraham Seba in Tzeror Hammor, fol. 80. 4.

* R. Bechai in Kad Hakkemach, fol. 21. 4. apud Buxtorf Lex. Talm. col. 1666.

name of God, but rapine and violence are comprehended in it; and that to give evidence in an Heathen court against an Israelite, deserves excommunication; for so it is said[y], "he that bears witness against an "Israelite בערכאות של גוים, *in the courts of the Gentiles*, and by his testimony gets money from him, "which is not according to the judgment of the "Israelites, they excommunicate him until he repays "it." Again[z], "it is forbidden to order causes in the "courts of (the rest of the nations) idolaters, for they "have no part in the side of our faith." The apostle here dissuades from this practice, of going to law before Heathen magistrates, not only from its being an imprudent, but an impudent, *daring*, rash and adventurous action; and seems surprised that any should attempt it, when it must unavoidably expose their weaknesses and faults to their enemies; nor could they expect justice to be done them by men of such a character, as *unjust*, who neither feared God, nor regarded men; were not only destitute of righteousness, but filled with all unrighteousness, and had not so much as the principles of common justice and equity in them; when on the contrary, from the *saints*, men who have the principles of grace and holiness wrought in them, and live soberly, righteously, and godly, who have the fear of God before their eyes, and upon their hearts; they might reasonably conclude, were matters brought before them, they would be adjusted according to judgment and truth, without exposing the sin and weakness of any party to the world.

Ver. 2. *Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world*, &c.] The apostle appeals to them concerning this matter, as a thing well known unto them, or might easily be known by them; for this was either a traditional notion among the Jews, many of whom were in this church, that good men should judge the world; as is said of the righteous in the *apocryphal* book of *Wisdom*, ch. iii. ver. 8. *They shall judge the nations, and have dominion over the people, and their Lord shall reign for ever*; and so the Jews say[a], that "the first "day of the month is the beginning of judgment in "the whole world, and Isaac sat on a throne, למידן "עלמא, *to judge the world*:" or this might be collected, as Dr. Lightfoot observes, out of Dan. vii. 18, 27. but the difficulty is, in what sense the apostle means the saints shall judge the world; not merely in a comparative sense, for so even will the Heathens, the men of Nineveh, and the queen of Sheba, judge and condemn the Jews; nor as assessors on the throne with Christ, for though they shall sit on the same throne with him as reigning, yet not as judging with him, all judgment is solely committed to him: nor merely as approving that judiciary sentence, that will be pronounced by him on the world; for even wicked men themselves, and devils, will be obliged to own the justice of it; but his meaning is, that in a little time the saints, Christian men, men under a profession of Christianity at least, should be governors in the world, and bear the office of civil magistracy in it; which came to pass in a few centuries after the writing of this, and has been more or less the case ever since; and will be more so in the latter day, when kings shall be nursing fathers, and queens nursing mothers to the church; and when the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High: upon which the apostle strongly argues, *and if the world shall be judged by you*: if such men as you shall bear sway in it, fill up all civil offices in it, even the highest; shall sit upon the benches of judges, and on the thrones of kings, and at last have the government of the whole world; since such honour the saints shall have, and be abundantly capable of it, *are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?* is it too high a post, and can you be thought to be unqualified for, and unfit to have such trivial things, of little or no moment and importance, things relating to the common affairs of life, brought before you, and be tried, and judged by you?

Ver. 3. *Know ye not that we shall judge angels*, &c.] Meaning not the ministers of the Gospel, and pastors of churches, called *angels*, Rev. i. 20. whose doctrines are examined, tried, and judged by the saints, according to the word of God; nor the good angels, who, were it possible that they could, or should publish a Gospel contrary to what has been preached by the apostle, would be contradicted, condemned, and accursed by him, see Gal. i. 8, 9. but the evil angels, the devil and his angels; and this is to be understood not of their future final judgment and condemnation at the last day, when saints will subscribe unto, and approve of the sentence pronounced upon them, and will triumph over them in their destruction; but of the judgment of them, and of their ejection out of the Gentile world, out of their oracles, idols, and idol-temples, to which Christ refers, John xii. 31. and calls the judgment of this world, and the casting out of the prince of it by the ministry of his apostles; and which was now already begun, and ere long would be fully accomplished: accordingly the Syriac version renders it, *know ye not* דלמלאכא דיננן, *that we are about to judge angels?* and the Arabic, *know ye not that we judge angels?* from whence the apostle infers very justly, *how much more things that pertain to this life?* this animal life; to the trade and business of life; to pecuniary matters, to estates and possessions in this world, about which differences may arise between one saint and another.

Ver. 4. *If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life*, &c.] Not judgments relating to life and death, for these were not in the power of a Jewish sanhedrim now, and much less of a Christian community, but were wholly in the power of the Roman magistrates; but judgments relating to the common affairs of life, or what the Jews call דיני ממונות, *pecuniary judgments*[b], in distinction from דיני נפשות, *judgments of souls*, or capital ones. The Jews say[c], "that forty "years before the destruction of the temple, capital "judgments were taken from Israel; and in the days "of R. Simeon ben Jochai, pecuniary judgments were "taken away from Israel." Now this Rabbi lived many years after the times of the apostles, so that as

[y] Maimon. Talmud Tora, c. 6. sect. 14.
[z] Zohar in Exod. fol. 103. 3.
[a] Ibid. in Lev. fol. 13. 4.

[b] Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 1. sect. 1.
[c] T. Hieros. Sanhedrin. fol. 24. 2.

yet the Jews had a power of exercising such judgments; and no doubt the Christians also, who as yet were very little, if at all, distinguished from the Jews by the Romans: and therefore since such judgments were within the compass of their authority, the apostle advises to *set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church*: meaning, not those of the lowest circumstances of life, and of the meanest abilites and capacities; for in the next verse he requires a wise man for such a business; but private persons, laymen, who were not in any office and authority in the church, in distinction from pastors, elders, and rulers, that were in office, power, and high esteem, whom he would not have troubled with cases of this nature; but should rather choose out from among the laity persons of the best judgment and capacity, to be umpires and arbitrators in such worldly matters, which do not so properly come under the notice and cognizance of spiritual guides. The phrase, *to judge*, is not in the original text, where it is only καθίζετε, *set*, or *put in the chair*; but is added in the Vulgate Latin version; and to which agree both the Syriac and Arabic versions; the former reading the words, *they that are despised in the church, set for you in judgment*; and the latter, *make them to sit judges*. The Jews, as Dr. Lightfoot observes, besides their great sanhedrim of seventy-one persons, and that other of twenty-three in their cities of note, and their triumvirate in every synagogue, had also two sorts of benches, who judged of lesser matters; the one was called בית דין של מומחין, *the bench of authorized* persons, experienced men, that were approved of, and had their authority from the sanhedrim; and the other was called בית דין של הדיוטות, *the bench of idiots*[d], or private persons, or בית דין שאינו מומחין, *the bench of those who were not authorized*[e], or had not their authority from the higher courts; but being judged proper persons, were chosen by the people to arbitrate matters in difference between them; and these are the men the apostle means, at least alludes to, before whom he would have the causes brought.

Ver. 5. *I speak to your shame*, &c.] Not that they did set such persons to judge, but that they did not; and instead of so doing went to law with their brethren before the unjust: *is it so that there is not a wise man among you?* this also the apostle speaks to their shame, who had so much gloried in their wisdom, and boasted of their parts and abilities to the contempt of others, and even of the apostle himself; and yet acted as if there was not a wise man among them capable of judging and determining trivial matters, but they must carry them before unconverted persons: *no not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren?* for though the above-mentioned benches consisted of three persons, yet the contending parties might choose one man to be an arbitrator and judge between them. The rule with the Jews was this[f]; "pecuniary judgments "are by three, but if he is authorised or approved by "the majority, דן אפילו יחידי, *he may judge alone*. "Says R. Nachman, as I judge pecuniary judgments "alone; and so says R. Chaijah, as I judge pecuniary "punishments alone."

Ver. 6. *But brother goeth to law with brother*, &c.] The relation meant is spiritual; it was usual for members of churches to be called brethren, they professing to be born again of the same father, and belonging to the same family under Christ, the son, first-born, and master of it: and a very wicked and shameful thing it was, that persons in such a relation, being of such a family, should go to law with one another at all: *and that before the unbelievers*; which is an aggravation of their sin and folly. The apostle before calls them *unjust*, now *infidels*, such as had no faith in Christ, disbelieved the Messiah, and denied the whole Gospel, and therefore no faith or confidence should be put in them; for, generally speaking, such as have no faith, are not only wicked, but unreasonable men, men of no reason, conscience, justice, and equity; and therefore very improper persons for believers to bring their causes before.

Ver. 7. *Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you*, &c.] Or a *defect*; a want of brotherly love, or there would be no occasion to go to law at all; a want of wisdom and conduct, or proper persons would be pitched upon, and chosen out from among themselves to be arbitrators and judge between them; and a want of care among their leaders, who else would have pointed out to them such a method of accommodation, and not have suffered them to go the lengths they did: *because ye go to law one with another*; which would never be, was there not a declension among you, a decay of your first love, and of the power of religion and true godliness: *why do ye not rather take wrong? why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded?* than to go to law, especially before unjust persons and unbelievers, taking the advice of Christ, Matt. v. 40. It is more advisable to a believer to suffer wrong than to go to law with any man, and especially with a brother. It is a petition in the Jewish liturgy[g], "let "it please thee, O Lord God, and the God of my "fathers, to deliver me this day, and every day— "from hard judgment, and a severe adversary, בין "שהוא בן ברית ובין שאינו בן ברית, *whether he be a son of "the covenant, or whether he be not a son of the covenant.*"

Ver. 8. *Nay, you do wrong and defraud*, &c.] So far were they from taking and acting up to the advice given, that instead of taking wrong, they did wrong; and instead of suffering themselves to be defrauded, they defrauded others: *and that your brethren*; that were of the same faith, of the same religion, and in the same church and family: in short, neither party, not the plaintiff, nor the defendant, sought any thing more or less than to wrong, trick, and defraud each other; such a sad corruption and degeneracy prevailed among them: hence the apostle thought to deal plainly and closely with them, as in the following verses.

Ver. 9. *Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?* &c.] A way of speaking much like that in the *Talmud*, הוי יודע שהעולם הבא אינו עשוי אלא לצדיקים, *know thou, that the world to come is not made but for the righteous*[h]? Without a righteousness there will be no entrance into the world of bliss and happiness hereafter; and this must be a better

[d] T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 32. 1.
[e] Maimon. Hilch. Ishot, c. 17. sect. 13. T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 88. 2. Gloss. in ib.
[f] T. Bab. Sanhed. fol. 5. 1. Maimon. Hilch. Sanhed. c. 5. sect. 8.
[g] Seder Tephillot, fol. 3. 2. Ed. Basil. fol. 5. 2. Ed. Amst.
[h] T. Bab. Yebamot, fol 47. 1.

righteousness than what a sinful creature is capable of working out, and no other than the righteousness of Christ. 'Twas a loss and want of righteousness that cast the angels down from heaven, and turned Adam out of paradise; and whoever of his posterity are destitute of one, will fall short of enjoying the glory of God; for it is not agreeable to the holy nature of God, to his infinite justice and righteous law, to admit any into heaven without a righteousness: hence a judgment-seat is erected, before which all must stand; and those that will be found without a righteousness, will be for ever excluded the kingdom of heaven; and could any unrighteous persons be received there, it would spoil the pleasure and happiness of the saints. Now this is said, partly to dissuade the Corinthians from going to law with each other before unrighteous persons, who have no right to the kingdom of God, and living and dying as they are, will have no share in it; and therefore since they are not to be fellow-heirs and companions with them in another world, they should not bring their causes before them in this; and partly to reprove them for their injurious and unrighteous actions among themselves, their tricking and defrauding of one another, with other sins they were guilty of; which, if not repented of, would shew, that notwithstanding their profession, they were destitute of the grace of God, were unfit to be in the kingdom of God, in a Gospel church-state here below, and would be shut out of the kingdom of heaven hereafter. *Be not deceived*; imagining, that through your knowledge and profession you shall be saved, live as you will: *neither fornicators*; such as are guilty of uncleanness with persons in a single state: *nor idolators*; who worship more gods than one, and not the true God; who do service to them that are not gods, and perform what the Jews call עבודה זרה, *strange service*; and not only fall down to stocks and stones, but serve divers lusts and pleasures, the idols of their own hearts: *nor adulterers*; such as have criminal conversation with persons in a married state: *nor effeminate*; or *soft*, or, as the Syriac renders it, מחבלא, *corrupters*; that is, of themselves, by voluntary pollution, such as are guilty of the sin of Onan. *Nor abusers of themselves with mankind*; sodomites.

Ver. 10. *Nor thieves*, &c.] Who take away another man's property, secret or openly, by fraud or force. *Nor covetous*; insatiable, in the lust of uncleanness; or greedy of worldly gain, bent upon increasing their substance at any rate, by circumvention, fraud, and deceit; and do not use the things of this life as they should, for their own good, and that of others. *Nor drunkards*; who are strong to drink strong liquors: who give up themselves thereunto: who sit down on purpose to intoxicate themselves, and are frequent in the commission of this sin. *Nor revilers*; who are free with other men's characters, load them with reproaches, and take away their good names; either openly or secretly, either by tale-bearing, whispering, and backbiting, or by raising and spreading scandalous reports in a public manner. *Nor extortioners*; ravishers of virgins; or plunderers of men's substance in an open and forcible way; or who extort unlawful gain: *shall inherit the kingdom of God*; not that these sins, any or all of them, are unpardonable; for such who have been guilty of them may, through the blood of Christ, receive the remission of them, and through the grace of the spirit of God obtain repentance for them, and have both right and meetness for the kingdom of heaven, as the following words shew.

Ver. 11. *And such were some of you*, &c.] Not all, but some of them; and of these every one was not guilty of all these crimes; but some had been guilty of one, and others of another; so that they had been all committed by one or another of them. The Corinthians were a people very much given to uncleanness and luxury, without measure [f], which was the ruin of their state; and among these wicked people God had some chosen vessels of salvation; who are put in mind of their former state, partly for their present humiliation, when they considered what they once were, no better than others, but children of wrath, even as others; and partly to observe to them, and the more to illustrate and magnify the grace of God in their conversion, pardon, justification, and salvation; as also to point out to them the obligations that lay upon them to live otherwise now than they formerly did. *But ye are washed*; which is not to be understood of external washing, of corporeal ablution, or of their being baptized in water; so they might be, and yet not be cleansed from their filthiness, either by original or actual transgressions; nor of the washing of regeneration, which more properly comes under the next head; but of their being washed from their sins by the blood of Christ, through the application of it to them, for the remission of them; which supposes them to have been polluted, as they were originally, being conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity; naturally, for who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? and internally, in heart, mind, and conscience; also universally, both as to persons, and as to the powers and faculties of their souls, and members of their bodies; and that they could not wash and cleanse themselves by any ceremonial purifications, moral duties, or evangelical performances; but that this was a blessing of grace they enjoyed through the blood of Christ, by which they were washed from their sins, both in the sight of God, his justice being satisfied for them, they were all pardoned and done away, so as to be seen no more, and they appeared unblamable and irreprovable in his sight; and also in their own apprehensions, for being convinced of their pollution, and being directed to Christ for cleansing, the spirit of God took his blood, and sprinkled it on their consciences, to the appeasement of them, the removal of sin from thence, and a non-remembrance of it. *But ye are sanctified*; which designs not their sanctification by God the father, which is no other than the eternal separation of them from himself, or his everlasting choice of them to eternal happiness; nor the sanctification of them, or the expiation of their sins by the blood of Christ, this is meant in the former clause; nor their sanctification in Christ, or the imputation of his holiness with his obedience and death for their justification, which is intended in the following one; but the sanctification of the spirit, which lies in a principle of spiritual life infused into the soul, in a spiritual light in the under-

[f] Ælian. Hist. var. l. 1. c. 19.

standing, in a flexion of the will to the will of God, both in grace and providence, in a settlement of the affections on divine objects, and in an implantation of every grace; which is a gradual work, as yet not perfect, but will be fulfilled in all in whom it is begun. *But ye are justified;* not by the works of the law, but by the righteousness of Christ. Justified they were from all eternity, as soon as Christ became a surety for them; and so they were when he rose from the dead, who were justified as their head and surety, and they in him; but here it is to be understood of their being justified in the court of conscience, under the witnessings of the spirit of God; who having convinced them of the insufficiency of their own righteousness, and having brought near the righteousness of Christ unto them, and wrought faith in them to lay hold on it, pronounced them justified persons in their own consciences; whence followed joy, peace, and comfort. *In the name of the Lord Jesus;* which may refer, as the following clause, to all that is said before: by *the name of the Lord Jesus* may be meant he himself; and the sense be, that they were washed by his blood, sanctified by his spirit, and justified by his righteousness; or it may intend the merit and efficacy of Christ's blood, sacrifice, and righteousness; as that their sins were pardoned, and they cleansed from them through the merit of the blood of Christ shed for the remission of their sins; and that they were regenerated and sanctified through the efficacy of Christ's resurrection from the dead; and were justified by the grace of God, through the redemption that is in Christ: or else the name of Christ may design his Gospel, through which they received the knowledge of God's way of pardoning sinners, and justifying them, and the spirit of God, as a spirit of regeneration and sanctification: *and by the spirit of our God;* who sprinkled the blood of Christ upon them, to the cleansing of them; who sanctified their hearts, and revealed the righteousness of Christ unto them for their justification, and pronounced the sentence of it upon them. 'Tis to be observed, that all the three persons, Father, Son, and Spirit, are here mentioned, as being jointly concerned in those acts of grace.

Ver. 12. *All things are lawful unto me,* &c.] That is, which are of an indifferent nature; otherwise every thing is not lawful to be done: *but all things are not expedient;* when the doing of them destroys the peace, comfort, and edification of others; when it stumbles and grieves weak minds, and causes offence to them; see ch. x. 23. *all things are lawful for me:* which is repeated for the sake of saying the following words: *but I will not be brought under the power of any:* which would be very inexpedient, should any by the use of liberty in things indifferent, on the one hand, offend his brethren, and, on the other, bring himself into bondage to those very things he has the free use of; and therefore the apostle determines, that these shall not have the mastery over him, that he'll use them, or not use them, at his pleasure. It is somewhat difficult to know what in particular he has respect unto, whether to what he had been treating of before, concerning going to law before unbelievers; and his sense be, that however lawful this might be in itself, yet it was not expedient, since it was exposing of themselves to ungodly persons, and a putting themselves under their power to judge and determine as they pleased; or whether to the use of meats forbidden under the law, or offered to idols; which though in themselves lawful to be eaten, every creature of God being good, and not to be refused and accounted common and unclean; yet it was not expedient to use this liberty, if a weak brother should be grieved, or a man himself become a slave to his appetite.

Ver. 13. *Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats,* &c.] All sort of food is appointed and provided to satisfy the appetite and stomach, to fill the belly, and nourish the body; and the belly, and all the parts through which the food passes, are purposely formed by God for the reception and digestion of the food, for its secretion, chylification, and nutrition by it, and the ejection of the excrementitious parts. *But God shall destroy both it and them;* at death, and in the grave, when the one shall be consumed, and the other be needless and useless; and though that part of the body, with the rest, will be raised at the last day, since the body will be raised perfect, consisting of all its parts; yet there will be no appetite, no desire in the stomach after meats, no need of them to fill the belly, and so no use of these parts for such purposes as they now are; for the children of the resurrection will be like the angels, and stand in no need of eating and drinking. *Now the body is not for fornication.* Though meats are appointed for the belly, and the belly for them, and this and the other sort of meats are of an indifferent kind, which may or may not be used; yet this cannot be said of fornication, which the Corinthians, and other Gentiles, took to be equally indifferent as meats; but the apostle shews there is not the same reason for the one, as the other. The body was not originally made and appointed for fornication; this is quite besides the will of God, who has provided marriage as a remedy against it; *but for the Lord;* for Jesus Christ, for whom a body was prepared in God's council and covenant; and for the sake of which, and after the exemplar of it in God's eternal mind, the body of man was first formed; and which was also made, as after the image, so for the glory of Christ, to be a member of his, to be redeemed by him, and to serve him in, in righteousness and holiness, and at last to be raised by him, and made like to his glorious body at the great day. *And the Lord for the body;* he was pre-ordained in the council of God, and provided in the covenant of grace, and sent in the fulness of time to be a Redeemer and Saviour of the body, as well as the soul; to be a sanctifier of it, and the raiser of it up from the dead in the resurrection; all which are so many arguments to dissuade from the sin of fornication.

Ver. 14. *And God hath both raised up the Lord,* &c.] God the father has raised up from the dead the Lord Jesus Christ, though not exclusive of the son, who was equally concerned in the resurrection of himself, whereby he demonstrated himself to be the son of God, truly and properly God. *And will also raise up us by his own power;* for the resurrection of the dead, whether of Christ, or of his people, is an act of power, of God's own power, even of his almighty power, and is what the power of a mere creature could never

effect. Now as Christ, the head, is raised, so shall all his members by the same power; their bodies will be raised powerful, glorious, incorruptible, and spiritual; an argument that they were never made for fornication, nor to be defiled with such uncleanness.

Ver. 15. *Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ*, &c.] The whole persons of God's elect were chosen in Christ, and given to him, and made one with him, their bodies as well as their souls; and both are redeemed by him, and, in union with him, are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones: *shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid.* Signifying, that it is a most absurd, indecent, abominable, and detestable thing, that the bodies of the saints, which are the members of Christ, should be joined in carnal copulation with an harlot.

Ver. 16. *What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot*, &c.] Not in marriage, but in carnal copulation, and unclean embraces, *is one body* with her: *for two (saith he*, Adam, or Moses, or God, or the Scripture, or as R. Sol. Jarchi says, the Holy Spirit, Gen. ii. 24.) *shall be one flesh*: what is originally said of copulation in lawful marriage, in which man and wife, legally coupled together, become one flesh, is applied to the unlawful copulation of a man with an harlot, by which act they also become one body, one flesh: and which is made use of by the apostle, to deter the members of Christ from the commission of this sin, which makes a member of Christ one body and flesh with an harlot, than which nothing is more monstrous and detestable. The apostle here directs to the true sense of the phrase in Genesis, *and they shall be one flesh*; that is, man and wife shall only have carnal knowledge of, and copulation with each other. Some Jewish [k] writers interpret this phrase, מצד הולד, *on account of the fœtus*, which is formed by the means of them both, and which becomes *their one flesh*: others [l], thus as if they were, or because they are, like as if they were one flesh; but others [m], in more agreement with the apostle, think that this has respect אל החבור, *to that conjunction*, by which the fixing of the species is completed; and others [n] expressly thus, *they two shall be one flesh*, למקום ששניהם עושים בשר אחד, *that is, in the place where both of them make one flesh*; which is equally done by unlawful copulation with an harlot, as with a man's own wife.

Ver. 17. *He that is joined unto the Lord*, &c.] As every elect person is; his whole person, soul and body, is united to the Lord Jesus Christ, to his whole person, as God-man and Mediator; even as Adam and Eve, whose marriage was a representation of the marriage between Christ and his church, were personally united, and were called by the same name; and as the whole human nature of Christ, consisting of a true body and a reasonable soul, was united to the person of the son of God; and as appears from the influence that union with Christ has upon the redemption, sanctification, and resurrection of the body. The ground, foundation, and bond of which union is, not the spirit on Christ's part: for the spirit being received as a spirit of regeneration, sanctification, &c. is a fruit of union to Christ, and an evidence of it; nor faith on our part, which as a grace is not ours, but the gift of God, and is a fruit of union; nor is it of an uniting nature, but is a grace of communion; and the foundation of all its acts, as seeing Christ, going to him, receiving of him, walking on in him, &c. is a previous union to Christ; but it is the everlasting and unchangeable love of Christ to them, shewn in his choice of them, in his covenant with his father on their behalf, in his engaging for them as a surety, in assuming their nature, and acting, both in time and eternity, as the representative of them, which is the bond and cement of their union, and from which there can be no separation. This union is first discovered in effectual vocation, and will be more manifest hereafter. Now he that is in this sense united to Christ, *is one spirit*: for this union is a spiritual one; it is complete and perfect; near and indissoluble; by virtue and in consequence of it, God's chosen ones come to have and enjoy the same spirit in measure, which Christ their head and Mediator has without measure: hence they have the spirit of God, as a spirit of illumination and conversion, of faith and holiness, of adoption, and as the earnest, pledge, and seal of their future glory. And since so it is, fornication, which makes them one flesh with an harlot, ought studiously to be abstained from.

Ver. 18. *Flee fornication*, &c.] As that which is hurtful, scandalous, and unbecoming Christians; avoid it, and all the occasions of it, that may lead unto it, and be incentives of it: *every sin that a man doth is without the body*: not but that other sins are committed by the body, and by the members of it as instruments; but they are generally committed by the abuse of other things, that are without, and don't belong to the body; and so don't bring that hurt unto and reproach upon the body, as fornication does: *but he that committeth fornication, sinneth against his own body*: not meaning his wife, which is as his own body; but his proper natural body, which is not only the instrument by which this sin is committed, but the object against which it is committed; and which is defiled and dishonoured by it; and sometimes its strength and health are impaired, and it is filled with nauseous diseases hereby.

Ver. 19. *What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost*, &c.] What is said in ch. iii. 16, 17. of the saints in general, is here said of their bodies in particular. The Holy Spirit, in regeneration and sanctification, when he begins the good work of grace on a man, takes possession of his whole person, soul and body, and dwells therein as in his temple. So the Jews [o] call the body of a righteous man משכן, the *habitation* of the Holy Spirit. Now it is most abominably scandalous and shameful that that body, which is the dwelling-place of the Holy Spirit, which is sacred to him as a temple, should be defiled by the sin of fornication: 'tis added, *which is in you, which ye*

[k] Tzeror Hammor, fol. 6. 2. Jarchi in Gen. ii. 24.
[l] Aben Ezra in ib.
[m] R. Levi ben Gersom in ib.

[n] Bereshit Rabba, sect. 16. fol. 15. 3. T. Hieros. Kiddushin, fol. 58. 3.
[o] R. Joseph Albo apud Pocock. Not. in Port. Mosis, p. 120, 121.

have of God: meaning the Holy Spirit which was in them, as in his temple; which dwelt in their hearts, and influenced their bodies, lives, and conversations; and which they received of God as a wonderful instance of his grace and love to them; that he should be bestowed upon them, to regenerate, renew, and sanctify them, to implant every grace, to make them a fit habitation for God, and meet for the inheritance of the saints in light: *and ye are not your own*: their own masters, at their own dispose, to live to their own lusts, or the lusts of men; men have not power over their bodies to abuse them at pleasure by fornication, or such-like uncleanness, neither single nor married persons; see ch. vii. 4. and of all men, not the saints, who are neither their own nor other men's, nor Satan's, but God's: not only by creation, but by choice and covenant; and Christ's by gift, by purchase, and powerful grace, and in a conjugal relation to him; wherefore fornication ill becomes them.

Ver. 20. *For ye are bought with a price*, &c.] Not with gold and silver, but with the precious blood of Christ, as the whole church, and all the elect of God are. This proves them to be the Lord's, not only his redeemed ones, being ransomed by a price from the bondage of the law, sin, Satan, and the world; but his espoused ones, and which is chiefly designed here; for one way of obtaining and espousing a wife among the Jews was by a price [p]; "a woman (they say) is "obtained or espoused three ways; בכסף, *by silver*, "by a writing, and by lying with; by silver, the "house of Shammai say, by a penny, and the value of "a penny; the house of Hillel say, by a *pruta*, and "the value of a *pruta*; how much is a *pruta*? the "eighth part of an Italian farthing." That is, be it ever so small a price, yet if given and taken on the account of espousals, it made them valid; and it was an ancient rite in marriage used among other nations [q], for husband and wife to buy each other: Christ, indeed, did not purchase his church to be his spouse, but because she was so; but then his purchasing of her with his blood more clearly demonstrated and confirmed his right unto her, as his spouse; he betrothed her to himself in eternity, in the everlasting covenant of grace; but she, with the rest of the individuals of human nature, fell into sin, and so, under the sentence of the law, into the hands of Satan, and the captivity of the world; to redeem her from whence, and by so doing to own and declare her his spouse, and his great love to her, he gave himself a ransom-price for her; which lays her under the greatest obligation to preserve an inviolable chastity to him, and to love and honour him. *Therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's*: by *God* is here meant more especially the Lord Jesus Christ, by the price of whose blood the bodies and souls of his people are bought, which lays the obligation on them to glorify him in and with both; and contains a very considerable proof of the deity of Christ; who is *glorified*, when all the perfections of the divine nature are ascribed to him; when the whole of salvation is attributed to him, and he is looked unto, received, trusted in and depended on as a Saviour, and praise and thanks are given unto him on that account; and when his Gospel is embraced and professed, and walked worthy of, and his ordinances submitted to, and his commandments kept in love to him: and he is to be glorified both in body and spirit; *in body*, by an outward attendance on his worship, and a becoming external conversation; by confessing and speaking well of him; by acting for him, laying out and using time, strength, and substance, for his honour and interest; and by patient suffering for his name's sake: *in spirit*, which is done when the heart or spirit is given up to him, and is engaged in his service, and when his glory lies near unto it; the reason enforcing all this, is because both are his; not only by creation, but by his father's gift of both unto him; by his espousal of their whole persons to himself; and by his redemption of both soul and body from destruction: the Vulgate version reads, *bear* or *carry God in your body*, and leaves out the next words, *and in your spirit*, which are God's; and which also are left out in the Ethiopic and in the Alexandrian copy, and some others.

C H A P. VII.

IN this chapter, various cases concerning marriage being proposed to the apostle, are answered by him; and he discourses of the nature, use, and end of marriage, and of the duties of married persons to one another; and gives advice to such as were unmarried, and points at the advantages of a single state, where it can be continued in without danger. Some of the Corinthians having written to him upon these heads, he returns for answer in general, that abstinence from marriage was most advisable; that is, at that time of persecution, and by those who had the gift of continence, and for reasons after mentioned, ver. 1. though, in order to avoid fornication, it was absolutely necessary for such who had not that gift to enter into it, and act agreeably thereunto, ver. 2. and therefore advises both parties in such a state to yield due benevolence to each other, ver. 3. giving this as a reason for it, that neither of them had power over their own bodies, but over each other's, ver. 4. wherefore abstinence from the marriage-bed ought not to be but with the following limitations; that it be by mutual agreement, and only for a time, and that only for the sake of devotion; but that they come together again, lest Satan should take an advantage of their incontinency, and tempt them to evil, ver. 5. though in all this the apostle would be understood to speak, not in an authoritative, but a permissive way, and rather by way of counsel than of command, ver. 6. and expresses his hearty wish, that every one was, and would continue, in a single state, as he himself; though he corrects him-

[p] Misn. Kiddushin, c. 1. sect. 1.

[q] Servius in Virgil. Georg. l. 1. lin. 31.

self by observing, that it was not the pleasure of God to bestow the gift of continency on every one, and therefore suggests, that it was right for every one to act according to the gift he had received, ver. 7. and then addresses persons in a single state, whether they had ever been married or not, and advises them so to abide, partly by his own example, and partly by the profitableness of it, ver. 8. but if they had not the gift of continency, his counsel is, that they enter into a marriage-state, giving this reason for it, that it is better to enter into such a state than to be inflamed with lust, ver. 9. and then he directs himself to married persons; and these he commands, not in his own name, but in the name of the Lord, to live together; and particularly, that the wife should not leave her husband for any trivial matter, or on account of any difference that might arise between them, ver. 10. and that if she so did, she ought to remain unmarried, or seek to be reconciled to her husband, and come to him again; and, on the other hand, the husband ought not to divorce his wife, unless in case of adultery and wilful obstinate desertion, ver. 11. And as to another case of conscience which was moved unto him, whether a believer, having married an unbeliever, should live together; he answers, that if a Christian brother had married an unbelieving wife, and she thought fit to continue with him, he should not put her away, ver. 12. And so a Christian woman that had married an unbelieving husband, if it was his pleasure to dwell with her, she ought not to forsake him, ver. 13. giving this reason for it, because they were legally married to each other, or otherwise their children must be reckoned bastards; whereas by maintaining the validity of their marriage, and abiding by it, they would appear to be legitimate, ver. 14. but if the unbeliever, whether man or woman, thinks fit to desert the believing wife or husband, so be it, the party deserted may make themselves easy, nor are they under obligation to remain unmarried: however, as they are called to peace they ought to seek it, and endeavour to live quietly together, ver. 15. and that for this reason, because they may be the means of the conversion, and so of the salvation of the unbelieving party, ver. 16. hence the apostle takes an occasion to exhort every man in general to walk and abide in the calling wherein he is called, this being an order he had given to all the churches, ver. 17. and which he exemplifies by particular instances, as that those who are called in circumcision, or in uncircumcision, should abide so, ver. 18. because these are nothing, or indifferent things, which may be, or may not be, but keeping the commandments is binding, and not to be dispensed with, ver. 19. wherefore the general rule is repeated, that it might be the more regarded and observed, ver. 20. And another instance given, illustrating it, as that if a man is called while a servant, he should make himself easy, and continue so; though if he can have his freedom it is most eligible, ver. 21. The reason persuading him to be satisfied with his condition is, because he that is called by grace, though a servant in a civil sense, is the Lord's freeman in a spiritual sense; and, on the other hand, he who is free in a civil sense when called, is in a spiritual sense a servant of Christ, ver. 22. as clearly appears by his being bought with the price of his blood; and therefore neither one nor the other should be servants of men in matters of religion, ver. 23. Wherefore, as before, it becomes every man to abide in the station in which he is called, until it please God in his providence to change his situation, ver. 24. After this the apostle returns to his former subject about marriage, and addresses the virgins particularly, concerning whom he declares he had no express commandment from the Lord, but however was willing to give his judgment and advice, with all sincerity and uprightness, as one that had the honour to be counted faithful by the Lord himself, ver. 25. and his judgment was, that considering the present persecution of the churches of Christ, it was better for single persons, men or women, to remain so, ver. 26. though he advises those that were married by no means to desert one another, or seek to dissolve the marriage-bond; as, on the other hand, those that were free from it, he would not have them seek out for a wife, ver. 27. though should they, it would not be criminal in them; and whether young men or maidens, it was not unlawful for them to marry, only it was not so convenient for the present; and such therefore must expect trouble in the world, ver. 28. However, it was proper, since time was short, and every worldly enjoyment was fading and perishing, that care be taken that there be no abuse of any, in whatsoever state and condition, or circumstance men were in; neither to be too much depressed with afflictive providences, nor too much elated with prosperous ones; and by no means to indulge to lasciviousness and luxury, ver. 29, 30, 31. And whereas the married life is a careful one, and the apostle was desirous the persons he writes to should be without any distressing care, he advised so strongly as he did to a single state; and in order to persuade to it, he puts the difference between an unmarried and a married man, who though they both had their cares, yet about different things: the former about divine and religious things, in order to please the Lord; the latter about worldly things, in order to please his wife, ver. 32, 33. And just the like difference he observes there is between a wife and a virgin; the virgin, she is concerned about and taken up in religious matters, that she may increase in holiness, both inward and outward; and the wife is engaged in worldly and domestic affairs, which engross her thoughts and time, in order to please her husband, ver. 34. wherefore the advice he had given to continue single, was manifestly for the profit and advantage of such persons in spiritual things; though he gave it with no design to ensnare any, who had not the gift of continence, but advised to it, when it could be done, in a comely manner, and that they might attend upon the worship of God, without distraction by worldly cares for their families, ver. 35. but in case, when a virgin is ripe for marriage, and there is a necessity for it, it is by no means advisable in parents to behave uncomely to her, and refuse to marry her, and so deprive her of the remedy against incontinence; when such is the case, she ought to marry, that being not sinful, yea, it would be sinful to do otherwise, ver. 36. yet where there is no necessity, where persons have the gift of continency, are steadfastly determined not to marry, but to keep their virginity, this is commend-

able, as well as profitable, ver. 37. whence this conclusion is drawn, that they that marry do well, rather than burn in lust, or commit sin, but they that do not marry, having the gift of continency, do better, both for themselves, and for the Lord, ver. 38. And whereas whilst an husband is living, the wife is bound by law to continue with him; and when he is dead, she may marry whom she will, so be it she seeks the Lord, and has his glory in view, ver. 39. yet in the judgment of the apostle she would be a much more happy person should she continue a widow; and this was not only his own private judgment, but he had reason to believe it was according to the mind of the spirit of God, ver. 40.

Ver. 1. *Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me*, &c.] Though the false apostles had greatly influenced the members of this church, yet there were many among them that had a very great respect for the apostle, and kept up a correspondence with him, though at a distance from him, by writing; in which way they informed him of their doubts and difficulties, that arose in their minds about certain things, and desired his judgment in them, to which they paid a very great deference. The things they wrote to him about, here referred to, may be collected from the contents of this chapter, and some others following; as whether a Christian man ought not to abstain from the use of women; whether a believer ought to live with an unbelieving yoke-fellow; whether such as had been circumcised should not make use of some methods to draw on the fore-skin of their flesh; whether apprentices, who were called by the grace of God, ought to serve out their time with their masters; and concerning celibacy or virginity, the eating of things offered to idols, and the maintenance of ministers: and he begins with the first; to which he answers, *it is good for a man not to touch a woman*; which is to be understood, not of merely touching a woman, which can neither be criminal, nor in all cases inexpedient, or be attended with any ill, or dangerous consequences; nor of the matrimonial contract, which is lawful and honourable; but of the act of carnal copulation with a woman: in this sense the Jews use the phrase, "there are three (they say [s]) that fled from transgression, and the blessed God joined his name with them; and they are these, Joseph, and Jael, and Phalti. Joseph, as appears from what is said, Psal. lxxxi. 5. *a testimony in Joseph is his name*; what is the meaning of the phrase *in Joseph*? this testifies concerning him, שלא נגע באשת פוטיפר, *that he did not touch Potiphar's wife* (*i. e.* he did not lie with her); Jael, as is clear from what is said, Judges iv. 18. *and Jael went forth to meet Sisera, and she covered him with a mantle*: what is the meaning of the phrase, בשמיכה? (which is rendered, *with a mantle*;) our Rabbins here (in Babylon) say with a linen cloth; but our Rabbins there (in the land of Israel) say with bed-clothes; says Resh Lekish, if we run over the whole Scripture, we shall not find any household goods so called; wherefore what is it? it is all one as שמי כה, *my name is thus*: and the meaning is, my name witnesses concerning her, שלא נגע בה אותו רשע, *that that wicked one (Sisera) did not touch her* [t]; (*i. e.* had not carnal knowledge of her;) Phalti, as is evident from hence, one Scripture says, *and Saul gave Michal his daughter to Phalti*, 1 Sam. xxv. 44. and another Scripture says Phaltiel; sometimes he is called Phalti, and sometimes he is called Phaltiel; who takes Phalti? and who gives Phaltiel? but I testify concerning him; שלא נגע באשת דוד, *that he did not touch David's wife*: (*i. e.* did not lie with her;") see Gen. xx. 6. And in this sense also is the word *touch* used, both by Greek and Latin authors. The apostle's meaning is not that it is unlawful to marry, or that it is sinful to lie with a woman in lawful wedlock; but that it is much better, and more expedient on several accounts, to abstain from the use of women, when persons have the gift of continency.

Ver. 2. *Nevertheless, to avoid fornication*, &c.] Or *fornications*; meaning either the frequent commission of that sin; or all sorts of uncleanness and pollution, which may be avoided by wedlock, and the proper use of the marriage-bed, where the gift of continency is not bestowed: wherefore to prevent unlawful copulations, as of single persons with one another, or of a married person with a single one, the apostle advises, as being what is right and proper, *let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband*; that is, let every man that has a wife enjoy her, and make use of her, and let every woman that has an husband, receive him into her embraces; for these words are not to be understood of unmarried persons entering into a marriage-state, for the words suppose them in such a state, but of the proper use of the marriage-bed; and teach us that marriage, and the use of it, are proper remedies against fornication; and that carnal copulation of a man with a woman ought only to be of husband and wife, or of persons in a married state; and that all other copulations are sinful; and that polygamy is unlawful; and that one man is to have but one wife, and to keep to her; and that one woman is to have but one husband, and to keep to him.

Ver. 3. *Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence*, &c.] The Syriac version renders it, חובא דמתתחיב, *due love*; and so the Arabic; and may include all the offices of love, tenderness, humanity, care, provision, and protection, which are to be performed by the husband to his wife; though it seems chiefly, if not solely, here to respect what is called, ענתה, Exod. xxi. 10. *her marriage-duty*; as distinct from food and raiment to be allowed her; and what is meant by it the Jewish doctors will tell us: one says [u], 'tis תשמיש המטה, *the use of the marriage-bed*; and, says another [w], לבא עליה, *it is to lie with her*, according to the way of all the earth. And so the phrase here, *due benevolence*, is an *euphemism*, and designs the act of coition; which as it is an act of love and affection, a sign of mutual benevolence, so of justice; it is a due debt from divine ordination, and the matrimonial contract. The Jewish doctors have fixed and settled

[s] Vajikra Rabba, sect. 23. fol. 164. 4. & 165. 1. Vid Shemot Rabba, sect. 1. fol. 91. 4.
[t] Vid. Kimchi in Jud. iv. 18.

[u] Mosis Kotsensis Mitzvot Tora, præcept. neg. 81. Sol. Jarchi in Exod. xxi. 10.
[w] Maimon. Hilch. Ishot, c. 12. sect. 2. Vid. Aben Ezra in Exod. xxi. 10.

various canons [w] concerning the performance of this conjugal debt: and the apostle may not be altogether without some view to the rules and customs which obtained in his own nation. *And likewise also the wife unto the husband*: she is not to refuse the use of the bed when required, unless there is some just impediment, otherwise she comes under the name of מורדת, *a rebellious wife*; concerning whom, and her punishment, the Jews [x] give the following rules: "a woman "that restrains her husband from the use of the bed, "is called *rebellious*; and when they ask her why she "rebels, if she says, because it is loathsome to me, and "I can't lie with him; then they oblige him to put "her away directly, without her dowry; and she may "not take any thing of her husband's, not even her "shoe-strings, nor her hair-lace; but what her husband "did not give her she may take, and go away: and if "she rebels against her husband, on purpose to afflict "him, and she does to him so or so, and despises him, "they send to her from the sanhedrim, and say to her, "know thou, that if thou continuest in thy rebellion, "thou shalt not prosper? and after that they publish "her in the synagogues and schools four weeks, one "after another, and say, such an one has rebelled "against her husband; and after the publication, they "send and say to her, if thou continuest in thy re-"bellion, thou wilt lose thy dowry; and they appoint "her twelve months, and she has no sustenance from "her husband all that time; and she goes out at the "end of twelve months without her dowry, and returns "every thing that is her husband's." This account, with a little variation, is also given by Maimonides [y].

Ver. 4. *The wife hath not power of her own body*, &c.] To refrain the use of it from her husband; or to prostitute it to another man: *but the husband*; he has the sole power over it, and may require when he pleases the use of it: *and likewise also the husband has not power over his own body*; to withhold due benevolence, or the conjugal debt from his wife; or abuse it by self-pollution, fornication, adultery, sodomy, or any acts of uncleanness: *but the wife*; she only has a power over it, a right to it, and may claim the use of it: this power over each other's bodies is not such, as that they may, by consent, either the husband allow the wife, or the wife the husband, to lie with another.

Ver. 5. *Defraud ye not one the other*, &c.] By withholding due benevolence, denying the use of the marriage-bed, refusing to pay the conjugal debt, and which is called a *diminishing of her marriage-duty*, Exod. xxi. 10. where the Septuagint use the same word *defraud*, as the apostle does here; 'tis what both have a right to, and therefore, if either party is denied, it is a piece of injustice, it is properly a defrauding; though with proper conditions, such as follow, it may be lawful for married persons to lie apart, and abstain from the use of the bed, but then it should never be done, *except it be with consent*: because they have a mutual power over each other's bodies, and therefore the abstinence must be voluntary on each side; otherwise injury is done to the person that does not consent, who is deprived against will of just right; but if there is an agreement, then there's no defrauding, because each give up their right; and such a voluntary abstinence is commended by the Jews [z]; "every one that lessens "the use of the bed, lo, he is praiseworthy; and he "who does not make void, or cause to cease the due "benevolence, but מדעת אשתו, *by consent of his wife*;" *i. e.* he also is praiseworthy: another condition of this abstinence is, that it be only *for a time*; which shall be agreed unto, and fixed by both parties; not for ever, which would be contrary to the will of God, the institution and end of marriage, and of dangerous consequence to either party. The Jews allow of a vow of continency for a while, and which they limit to different persons; thus [a], "if a man by a vow excludes "his wife from the use of the bed, the school of Sham-"mai say it is for the space of two weeks, the school "of Hillell say one week; scholars go out to learn the "law, without leave of their wives, thirty days, work-"men one week;" which vow, for such a limited time, they seem to allow of, without mutual consent; and herein they disagree with the rule the apostle gives; and who further observes, the end to be had in view by such a voluntary separation for a time, *that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer*; not that this was necessary for the ordinary discharge of such service, as for private acts of devotion among themselves, and constant family prayer; but either when times of fasting and prayer on some emergent occasions were appointed by themselves, or by the church, or by the civil government on account of some extraordinary and momentous affairs; and this seems to be observed by the apostle, in agreement with the customs and rules of the Jewish nation, which forbid the use of the bed, as on their great and annual fast, the day of atonement [b], so on their fasts appointed by the sanhedrim for obtaining of rain [c]: the word *fasting* is omitted in the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions, and so it is in the Alexandrian copy, two of Stephens's, and others: the apostle adds, *and come together again*; to the same bed, and the use of it, and that for this reason, *that Satan tempt you not for your incontinence*; for not having the gift of continency, should they pretend to keep apart long; Satan, who knows the temperament and disposition of men and women, may tempt them not only to hatred of, and quarrels with one another, but to impure lusts and desires, to fornication, adultery, and all uncleanness; a very good reason why, though abstinence from the marriage-bed for a short time, by the consent of both parties, for religious purposes, may be lawful, yet ought not to be continued; since Satan may hereby get an advantage over them, and draw them into the commission of scandalous enormities. The Jews have a notion of Satan's being a tempter, and of his tempting men to various sins, which they should guard against, as idolatry, *&c.* So say they [d], "thou mayest not look after idolatry, according to "Deut. iv. 19.——and again, thou must take heed

[w] Vid. Misn. Cetubot, c. 5. sect. 6. & Mikvaot, c. 8. sect. 3.
[x] Mosis Kotsensis Mitzvot Tora, pr. neg. 81.
[y] Hilch. Ishot, c. 14. sect. 8, 9, 10. Vid. Misn. Cetubot, c. 5. sect. 7. & Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.
[z] Maimon. Hilch. Ishot, c. 21. sect. 11.

[a] Misn. Cetubot, c. 5. sect. 6.
[b] Misn. Yoma, c. 8. sect. 1.
[c] Misn. Taanith, c. 1. sect. 6.
[d] Mosis Kotsensis Mitzvot Tora, pr. neg. 14.

"lest this be a cause of *it* to thee, ושטן יסית אותך, "*and Satan tempt thee* to look after them, and do as "they do:" and again[e], frequently should a man think "upon the unity of the blessed God, lest there should "be any thing above or below, before him or behind "him, or by him, and so, והשטן מסיתו, *Satan tempt* "*him*, and he come into heresy."

Ver. 6. *But I speak this by permission*, &c.] Referring either to what he had said before, though not to all; not to ver. 2. that for the avoiding of fornication, every man should make use of his own wife, and every woman of her own husband; since this is not by permission, but by command, Gen. ii. 24. that carnal copulation should be between one man and one woman in a married state; nor to ver. 3, 4. for that married persons ought to render due benevolence to, and not defraud each other, having a power over each other's bodies, is a precept, and not a permission, Exod. xxi. 10. but to ver. 5. their parting for a time, and coming together again: it is not an absolute command of God that they should separate for a time, on account of fasting and prayer, but if they thought fit to do so by agreement, they might; nor was there any positive precept for their coming together again directly, after such service was over. The apostle said this, *not of commandment*; but, consulting their good, gives this advice, lest Satan should be busy with them, and draw them into sin; but if they had the gift of continence, they might continue apart longer; there was no precise time fixed by God, nor did the apostle pretend to fix any: or it may refer to what follows after, that he would have all men be as he was; though he laid no injunction, but left them to their liberty; unless it can be thought to regard marriage in general, and to be said in opposition to a Jewish notion, which makes marriage מצוה, *a command*: "a man, they say[f], is bound "to this command at seventeen years of age, and if he "passes twenty and does not marry, he transgresses, "and makes void an affirmative precept;" but the apostle puts it as a matter of choice, and not of obligation.

Ver. 7. *For I would that all men were even as I myself*, &c.] The apostle speaks not of his state and condition, as married or unmarried, for 'tis not certain which he was; some think he had a wife, others not: it looks, however, as if he had not at this time, as appears from ver. 8. but be it which it will, it can hardly be thought he should wish all men to be in either state, either all married, or all unmarried; but he speaks of the gift of continency, which he had, as the following words shew; and this he desires for all men, that they might not be in any danger from Satan's temptations, and that they might be more fit for and intent upon the service of Christ. The Syriac version adds, בדכיותא, *in purity*, or *chastity*; which may be preserved in a marriage-state, as well as in single life: *but every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that*: all the gifts of nature and grace which men have, they have of God, and not of themselves; and every man has a gift proper to himself; no one man has all gifts, but some one, and some another; and with respect to the case in hand, one man has the gift of continency, another the gift of marriage; all can't contain themselves, only to whom it is given; and all are not disposed to marriage; some are inclined to a single life, and some to a marriage-state; and of those that are married, some can abstain from the use of the marriage-bed longer than others, without being in danger of being tempted by Satan for their incontinency; and such a disposition is desirable.

Ver. 8. *I say therefore to the unmarried and widows*, &c.] Not by way of command, but advice: by the *unmarried* he means, either such men who never were in a married state, or else such who had been married, but their wives were dead; which latter sense seems more agreeable, since they are joined with *widows*, who had lost their husbands: *it is good for them if they abide*; unmarried, and don't change their condition any more; not that it was sinful to marry again, for he allows of it in the next verse, in case they have not the gift of continence; and therefore *good* here, is not opposed to evil, only signifies that it would be better for them, more expedient and profitable for them; they would be more free from the cares of life, have less trouble, and be more at leisure to serve the Lord; and which he knew by experience, and therefore proposes himself as an example: *even as I*; that is, as he was then; for at that time it seems certain that he had no wife; though whether he had had one, and she was now dead, or whether he had never been married, may be matter of dispute; the former seems most agreeable, since he proposes himself as an example to widowers and widows; and having known what a married and single state both were, was better able to give his judgment of both, and proper advice to such persons; which must come with more force and strength, and a better grace, from such an one.

Ver. 9. *But if they cannot contain*, &c. Or *if they do not contain*, as the words may be rendered, and as almost all versions do render them; if they have not the gift of continency; if they are not willing, and don't think fit to contain, for none are to be compelled; if either therefore they want a will or power to contain, *let them marry*; it is not only lawful for them to marry, but it is right and best for them; hence it appears that second marriages are lawful, which were condemned by some of the ancients: *for it is better to marry than to burn*; or *be burnt*: not with material fire, as Judah ordered Tamar to be brought forth and burnt with, for whoredom; nor with hell-fire, the just demerit of uncleanness; but with the fire of lust itself; and so the Syriac version reads it, *it is better to marry than to be burnt* ברנתא, *with lust*; when persons not only find in them some lustful motions and desires, and a glowing heat of concupiscence; but are as it were all on fire with the lusts of the flesh, and in great danger of being drawn into the commission of fornication, adultery, or other pollutions, and even unnatural lusts; it is much better to enter into a marriage-state, though it may have its cares, inconveniences, and difficulties, than to be under temptations and inclinations to such defilements: so the Jews often express the lust of concupiscence by fire; they tell[g] us a "story of R. "Amram, that he redeemed all the captives, men and

[e] Mosis Kotsensis Mitzvot Tora, pr. neg. 13.
[f] Maimon. Hilch. Ishut, c. 15. sect. 2.

[g] Capator, fol. 62. 1.

"women; and the women and the virgins dwelt in a "chamber in his house alone; one time Satan kindled "in him אש התאוה, *the fire of lust*, and he set a ladder to go up to them, and when he came upon the "steps of the ladder, he began to cry with a loud "voice, נורא בי עמרם נורא בי עמרם, *fire in the house* "*of Amram, fire in the house of Amram*; and the men "came to quench the fire, and found nothing burning; "for it was only his intention to cause to cease from "him *the fire of lust*; and his thought ceased, and his "mind grew cool: and they asked him, why he "mocked them? he replied, for this is a greater *fire* "than all the fires in the world, for it is the fire of "hell." This story is also told in the Talmud[h], with some little variation: so we read of one that is אתלהיט ביצר רע, *enflamed*[i], or all on fire *with the corruption of nature*, who does not direct his heart to God: and such a man that finds his corruptions prevail over him, he ought to marry, they say[k], as a proper remedy against it: "he whose mind is intent upon the "law continually, and learns it as Ben Azzai, and "cleaves to it all his days, and does not marry a wife, "there's no iniquity in his hands, and that because his "corruption does not prevail over him: but if his cor- "ruption prevails over him, חייב לישא אשה, *he ought* "*to marry a wife*:" and that for the very reason the apostle here gives. The Ethiopic version reads, *it is better to marry than to commit fornication*: that and adultery both are expressed by fire and burning, with the Jews, as they prove from Hos. vii. 4. Cant. viii. 6[l].

Ver. 10. *And unto the married I command*, &c.] To the unmarried and widows he spoke by permission, or only gave advice and counsel to remain unmarried, provided they could contain; but if not, it was advisable to marry: but to persons already in a married state, what he has to say to them is by commandment, enjoining what they are under obligation to observe, not being at liberty to do as they will: *yet not I, but the Lord*; not as if he took upon him the dominion over them, to make laws for them, and, in an imperious authoritative way, oblige them to obedience to them: no; what he was about to deliver, was not a law of his own enacting and obtruding, but what their Lord, their Creator, head, husband, and Redeemer, had ordered and enjoined; and this grave solemn way of speaking he makes use of, to excite their attention, command awe and reverence, make the greater impression upon their minds, and shew the obligation they were under to regard what was said: *let not the wife depart from her husband*; for the same law that obliges a man to cleave to his wife, obliges the wife to cleave to her husband, Gen. ii. 24. and those words of Christ, *what God hath joined together, let no man put asunder*, Matt. xix. 6. regard the one as well as the other; and the rules he has given, forbidding divorces only in case of adultery, Matt. v. 32. and xix. 9. are as binding upon the wife as upon the husband. The wife therefore should not depart from her husband upon every slight occasion; not on account of any quarrel, or disagreement that may arise between them; or for every instance of moroseness and inhumanity; or because of diseases and infirmities; nor even on the score of difference in religion, which, by what follows, seems to be greatly the case in view. The apostle observes this, in opposition to some rules and customs which obtained among Jews and Gentiles, divorcing and separating from one another upon various accounts: not only husbands put away their wives, but wives also left their husbands: for women to put away, or leave their husbands, were not in former times allowed of among the Jews, but from other nations crept in among them; indeed if a man married one under age, and she did not like him for her husband, she might refuse him, and go away without a bill of divorce; the manner of refusal was, by saying before two witnesses, I don't like such an one for my husband, or I don't like the espousals, with which my mother or my brother espoused me, or in such-like words; and sometimes a written form of refusal was given[m]; but otherwise where marriage was consummated, such a departure of the wife was not allowed. Salome, the sister of Herod, is thought to be the first that introduced it, who sent a bill of divorce to Costobarus[n] her husband; and in this she was followed by Herodias, the daughter of Aristobulus, who left her husband, and married Herod Antipas[o]; and it seems certain, that this practice prevailed in Christ's time, since not only such a case is supposed, Mark x. 12. but a very flagrant instance is given in the woman of Samaria, John iv. 18. who had had five husbands, not in a lawful regular manner, one after another upon their respective deaths, but she had married them, and put them away one after another: and as for the Gentiles, the account the Jews[p] give of them is, that though they had "no "divorces in form, they put away one another; R. "Jochanan says, אשתו מגרשתו, *a man's wife might put* "*him away*, and give him the dowry:" though, according to other accounts, they had divorces in form, which, when a man put away a woman, were called γραμματα αποπομπης, *letters of dismission*; and when a woman left her husband, απολειψεως γραμματα, *letters of dereliction*, such as Hipparchia the wife of Alcibiades gave to him[q]; and Justin Martyr[r] gives us an instance of a Christian woman, who gave her husband what the Roman senate called a divorce.

Ver. 11. *But and if she depart*, &c.] This is said, not as allowing of such a departure, which only in case of fornication is lawful; but supposing it a fact, that a woman can't be prevailed upon to stay with her husband, but actually forsakes him upon some difference arising between them, *let her remain unmarried*: she ought not to marry another man; her departure don't make the marriage void; nor is it to be made void by any difference between them, either on religious or civil accounts, only in case of adultery; and therefore, if upon such separation she marries, she is guilty of adultery: *or be reconciled to her husband*; which is rather to be chosen, than to remain separate, though unmarried; if she has given the offence, and is the cause of

[h] T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 81. 1.
[i] Zohar in Lev. fol. 21. 1.
[k] Maimon. Hilch. Ishot, c. 15. sect. 3.
[l] Vet. Nizzachon, p. 43, 44.
[m] Maimon. Hilch. Gerushim, c. 11. 1. & 11. 3. Ishot, c. 4. sect. 8.
[n] Joseph. Antiqu. l. 15. c. 7. sect. 10.
[o] Ib. l. 18. c. 6. sect. 1.
[p] Bereshit Rabba, sect. 18. fol. 15. 3.
[q] Plutarch. in Alcibiade.
[r] Apolog. 1. p. 41, 42.

the separation, she ought to acknowledge it, and ask forgiveness of her husband, and return to him, and live in peace with him; and if the fault is on his side, she ought to make use of all proper methods to convince him of it, bring him into good temper, forgive any injury done her, and live peaceably and comfortably together: *and let not the husband put away his wife*: as the Jews were wont to do, upon every trifling occasion; see the note on Matt. v. 31, 32.

Ver. 12. *But to the rest speak I, not the Lord*, &c.] He had spoken before to married persons in general, and had delivered not his own sentiments barely, but the commandment of the Lord, that such should never separate from, or put away each other; in which he has respect to such as were upon equal foot in matters of religion, who were both of them believers in Christ; but now he speaks to the rest, to such as were unequally yoked, the one a believer, the other an unbeliever; and what he delivers on this head, concerning their living together, there being no express determination of this matter by the Lord himself, he under divine inspiration gives his sense of it; as that such marriages were valid, and that such persons ought to live together, and not separate on account of difference in religion: or the sense is, that as *to the rest* of the things they had wrote to him about, besides what he had given answer to already, he should speak to under divine illumination; though he had not an express law of Christ to point unto them, as the rule of their conduct: and particularly, whereas they had desired his judgment and advice upon this head, whether one who before conversion had married an unbeliever, ought to live with such an one, or whether it would not be advisable to leave, or put such away, to it he answers, *if any brother hath a wife that believeth not*; that is, if any man who is now a brother, one called by the grace of God, and is in church-fellowship, has a wife to whom he was married whilst in a state of unregeneracy and infidelity; who is as she was when he married her, entirely destitute of faith in Christ; not one that is weak in the faith, or only makes an outward profession, but that has no faith at all in Christ, nor in his Gospel, not so much as an historical one; who disbelieves, denies, and rejects, the truths of the Gospel: *and she be pleased to dwell with him*; loves her husband, chooses to continue with him, notwithstanding their different sentiments of religion: *let him not put her away*; infidelity is no reason for a divorce. The Gospel revelation does not dissolve the natural obligations men and women are in to one another. The Jews had a law prohibiting marriages with Heathens and idolaters; and such marriages were dissolved, and such wives put away, Exod. xxxiv. 16. Ezra x. 3. but this was a law peculiar to that people, and was not obligatory on other nations, and especially has no place under the Gospel dispensation.

Ver. 13. *And the woman which hath an husband that believeth*, &c.] The apostle puts the case both ways, there being the same reason for one as for another; that if one that was a sister, who was partaker of the grace of God, and a member of the church, had a husband to whom she was married before her conversion; who was an unbeliever, had no faith in Christ, nor any notion of the Gospel, but an infidel to both: *and if he be pleased to dwell with her*; loves her, and is willing to continue with her; neither puts her away from him, nor departs from her on account of her Christianity; *let her not leave him*; but continue, and cohabit with him as man and wife; this is the advice the apostle gives, as agreeably to the light of nature and reason; as becoming the Gospel of Christ, and as what might serve to recommend it, and spread the knowledge of it.

Ver. 14. *For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife*, &c.] That is, *by the believing wife*; as the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions read, and so it is read in some copies; and likewise in the next clause the same is read, *by the believing husband*; this is a reason given by the apostle why they should live together. This can't be understood of internal sanctification, which is never the case; an unbeliever can't be sanctified by a believer in this sense, for such a sanctification is only by the spirit of God; nor external sanctification, or an outward reformation, which though the unbelieving yoke-fellow may sometimes be a means of, yet not always; and besides, the usefulness of one to another in such a relation, in a spiritual sense, is urged as a reason for living together, in ver. 16. nor merely of the holiness of marriage, as it is an institution of God, which is equally the same in unbelievers as believers, or between a believer and an unbeliever, as between two believers; but of the very act of marriage, which, in the language of the Jews, is expressed by being *sanctified*; instances almost without number might be given of the use of the word קדש, in this sense, out of the Misnic, Talmudic, and Rabbinic writings; take the following one instead of a thousand that might be produced [s]. "The man "מקדש, *sanctifies*, or espouses a wife by himself, or "by his messenger; the woman מתקדש, *is sancti-* "*fied*, or espoused by herself, or by her messenger. "The man מקדש, *sanctifies*, or espouses his daughter, "when she is a young woman, by himself or by his "messenger; if any one says to a woman, התקדשי, "*be thou sanctified*, or espoused to me by this date "(the fruit of the palm-tree,) התקדשי, *be thou sancti-* "*fied*, or espoused to me by this (any other thing); "if there is any one of these things the value of a "farthing, מקודשת, *she is sanctified*, or espoused, and "if not she is not מקודשת, *sanctified*, or espoused; "if he says, by this, and by this, and by this, if "there is the value of a farthing in them all, מקודשת, "*she is sanctified*, or espoused; but if not, she is not "מקודשת, *sanctified*, or espoused; if she eats one after "another, she is not מקודשת, *sanctified*, or espoused, "unless there is one of them the value of a farthing;" in which short passage, the word which is used to *sanctify*, or be *sanctified*, in the Hebrew language, is used to espouse, or be espoused no less than *ten* times. So the Jews [t] interpret the word *sanctified*, in Job i. 5. he espoused to them wives; in the Misna, the oral law of the Jews, there is a whole treatise of קדושין, *sanctifications* [u], or espousals; and in the Gemara or Talmud [w] is another, full of the disputes of the doc-

[s] Misn. Kiddushin, c. 2. sect. 1.
[t] Vajikra Rabba, sect. 7. fol. 152. 1.
[u] Massech. Kiddushin.
[w] T. Bab. & Hieros. Kiddushin.

tors on this subject. Maimonides has also written a treatise of women and wives [x], out of which might be produced almost innumerable instances in proof of the observation; and such as can read, and have leisure to read the said tracts, may satisfy themselves to their heart's content. Let it be further observed, that the preposition εν, which is in most versions rendered *by*, should be rendered *in* or *to*, as it is in the next verse, and in many other places; see Matt. xvii. 12. Mark ix. 13. Col. i. 23. 1 Thess. iv. 7. 2 Pet. i. 5, 6, 7. if it be rendered in the former way, *in*, it denotes the near union which by marriage the man and woman are brought into; if in the latter, it designs the object to which the man or woman is espoused, and the true sense and even the right rendering of the passage is this: *for the unbelieving husband is espoused to the wife, and the unbelieving wife is espoused to the husband*: they are duly, rightly, and legally espoused to each other; and therefore ought not, notwithstanding their different sentiments of religion, to separate from one another; otherwise, if this is not the case, if they are not truly married to one another, this consequence must necessarily follow; that the children born in such a state of cohabitation, where the marriage is not valid, must be spurious, and not legitimate, and which is the sense of the following words: *else were your children unclean, but now are they holy*: that is, if the marriage contracted between them in their state of infidelity was not valid, and, since the conversion of one of them, can never be thought to be good; then the children begotten and born, either when both were infidels, or since one of them was converted, must be unlawfully begotten, be base-born, and not a genuine legitimate offspring; and departure upon such a foot would be declaring to all the world that their children were illegitimate; which would have been a sad case indeed, and contains in it another reason why they ought to keep together; whereas, as the apostle has put it, the children are holy in the same sense as their parents are; that as they are sanctified, or lawfully espoused together, so the children born of them were in a civil and legal sense holy, that is, legitimate; wherefore to support the validity of their marriage, and for the credit of their children, it was absolutely necessary they should abide with one another. The learned Dr. Lightfoot says, that the words *unclean* and *holy* denote not children unlawfully begotten, and lawfully begotten; but Heathenism and Christianism; and thinks the apostle alludes to the distinction often made by the Jews, of the children of proselytes being born in *holiness*, or *out of* it, that is, either before they became proselytes or after; but it should be observed, that though the word *holiness* is used for Judaism, yet not for Christianity; and besides, the marriages of Heathens were not looked upon as marriages by the Jews, and particularly such mixed ones as of a Jew and Gentile, they were not to be reckoned marriages; for so they say [y], " he that espouses a Gentile woman, or " a servant, אינן קדושין, *they are not espousals*; but " lo, he is after the espousals as he was before the " espousals; and so a Gentile, or a servant, that espouses " a daughter of Israel, אין קדושיהן קדושין, *those espousals* " *are no espousals*;" nor do they allow children begotten of such persons to be legitimate. This learned writer himself owns such a tradition, and which he cites [z], " that a son begotten in unclean- " ness is a son in all respects, and in general is " reckoned as an Israelite, though he is a bastard, " הבן מן הנכרית אינו בנו, *but a son begotten on a Gentile* " *woman is not his son*;" all which are just the reverse of what the apostle is here observing; and who, it must be remarked, is speaking of the same sort of holiness of children as of parents, which can't be understood of Christianity, because one of the parents in each is supposed to be an Heathen. The sense I have given of this passage, is agreeable to the mind of several interpreters, ancient and modern, as Jerom, Ambrose, Erasmus, Camerarius, Musculus, &c. which last writer makes this ingenuous confession; formerly, says he, I have abused this place against the Anabaptists, thinking the meaning was, that the children were holy for the parents' faith; which though true, the present place makes nothing for the purpose: and I hope, that, upon reading this, every one that has abused it to such a purpose will make the like acknowledgment; I am sure they ought.

Ver. 15. *But if the unbelieving depart*, &c.] If the unbelieving party, man or woman, separate themselves from the believing party on account of religion, and in hatred to it, and will not live with the believer unless Christ is denied, his Gospel abjured, and his ordinances and worship relinquished: *let him depart*; he or she, though not without making use of all proper means to retain them; but if, after all, they will go, unless such things are complied with as are unreasonable and sinful, they are not to be held, but let go; and the deserted person may sit down contented, being not to be blamed, the fault entirely lying upon the deserter: *a brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases*. The Ethiopic version reads it, *to such an one*; one that is called by grace a church-member, and so a brother or sister in Christ, is not to be subject to an unbeliever in matters of conscience, in things appertaining to the worship of God, and the service and glory of Christ; nor, being in such circumstances, that either Christ must be forsaken, or the unbeliever will depart, are they obliged to yield to such an one, but rather suffer a departure; nor are they bound to remain unmarried, but are free to marry another person, after all proper methods have been tried for a reconciliation, and that appears to be impracticable; desertion in such a case, and attended with such circumstances, is a breach of the marriage-contract, and a dissolution of the bond, and the deserted person may lawfully marry again; otherwise a brother, or a sister in such a case, would be in subjection and bondage to such a person: *but God hath called us to peace*; which ought to be sought after and maintained, so far as it can be consistent with truth, the glory of God, the honour of Christ, and interest of religion. The believing party being threatened with a desertion, ought as much as possible to seek for peace and reconciliation, and do

[x] Hilch. Ishot, c. 3. & 4. & 5. & 6. & 7. & 8. & 9.
[y] Maimon. Hilch. Ishot, c. 4. sect. 15.

[z] Maimon. Hilch. Issure Bia, c. 12. sect. 7. Vid. Ib. Hilch. Nechalot, c. 2. sect. 12.

all that can be to prevent a departure; for saints are called by the grace of God, to follow after and cultivate peace, not only with one another in their Christian communion as saints, but with all men, even their enemies, and especially with such as are so nearly allied; wherefore the departure should not be easily admitted, or a new marriage be suddenly entered into, reconciliation, if it can be obtained, being most eligible and becoming a Christian.

Ver. 16. *For what knowest thou, O wife, &c.*] These words may be understood, as containing a reason either why the believing party should be easy at the departure of the unbeliever, after all proper methods have been used in vain to retain him or her; taken from the uncertainty and improbability of being of any use to them, to bring them to the knowledge of Christ, and salvation by him; *for what knowest thou, O wife?* thou dost not know, thou canst not know, thou canst not be sure, *whether thou shalt save thy husband?* be the means of bringing of him under the means of grace, and so of his conversion and salvation; there is no likelihood of it, since he is such an implacable enemy to Christ, and so bitterly averse to the Gospel, and the ordinances of it; and therefore since he is determined to separate, e'en let him go: or else, as rendering a reason why the believer should seek for peace and reconciliation, and by all means, if possible, continue to dwell with the unbeliever; taken from hopes of being serviceable under a divine influence and blessing, for their spiritual and eternal good, the wife for the good of the husband; by whose conversation he may be won over, and prevailed upon to entertain a better opinion of the Christian religion; to take a liking to the Gospel, and to attend upon the ministry of the word, which may be made the power of God unto salvation to him: *or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife?* this may possibly be done, in the same manner as now suggested: persons in such a relation have often great influence upon one another, and are by divine Providence often great blessings to each other, in things spiritual as well as temporal. This puts me in mind of a case related by the Jewish doctors[a]: "it "happened to a holy man that he married a holy "woman, and they had no children; say they, we "are of no manner of profit to the blessed God; they "stood up and divorced one another; he went and "married a wicked woman, and she made him wicked; "she went and married a wicked man, ועשתה אותו "צדיק, *and she made him righteous*;" or, to use the apostle's phrase, saved him.

Ver. 17. *But as God hath distributed to every man, &c.*] This text is so placed, and the words of it so expressed, as that it may have regard both to what goes before, and follows after; it may have respect to every man's proper gift, whether of continence, or of disposition to marriage, which every man has of God, ver. 7. and accordingly ought to live in a single, or in a married state; or it may refer to the last verse, *what knowest thou, &c.* and ει μη, which we render *but*, be translated either *unless*; and then the sense is, thou knowest not, O man or woman, whether thou shalt save thy wife or husband, nor any other, unless God, who distributes his grace to every one as he pleases; or else it may be rendered *if not*, and the sense be, if thou shouldst not save thy husband, or thou, man, shouldst not save thy wife; yet *as God hath distributed to every man* his own proper gift, both as to nature and grace; his proper sphere of usefulness, and the station in which he would have him be, and the place he would have him fill up, and the business he must do in life; so let him act, and *as the Lord hath called every one*; which is to be understood of that particular station of life, and those circumstances of it, in which men are providentially placed by God, or are found in when he calls them by his grace; as whether married or unmarried; whether joined to a believer or an unbeliever; whether circumcised or uncircumcised; whether bond or free; a servant or a master; and so may refer to what follows, as well as to what goes before: *so let him walk*; contented with his station and kind of life, agreeably to the profession he makes of the Gospel, doing all the good he can to those he is concerned with: *and so ordain I in all churches*; the decisions and determinations he had made, in the cases proposed to him about marriage, the rules and orders he had prescribed, what he had given out by way of precept or permission, by command or counsel, or what he was about to deliver, were no other than what he in common enjoined other churches; and therefore they ought not to think that they were used with more strictness and severity than others; and might be induced hereby to attend to what was advised or enjoined, since it was what was common to all the churches.

Ver. 18. *Is any man called being circumcised? &c.*] That is, if any man that is a Jew, who has been circumcised in his infancy, is called by the grace of God, as there were many in those days, and many of them in the church at Corinth: *let him not become uncircumcised*; or *draw on* the foreskin; as some did in the times of Antiochus, for fear of him, and to curry favour with him, who, 'tis said, 1 Maccab. i. 15. *made themselves uncircumcised, and forsook the holy covenant*: and so did Menelaus, and the sons of Tobias, as Josephus reports[b]; and there were many, in the days of Ben Cozba, who became uncircumcised by force, משוכין, they had their *foreskins drawn on* by the Gentiles against their wills, and when he came to reign were circumcised again[c]; for, according to the Jews, circumcision must be repeated, and not only four or five times[d], but a hundred times, if a man becomes so often uncircumcised[e]. They make mention of several particular persons who voluntarily became uncircumcised, or, to use their phrase, and which exactly answers to the word used by the apostle, משך בערלתו, *that drew over his foreskin*: as Jehoiachin[f], Achan[g], yea even the first Adam[h]; one guilty of this, they say, makes void the covenant[i]; it was accounted a very great sin, so great that he that committed it was rec-

[a] Bereshit Rabba, sect. 17. fol. 14. 4.
[b] Antiqu. l. 12. c. 5. sect. 1.
[c] Hieros. Yebamot, fol. 9. 1. & Sabbat, fol. 17. 1. T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 72. 1. & Gloss. in ib.
[d] Bereshit Rabba, sect. 46. fol. 41. 4.
[e] T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 72. 1.
[f] Vajikra Rabba, sect. 19. fol. 161. 1.
[g] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 44. 1.
[h] Ib. fol. 38. 2. Zohar in Gen. fol. 27. 1. & 40. 4.
[i] Hieros. Peah, fol. 16. 2. & Sanhedrin, fol. 27. 3. Bereshit Rabba, fol. 41. 4.

oned[k] among them that shall have no part in the world to come, but shall be cut off and perish; physicians say, this may be done by the use of an instrument they call *spaster*, which has its name from the word used in the text. The apostle's sense is, that such as had been circumcised, and had now embraced the faith of Christ, had no reason to be uneasy, or take any methods to remove this mark from their flesh, because it was abolished by Christ, and now of no significancy; since as it did them no good, it did them no hurt: *is any called in uncircumcision? let him not become circumcised*: that is, if a Gentile who was never circumcised is called by grace, let him not submit to circumcision, which is now abrogated, and is altogether unnecessary and unprofitable in the business of salvation; yea, hurtful and pernicious if done on that account, since it makes men debtors to do the whole law, and Christ of none effect unto them.

Ver. 19. *Circumcision is nothing, &c.*] In the affair of justification before God, and acceptance with him; it cannot make any man righteous in the sight of God, nor recommend him to the divine favour; it is no evidence of a man's calling, or of his having the truth or grace of God in him; nor is it of any avail in the business of salvation. It was something formerly; it was a command and an ordinance of God, to Abraham and his natural seed; it pointed at the corruption and pollution of nature; was typical of the effusion of the blood of Christ, for pardon, and cleansing, and of the internal circumcision of the heart; it was a sign and seal to Abraham, that he should be the father of many nations, and that the righteousness of faith should come upon the uncircumcised Gentiles; and was a distinguishing character of the people of the Jews, until the Messiah came: but now it is nothing, nor has it any of these uses, being with the rest of the ceremonies abolished by Christ; it gives no preference to the Jew above the Gentile; he that has this mark in his flesh, is not a whit the better for it, and he that is without it, is not at all the worse; and is a reason why both the one and the other should be easy, and not attempt any alteration in themselves with regard to this, or think the better or worse of themselves on account of it. This is said in direct opposition to the sentiments of the Jews, who extol circumcision to the skies. The apostle says it is nothing, and they say it is every thing, and every thing is nothing without it: they say, it is the hinge of their whole law[l], and that it is equal to all the precepts in the law[m]: their extravagant commendations of it take in the following passage[n]; "says R. Eliezar ben Azariah, uncircumcision is rejected, because by it the wicked are defiled, as it is said, *for all the Gentiles are uncircumcised*: says R. Ishmael, גדולה מילה, *great is circumcision*: for on account of it, thirteen covenants were made; says R. Jose, *great is circumcision*, for it drives away the sabbath, the weighty (command in the law, that is, it is obliged to give way to it); R. Joshua ben Korcha says, *great is circumcision*, for it was not suspended to Moses the righteous one full hour; R. Nehemiah says, *great is circumcision*, for it drives away plagues; says Rabba, *great is circumcision*, for notwithstanding all the commands which Abraham our father did, he was not called perfect until he was circumcised; as it is said, *walk before me, and be thou perfect*: says another, great is circumcision, for had it not been for that, the holy blessed God would not have created his world; as it is said, *thus saith the Lord, if my covenant be not with day and night, and if I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth*." More of this kind might be produced, but enough of this. *And uncircumcision is nothing*; it does not hinder any having an interest in, and partaking of the blessings of grace; nor their enjoyment of the Gospel and Gospel ordinances; nor their communion and fellowship with the churches of Christ, much less their everlasting salvation, as say[o] the Jews; "the holy blessed God (say they) rejects the uncircumcised, and brings them down to hell; as it is said, Ezek. xxxii. 18. *son of man, wail for the multitude of Egypt, and cast them down*; and so says Isaiah, ch. v. 14. *therefore hell hath enlarged herself and opened her mouth*, לבלי חק; that is, to him that hath not the law of circumcision; as it is said, Psal. cv. 10. *and confirmed the same unto Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant*: for no circumcised persons go down to hell:" *but the keeping of the commandments of God*: that is something; not that the commands of God, and the observance of them, are of any avail to procure the pardon of sin, acceptance with God, justification in his sight, and eternal salvation; yet they are of moment, as they are the commands and ordinances of God; and ought to be kept in faith and fear, as they were delivered from a principle of love, and with a view to the glory of God; and though for keeping of them there is no reward of debt, yet in keeping of them there is a reward of grace; peace of mind is had, and the presence of God enjoyed; obedience to them, upon Gospel principles and motives, is a fruit of grace, an evidence of faith, and of the new creature; it is the ornament of a Christian profession, and is profitable to men.

Ver. 20. *Let every man abide in the same calling, &c.*] Civil calling, station, and business of life, *wherein he was called*: that is, in which he was when he was called by the grace of God; and is to be understood of such a calling, station, and business of life, as is lawful, honest, and of good report; otherwise he ought not to abide in it, but betake himself to another, as Matthew and Zaccheus, when called by grace, left the scandalous employment of a publican: nor is it the apostle's sense, that a man that is in an honest way of living, may not change that for another that is equally so, as if a man was bound down to that sort of business he is in when first called; for no doubt it may be lawful, and there may be just reason for it in Providence, why a man should change his calling and station in life; though this ought not to be done rashly and unadvisedly, and without wise and good

[k] Maimon. Hilch. Teshuba, c. 3. sect. 6. & Milah, c. 3. sect. 8.
[l] Shebet Judah, p. 94. Ed. Gent.
[m] Zohar in Lev. fol. 6. 1. T. Bab. Nedarim, fol. 32. 1. Caphtor, fol. 9. 2.
[n] Misn. Nedarim, c. 3. sect. 11. Maimon. Hilch. Milah, c. 3. sect. 8, 9.
[o] Shemot Rabba, sect. 19. fol. 104. 4. Vid. Maimon. in Misn. Sabbat, c. 19. sect. 6.

reasons; but the chief view of the apostle is to teach contentment in every condition, and station of life, and that persons should not be uneasy and restless in it, and seek for an alteration when there is no just occasion; and particularly he seems to have reference, either to the different state of married and unmarried persons, he had before been speaking of; see ver. 27. or to the different circumstances of Jew and Gentile, as circumcised or uncircumcised, as in the foregoing verse; or to the different condition of bond and free, servant and master, in the following verse; and persuades them to remain easy and satisfied, for that the Christian religion does not necessarily require a change in a man's civil circumstances of life.

Ver. 21. *Art thou called being a servant?* &c.] That is, called by grace whilst in the condition of a servant, *care not for it:* don't be troubled at it, and uneasy with it; be not anxiously solicitous to be otherwise; bear the yoke patiently, go through thy servitude cheerfully, and serve thy master faithfully; don't look upon it as any objection to thy calling, any contradiction to thy Christian liberty, or as unworthy of, and a reproach upon thy profession of Christ: *but if thou mayest be made free, use it rather.* The Syriac renders the last clause, גבי לך דתפלח, *choose for thyself to serve:* perfectly agreeable to the sense given of the words, by several great critics and excellent interpreters, who take the apostle's meaning to be, that should a Christian servant have an opportunity of making his escape from his master, or could he by any art, trick, and fraudulent method, obtain his liberty, it would be much more advisable to continue a servant, than to become free by any such means: yea, some seem to carry the sense so far, that even if servants could be made free in a lawful way, yet servitude was most eligible, both for their own and their master's good: for their own to keep them humble and exercise their patience; for their master's not only temporal, but spiritual good; since by their good behaviour they might be a means of recommending the Gospel to them, and of gaining them to Christ; but one should rather think the more obvious sense is, that when a Christian servant has his freedom offered him by his master, or he can come at it in a lawful and honourable way, this being preferable to servitude, he ought rather to make use of it; since he would be in a better situation, and more at leisure to serve Christ, and the interest of religion: however, certain it is, that the apostle's design is, to make men easy in every station of life, and to teach them how to behave therein; he would not have the freeman abuse his liberty, or be elated with it, nor the servant be uneasy under his servitude, nor be depressed by it, for the reasons following.

Ver. 22. *For he that is called in the Lord,* &c.] Which is to be understood, not of any civil calling, or of calling to an office; or of the outward call by the ministry of the word only; but of an internal, special, powerful, evangelical, and saving call by the grace of God; which is of persons out of darkness into light, out of bondage into liberty, from their sinful companions to the company and society of Christ and his people, from off themselves and their own righteousness, to the grace and righteousness of Christ, and out of the world unto a kingdom and glory. And this may be said to be, *in the Lord;* either because it is by him, he is the efficient cause of it, his grace the moving cause, and his glory the end; or because it is in consequence of being in him, united to him, persons are first in the Lord, and then called by him; or because they are called into fellowship and communion with him; the whole is true, and make up the sense of the text; for he that is effectually called by grace, is called by the Lord, and by virtue of being chosen in him, and in union to him, and to partake of all the blessings of grace and glory that are with him. And such an one, *being a servant;* in a natural and civil sense when called, in a spiritual sense *is the Lord's freeman:* he is free from sin, not from the being, but from the servitude, guilt, and damning power of it: he is free from Satan, not from his temptations and insults, but from his dominion and captivity; he is ransomed from him, by the redemption of Christ, and is turned from his power in conversion; he has not that influence over him he before had; and he is so safe and secure from him, that he can never be destroyed by him, and in a short time Satan will be bruised under his feet: he is free from the law, the observance of the ceremonial law, and all its numerous burdensome rites; and from the moral law, not from obedience to it, as in the hands of Christ, but from the bondage, curse, and condemnation of it, as ministered by Moses: he is free of the company of saints, of the church of God below, and of heaven, the city God has built and prepared for his; he is free to the use of all things indifferent, provided it is done in faith, the peace of weak brethren secured, and the glory of God preserved; he is free to all the privileges and immunities of the house of God, and to the throne of grace, come when he will; and therefore though a servant, in another sense he is a very happy man; he is free indeed, and can never be disfranchised, or arrested, or cast into prison; the various privileges he is free unto and enjoys, shew him to be a happy man; and the effects following on his freedom prove it, as peace with God, the presence of Christ, joy in the Holy Ghost, fellowship with saints, and a well-grounded hope of glory; he is not only called to the liberty of grace, which he enjoys, but will be delivered into the glorious liberty of the children of God; and therefore has no reason to be uneasy with his civil servitude: on the other hand, *likewise he that is called being free;* he that is called by the grace of God, with an holy and effectual calling, being a freeman, his own master, and it may be the master of others in a civil sense, he, in a spiritual one, *is Christ's servant:* he is bought by Christ with his money, with the price of his blood; and therefore he has a right unto him, and a claim to his service; and he becomes a voluntary servant to him, through the power of his grace upon him; and though he serves his Lord Christ without mercenary views, freely, readily, and cheerfully, from a principle of love and gratitude, he shall not fail of a reward of grace; he shall be honoured of God, approved of men, and shall receive the reward of the inheritance: Christian liberty, and the service of Christ, are not at all inconsistent; nor should we entertain any other notions of liberty, but what are consistent with serving the Lord; whatever liberty con-

tradicts, that is no true liberty; though it may have the face of it, it is no other than bondage.

Ver. 23. *Ye are bought with a price*, &c.] Some read these words interrogatively, as ver. 18. 21. *are ye bought with a price?* and suppose them directed to such who had bought out their time of servitude with a sum of money, and ought not to return to their former condition; but they are rather to be read affirmatively, and to be understood of all, whether freemen or servants, that are bought with the inestimable price of Christ's blood, as in ch. vi. 20. and contain in them a reason why such as are called by the grace of God, whilst in a state of civil servitude, are Christ's freemen, because they are redeemed by him from sin, Satan, the law, and from among men; and also why such as are called by the grace of God, being in a state of civil liberty, are Christ's servants, because he has purchased them with his blood, and therefore has a right unto them, both to their persons and service: *be not ye the servants of men*: not that the apostle dissuades such as are redeemed by Christ, and are believers in him, from being the servants of men in a civil sense; for this would be to contradict himself, who here and elsewhere exhorts servants to continue in the service of their masters, and to perform it heartily and cheerfully, and with great sincerity and integrity; but his meaning is, that since they were redeemed from a vain conversation by the blood of Christ, they should not be servants to the lusts of men, nor obey them in things sinful and wicked, which were contrary to law and Gospel, and which were made unlawful by the word of God, and were a breach of the command of their Lord and master Christ; nor should they in matters of religion and the worship of God submit to the authority of any set of men whatever, or be subject to the doctrines and commandments of men; whether these relate to Jewish ceremonies, or Gentile superstitions, or be a mixture of both: they were to call no man master upon earth; nor suffer any to lord it over them, as the false teachers very much did in this church; but to acknowledge Christ, who had bought them to be their only Lord and master. The allusion seems to be to a tradition of the Jews, that the Israelites being redeemed out of Egypt were the servants of God, and not of men[r]; " R. Jochanan ben " Zaccai was explaining this Scripture, Exod. xxi. 6. " how different the ear is from all the members of the " body; says the holy blessed God, the ear that heard " my voice on Mount Sinai, at the time I said, the " children of Israel are my servants, ולא עבדים לעבדים, " and *not servants to servants*; and this goes and gets " itself a master, let it be bored: R. Simeon ben Ribbi " was explaining the same Scripture, how different the " door and the door-post were from all the parts of the " house; says the holy blessed God, the door and the " door-post, which were witnesses in Egypt, at the " time that I passed by the threshold, and by the two " door-posts, and I said, the children of Israel are my " servants, and not servants to servants, and I brought " them out of bondage to liberty; and this goes and " gets itself a master, let it be bored before them."

Ver. 24. *Brethren, let every man wherein he is called*, &c.] The apostle repeats the advice given in ver. 20. and prefaces it with that tender and affectionate appellation, *brethren*, the more to engage them to attend to it; shewing also that whatever difference there was in their civil state and condition, there was none in their religious one; they were all brethren, one of another, they were his brethren, yea, even the brethren of Christ: *therein abide with God*; that is, abide in his civil calling and station of life, be it what it will, as knowing he is in that state 'tis the will of God he should be in; and as in the sight of God, who knows all men, and what is best for them, and who sees and observes all their actions and conduct of life; and with whom there is no respect of persons, of bond or free, of masters or servants; they are admitted equally to enjoy the same favours and privileges in the house of God; have the same access to the throne of grace, and enjoy the same communion with God; and therefore should be content in their present situation, discharging the several duties of their station aright, and exercise a good conscience both towards God and man.

Ver. 25. *Now concerning virgins*, &c.] Whether they should continue in the same state or no, whether they should marry or not, was one of the cases put to the apostle, and which the Corinthians wrote to him about, and to which he returns this answer: *I have no commandment of the Lord*; neither in the Old Testament, in the law of Moses, or writings of the prophets; nothing is therein enjoined concerning celibacy, or commanding persons to live a single life; but on the contrary there are many things directing and exciting to a marriage-state; nor had the apostle any command from the Lord Jesus Christ, under the Gospel dispensation, obliging to virginity; nor any special orders, or peculiar revelation from the spirit of God, fixing and settling this point: *yet I give my judgment*; what will be most advisable, convenient, and prudent to be done, considering persons, times, and circumstances. The apostle does not make use of his power and authority, as such, to make decrees, and prescribe rules, binding on the consciences of men; only humbly and modestly gives his opinion, which if thought well of, might be followed by them: and the more to engage them to take his advice, he adds, *as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful*; the meaning of which is, not that he, through the goodness and mercy of the Lord, had with great integrity preserved his virginity, and so proposes himself, as an instance and example of retaining it; for it is not certain, that though the apostle was now single, that he had never been married; it seems rather that he had, and therefore this can't be his sense; nor does he refer to his faithfulness, to the Gospel committed to his trust, and the faithful discharge of his whole ministerial service, and which was owing to divine grace and mercy; but to that plainness, honesty, and integrity, which appeared in the whole course and conduct of his life, and in all his conversation with men; and particularly in giving advice about any matter, or declaring his sentiments on any subject: and when a man is free and faithful, and openly and honestly tells his mind, it greatly recommends him, and commands attention and regard to what he says; and faithfulness, it may be observed,

[r] T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 22. 2.

considered in this sense, is not of nature, but of grace; 'tis obtained not by a man's own power and strength, but by the grace and mercy of God; to which it is here ascribed.

Ver. 26. *I suppose, therefore, that this is good*, &c.] The opinion of the apostle, the sentiment of his mind, his judgment in this case were, that it was better, more advisable and eligible, for persons that were single to continue so; his reason for it follows, *for the present necessity*: by which is meant not the shortness of life, and the necessity of dying, when husband and wife must part, upon which trouble ensues: nor the various sorrows, cares, encumbrances, trials, and exercises that attend a conjugal state, as bearing and bringing forth, and bringing up children, provision for the family, &c. which are common to all, and at all times more or less; but the present time of persecution, under which the churches of Christ were; agreeably the Syriac version reads it, מטל אעקא דזבנא, *because of the necessity of the time*, or *season*: using the very Greek word in the text; as the Targumists [s] also have frequently adopted it into their language, and use the phrase שעת אעק, *an hour, or time of necessity*, for a time of great affliction and distress, just as the apostle does here; because this was the present case of the Christians, he thought it most prudent for such as were single to remain so; since as they were often obliged to move from place to place, to fly from one city to another, this would be very incommodious for married persons, who might have young children to take care of, and provide for; see Matt. xxiv. 19. Luke xxiii. 29. upon a like account, the Jewish doctors advise to the same the apostle here does [t]; "from the day that the empire is extended, "which decrees hard decrees upon us, and causes the "law and the commandments to cease from us, and "does not suffer us to circumcise children; it is right "that we agree among ourselves, שלא לישא אשה, *not "to marry*, and beget children:" *I say it is good for a man so to be*; to remain unmarried, to live a single life, to be a virgin; for the word *virgin*, as here used, relates to men as well as maidens, and denotes the single state of either. The apostle does not add, *even as I*; as he does in ver. 8. which seems to confirm the conjecture already made, that he was not a bachelor, but a widower; otherwise he would doubtless have enforced this advice by his own example, as before.

Ver. 27. *Art thou bound unto a wife?* &c.] Or *to a woman*; either by promise, or by espousal, or by consummate marriage; either of which is a tie, or obligation, a bond, and especially the latter: marriage is such a bond as cannot be dissolved, but by the death of one of the parties; see Rom. vii. 2. unless in case of adultery, or of wilful desertion: and it is a bond which mutually obliges; as the husband is bound by the law of marriage to live chastely and lovingly with his wife, and to take care of her, and provide for her; so the wife is bound by the same law to live in like manner with her husband, and to submit unto him, and obey him: *seek not to be loosed*; don't depart from her, nor seek to be divorced, nor even desire to be loosed by death: *art thou loosed from a wife?* being either never married, or else if having been married the wife is dead, or legally divorced for a just cause: *seek not a wife*, or *woman*; make no inquiry after one; be content to live without one; enter not into a marriage-state, nor take any step towards it; 'tis best to continue loosed, for the reason above given, that is, provided the person has the gift of continence, otherwise not; see ver. 5.

Ver. 28. *But and if thou marry, thou sinnest not*, &c.] If a man that has never been married, or one that has, if legally loosed from his wife, thinks fit to marry, he commits no sin, he breaks no law of God, far from it; marriage is honourable in all. The apostle would be understood, that in the advice he before gives, he is not dissuading from marriage, as a thing sinful and criminal; only that it was more advisable to such as could to abstain from it, under the present circumstances of things; and what he says of a man holds equally true of a virgin: *and if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned*; the one may as lawfully marry as another; there's no law forbidding virgins to marry, any more than young men; and if they think fit to enter into such a state, they break no law of God, and consequently sin not: *nevertheless such shall have trouble in the flesh*; that is, such young men and virgins, who choose to marry, and who generally promise themselves a great deal of pleasure, shall meet with a great deal of trouble; and that even where they expected the most satisfaction and delight, *in the flesh*; the body, the outward man, and external circumstances of life. This *trouble* is the same with the *present necessity* before mentioned, the persecutions and tribulations the saints should suffer in the flesh, for the sake of Christ and his Gospel; not that married persons should be the only ones that should have trouble in this way, but that such persons would be less able to bear it, or to escape from it. Moreover, this may be extended to all the sorrows, troubles, and distresses which attend a married state: *but I spare you*; the sense of which is, either that the apostle, out of his great tenderness to such who were inclined to marry, and could not contain, just gave this hint, that such should have trouble in the flesh; but did not dwell upon it, or enter into particulars, lest they should be discouraged from it, and fall into temptation, sin, and a snare; or because of the great respect he had to the Corinthians, he gave the above advice to keep themselves single, that they might the better bear afflictions and persecutions, for the sake of their profession, and escape many troubles which others endure.

Ver. 29. *But this I say, brethren, the time is short*, &c.] This is another reason, with which the apostle supports his advice to virgins, and unmarried persons, to remain so; since the time of life is so very short, and 'tis even but a little while to the end of the world, and second coming of Christ; and therefore seeing the marriage-state is so full of care and trouble, and it affords still less time for the service of Christ and religion, he thought it most advisable for them to continue in a single life, that they might be more at leisure to make use of that little time they had for their spiritual good and welfare, the edification of

[s] Targum Jon. & Hieros. in Gen. xxii. 14. & xxxviii. 25. & Targum Sheni in Esth. v. 1.

[t] T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 60. 2.

others, and the glory of Christ: unless it should be rather thought that the apostle is still enlarging upon the former argument, taken from the present time, being a time of distress and persecution; and so the phrase, *the time is short*, or *contracted*, and full of anguish and affliction, is the same with *the present necessity*, and *trouble in the flesh*; and since this was the case, he suggests again, that an unmarried state was most preferable: *it remaineth that both they that have wives, be as though they had none*: and as for the rest, they that were married, his advice to them was, that they should so behave as if they were not married: not that he would have them put away their wives, or fancy with themselves that they had none, or make no use of the marriage-bed; but suggests a moderate use of it; he would not have them give up themselves to lasciviousness and carnal lusts and pleasures, even with their own wives, and spend their time altogether in their company and embraces: but since the time of life was short, and that full of troubles, they should spend it in the service and worship of God, private and public, as much as possible; and not in the indulging and satisfying of the flesh.

Ver. 30. *And they that weep, as though they wept not*, &c.] They that weep for troubles and crosses, things adverse and afflicting in a marriage-state, for the loss of wives or children, should express their sorrow in such a manner and degree, as if they wept not; not that the apostle here introduces and establishes a stoical apathy, and would have persons shew no manner of concern for these things; but he directs to a moderate use of sorrow, to such a degree as not to hinder and divert from the exercises of piety and religion: *and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not*; such who are blessed with great prosperity, and with whom every thing goes well; they have married wives, and have children, and thrive in the world; let them rejoice on the account of these things, in such a still, silent way, as if they rejoiced not, their hearts not being set upon their outward felicity, nor elated with it; but rejoicing rather that their names were written in heaven, that they had an interest in Christ and his grace, and a right and title to the glories of another world, and at the same time be thankful to God for what they enjoy in this: *and they that buy as though they possessed not*: meaning, not any sort of buyers, every one is a buyer in some sense; but such as purchase estates, buy houses and lands, and become proprietors of large tracts. These the apostle would not have hold their substance for themselves, but hold it as if they did not hold it, parting with it for the use of others; and as persons that are only stewards, and not properly owners, and in a little time must quit it all, and be accountable for their use and disposition of it.

Ver. 31. *And they that use this world, as not abusing it*, &c.] Such as have a large affluence of the things of this world, should use them in a moderate and temperate manner; should not squander them away extravagantly, or spend them on their lusts, and use them intemperately, which is to abuse them: *for the fashion of this world passeth away*: not the nature, matter, and substance, but the figure and form of it: for after this world is burnt up, a new one, as to form and fashion, will arise, in much more beauty and glory; all that looks glorious and beautiful in the present world, as riches, honour, &c. are all mere shew and appearance, having nothing solid and substantial in them; and are all fluid and transitory, are passing away; there is nothing firm and permanent; in a little time, all will be at an end, the world itself, as to its present form, and all that is in it; when there will be no more marrying, nor giving in marriage, no more buying and selling, no more of the present changes and vicissitudes of prosperity and adversity, of joy and sorrow; these scenes will be all removed, and quite a new face of things appear: wherefore what the apostle exhorts unto, with respect to present conduct and behaviour, must be right and good.

Ver. 32. *But I would have you without carefulness*, &c.] This is another reason, by which the apostle confirms the advice he gives to virgins to remain such, because the married state is full of cares, whereas the single life is no more free from them; and therefore he wishes them to continue in such a state, that they might be without anxious and distracting cares of temporal things, things relating to the good decorum and sustenance of a family, and so be more free and at leisure for the service of God; which he illustrates, by shewing the different cares that married and unmarried persons are involved in: *he that is unmarried, careth for the things that belong to the Lord*: such as hearing the word, reading it, meditating upon it, praying to God and attending upon all ordinances, taking every opportunity to glorify God, and do good to others; but this is not to be understood as matter of fact, that unmarried persons are so studiously concerned for these things, or that this is the case of all of them; there are many unmarried persons think nothing about them; and are not at all concerned with them; but the meaning is, that such persons are more at leisure, and can more conveniently attend to these things, and ought so to do; and they that have the grace of God will be more or less solicitous to observe them: *how he may please the Lord*: for when these things are attended to in faith and fear, from a principle of love, and with a view to the glory of God, the good of their own souls and others, they are well-pleasing to the Lord; and though they are not meritorious of eternal life, yet they are acceptable to God through Jesus Christ, and will be taken notice of with approbation, and followed with a reward of grace another day.

Ver. 33. *But he that is married careth for the things that are of the world*, &c.] Attending diligently to the business and calling of life, he is engaged in, that he may provide food and clothing, and other necessaries for the support and sustenance of his family: *how he may please his wife*: and make her and his children easy and comfortable. This also is not to be understood of every individual person in a married state as matter of fact; for, on the one hand, there are some who take no care to please their wives and provide for their families, and are worse than infidels; and, on the other hand, there are others who take a proper care to make a suitable provision for their wives and children, to the satisfaction of both; and yet this is not their only care, they also care for the things of the Lord, and concern themselves much for his ho-

nour and glory: but the sense is, that, generally speaking, persons in such a state are greatly involved in worldly cares, and have not that leisure, and those opportunities, that single persons have to attend religious exercises; wherefore the single state, on this account, is, in the apostle's opinion, the more preferable.

Ver. 34. *There is difference also between a wife and a virgin*, &c.] The word μεμέρισται, translated *there is difference*, stands in some copies at the end of the last verse, and in the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions, by which it is rendered, *and is divided*: referring to the married man, whose thoughts are distracted with the cares of the world, and his mind divided between the Lord and his wife, between the things that please the one, and those that please the other; so that he cannot attend upon the Lord without distraction, as the unmarried person may; see ver. 35. But the more generally received reading is what we follow; in which words the apostle shews, that there is just the same difference between a married and an unmarried woman, as there is between a married and an unmarried man. There's no difference in their nature, nor sex, but in their state and condition, and in the cares which involve the one and the other. *The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord*; not every one that is unmarried, but one that has the grace of God, being in a single state; as such an one is more at leisure, and can more conveniently attend on the service of the Lord, so she ought, and generally speaking does: and her end in so doing is, *that she may be holy both in body and in spirit*: not in body only, but in spirit also; for outward chastity, without internal holiness, will be of little avail: but as a close adherence to the Lord, and to his worship and service, may be a means of preserving from external pollutions of the body, so likewise of carrying on the internal work of grace upon the soul: not that it is to be thought that unmarried persons are the only ones that are holy in body and spirit; there are some that are so in neither; and there are many married persons that are chaste in their bodies, and possess their vessels in sanctification and honour, and are blessed with inward spiritual purity. *But she that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please her husband*: not by beautifying and adorning herself with broidered hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array: though this is all that some care for; but with good works, taking care of her household and family affairs, bringing up her children in an orderly manner, honouring and obeying her husband, doing every thing to oblige him, and to engage his love and affection to her, as becomes her; nor is this said of her by way of dispraise, only that such is her state and situation in life, that she has not the opportunities and advantages the unmarried person has of serving the Lord; on which account the single life is represented as most advisable to abide in.

Ver. 35. *And this I speak for your own profit*, &c.] The apostle suggests, that in giving the advice he did to unmarried persons to abide single, he had nothing else in view than their temporal and spiritual advantage; that they might be better able to meet and grapple with persecution for the sake of the Gospel; that they might be more free from the cares and encumbrances of life, and more at liberty to serve the Lord; whereby not only his glory, but their spiritual good, might be promoted; not that he thought that marriage was unlawful, or that the single life was a more honest, and a more chaste way of living, or that it was absolutely necessary, and an incumbent duty upon them to remain single, nor would he be so understood: all that he had said was by way of advice; he had very faithfully laid before them the advantages and disadvantages of both states, and now leaves them to their full liberty to do as they pleased to take his advice, or not: *not that I may cast a snare on you*: as fowlers on birds; had he enjoined virginity as necessary, and insisted upon it, that it was absolutely their duty to live a single life; this would have been laying an obligation upon them, and an ensnaring and entangling of them; hereby some might have engaged in a single life, who had not the gift of continence, and so might have been drawn into the sin of fornication, or into unnatural lust, and such impurities as would be very scandalous unto, and highly reflect upon, the Gospel of Christ. But the apostle delivered himself on the subject with no such view, and in such a manner as is plain he meant not to ensnare any: *but for that which is comely, and that you may attend upon the Lord without distraction*: all he aimed at, by advising them to a single life, was that they might more orderly and constantly, and without distraction of mind, through the cares of the world, wait upon the Lord, and serve him; which, in his opinion, was choosing the good part with Mary; whilst others, like Martha, were troubled, divided, and distracted with many things.

Ver. 36. *But if any man think*, &c.] This some understand of a man that is engaged, or betrothed to a virgin, and protracts marriage, who may use his prudence in consummating it, if he pleases, for any thing the apostle has said to the contrary: but it is better to understand it of a parent, or one that has the care and guardianship of virgins; if such an one is of opinion, *that he behaveth himself uncomely towards his virgin*: by exposing her to contempt and reproach, in retaining her at home, and not giving her in marriage when at proper age for such a state; it being reckoned reproachful to be at, or past the age of marriage, or to be in years, and not married; or by so doing lay her under temptation to do that which is uncomely, to commit fornication, which would be uncomely, both to him, and to her; and such a tendency has living in a single state, contrary to inclination. The apostle may have respect to a Jewish tradition founded upon the supposed sense of Lev. xix. 29. *do not prostitute thy daughter to cause her to be a whore*[*]. "Says R. Eliezer, this is "he who marries his daughter to an old man. Says "R. Akiba, (who was cotemporary with the apostle,) "this is he who detains his daughter at home when she "is marriageable." *If she pass the flower of her age*: that is, one that is arrived to years of maturity, is ripe for marriage, and is what the Jewish doctors call בגרת; who, according to them, was one of twelve years and a half old[†], at which age virgins were judged fit to marry: hence that saying of

[*] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 76. 1.

[†] Maimon. Hilchot Ishot, c. 2. sect. 2.

theirs[t], "if thy daughter, בגרה, *is ripe*, or come "to the flower of her age, make thy servant free "and give her to him." Moreover, according to their canons, such an one was no longer under her father's power; for so runs the canon[u], "כיון "שבגרה, *when she is at the flower of her age*, she is no "more under her father's power:" her father can't make void her vows, though a husband can[x]: *and need so require*: that she be given in marriage to a man; if she has not the gift of continence; if she is in danger of falling into the sin of fornication, and the father or guardian are sensible of this: *let him do what he will, he sinneth not*: he is under no obligation by what the apostle had said to detain her in a single life; he may give her in marriage if he pleases: he may *do what she will*, as it may be rendered; comply with her inclination and desire in marrying her to some person; in doing which, neither he nor she will break any law of God, and so not sin therein: *let them marry*: let parents marry their children when this is the case; let the young men and young women marry who are so disposed; there's no reason why they should not; there is nothing contrary to it in the word of God, nor in the advice of the apostle; nay, according to him, it was much better to marry than to burn, or to be exposed to any snare and temptation.

Ver. 37. *Nevertheless, he that standeth steadfast in his heart*, &c.] The apostle returns to confirm his former advice, where it can be attended to with safety; and observes, that notwithstanding what he had allowed might lawfully be done, and was proper to be done; yet a man that had deliberated upon, and had well weighed the matter of virginity, the case of a single life, and was at a point about it, having no hesitation nor fluctuation of mind concerning it: and also *having no necessity*; of acting otherwise, either through the meanness of his circumstances, or rather through the weakness of his virgin, she not having the gift of continency: *but hath power over his own will*: his daughter's will being the same with his, and she entirely consenting to live a single life; otherwise he would have no power of acting as he pleased in such a case: *and hath so decreed in his heart*; it is a fixed point on mature deliberation, in which he himself is hearty and determined, and his child perfectly assents to it, so that on all hands it is an agreed matter: *that he will keep his virgin*; at home with him, unmarried, and not give her to any man in marriage: *doth well*; or that which is for both temporal and spiritual profit and advantage, as before observed. Some understand all this of a man's keeping his own virginity, and determining to continue unmarried.

Ver. 38. *So then he that giveth her in marriage doth well*, &c.] Does that which is in its own nature good; that which is agreeable to the will of God, is of his institution and appointment, and therefore must be good, and answer many good ends and purposes. Such an one that marries his daughter, he seeing a necessity for it, and a propriety in it, does a very good thing; secures her chastity, and his own credit; prevents fornication, and other evils that might follow; consults the good of mankind, and the honour of religion. *But he that giveth her not in marriage doth better*; not a better action in itself, simply considered; but more profitable and advantageous under such and such circumstances, with such and such conditions and consequences; since hereby a single person is more fit to encounter with and endure persecutions, is freer from the cares of life, and more at liberty to wait upon the Lord, and give up himself to his service.

Ver. 39. *The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth*, &c.] That is, she is bound to her husband, by the law of marriage, during his life; nor can the bond of marriage between them be dissolved but by the death of one of them, except in the cases of adultery, and wilful desertion, see Rom. vii. 2, 3. *But if her husband be dead*; or *asleep*, for so the word may be rendered; though it designs death; death is often expressed by sleeping in Scripture; for the dead will not always remain in such a state, but be raised from thence at the last day, just as persons are awaked out of sleep. The Alexandrian copy reads αποθανη, *dead*; and so seems the Ethiopic version to have read. *She is at liberty to marry whom she will*; so that second marriages are lawful, though condemned by many of the ancients; the liberty of a widow is greater than that of a virgin, because a virgin is under the power, and at the dispose of her parents; but a widow is at her own dispose; and death having dissolved her former obligation, she is at entire liberty to marry, or not marry, and to marry whom she pleases, that is not forbidden by the laws of God: *only in the Lord*: not that it is absolutely necessary that her husband should be in the Lord, a converted person, a believer in Christ; though such an one should be most desirable and eligible: but either that she should continue in the possession of her faith in Christ, and not relinquish it for the sake of an husband; or that she enter into this state in the fear of the Lord, calling upon him, and consulting him in such an important affair; and take care that whom she marries is not within the line prohibited by the Lord.

Ver. 40. *But she is happier if she so abide*, &c.] That is, a widow, in an unmarried state; which is to be understood not of the happiness of another world, but of this: the apostle's meaning is, that she would be more free from cares, and less liable to trouble, would live with more peace and quietness, and be more at leisure to serve the Lord, second marriages oftentimes proving more disagreeable than the first; but in this the apostle only gives his opinion, enjoins nothing by way of command, or in an authoritative manner: and therefore adds, *after my judgment*; according to his sense of things, and agreeably to the advice he had before given to unmarried persons, whether virgins or widows, such a person was likely to have most peace, and least trouble, remaining a widow, than if married, and so consequently more happy: and in order to engage such to regard his counsel, he further says, *and I think also that I have the spirit of God*: that though he had no express command, nor did he pretend to any, nor did he lay any injunction on any, but left them to their liberty; yet he could not but think, nay, he was assured, though he thus modestly expresses himself, that he was directed to give this advice by the spirit of God.

[t] T. Bab. Pesach. fol. 113. 1.
[u] Misn. Nidda, c. 5. sect. 7.
[x] Misn. Nedarim, c. 10. sect. 2. T. Bab. Nedarim, fol. 70. 2. Maimon. Hilch. Nedarim, c. 11. sect. 7.

MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI MAHAL. THE TANJORE

CHAP. VIII.

IN this chapter the apostle proceeds to consider the case of eating things offered to idols, which, though an indifferent thing, was abused by many in the Corinthian church, to the scandal and hurt of weak Christians; wherefore the apostle dissuades from the use of it, and refutes the arguments which were used by them in defence of their practice. And the general foundation on which they proceeded being their knowledge of Christian liberty, he begins with that; and makes answer to it, by granting, that he, and they, and all had knowledge in general; and by distinguishing between knowledge and charity, the one puffing up, and the other edifying: wherefore to argue from the one, to the disuse of the other, was wrong, ver. 1. seeing that kind of knowledge, which was not accompanied with love, was no true knowledge, ver. 2. but that was right which had annexed to it love to God, and our neighbour, ver. 3. and then applies this observation to the case of things offered to idols; and explains the knowledge which some had, and boasted of, that an idol was nothing, and that there was but one God, ver. 4. which latter he proves and confirms, partly by allowing that there were many nominal gods and lords, both in heaven and earth; but then they were only so by name, not by nature, ver. 5. and partly by observing the common faith of Christians, that there is but one God, and one Lord Jesus, who are both described by their names and properties, ver. 6. But now, though there was such knowledge concerning an idol, as nothing, and things offered to it, as indifferent, in some, this was not the case of all: who, as their knowledge was small, their consciences were weak, and were defiled by eating such things through the example of others, ver. 7. wherefore it became such who had greater knowledge to abstain from eating them; partly from the unprofitableness of such eating to them with respect to divine acceptance, it making them neither better nor worse, ver. 8. and partly from the hurtfulness of it to others, it being a stumbling-block to the weak, which ought not to be laid in their way, ver. 9. and emboldening to do so likewise to the injury of their weak consciences, ver. 10. and so was to the loss and ruin of their peace and comfort, which is aggravated by their being brethren, and such for whom Christ died, ver. 11. Thus by wounding their weak consciences, they that drew them into this practice, by their example, sinned both against their brethren, and Christ himself, ver. 12. From all which the apostle concludes, that rather than offend a weak brother, it was right never to eat any flesh at all; and this he strengthens by his own example and resolution, ver. 13.

Ver. 1. *Now as touching things offered unto idols, &c.*] This was another of the things the Corinthians wrote to the apostle about, desiring to have his judgment in: it was a controversy that had been before moved, whether it was lawful to eat things that had been sacrificed to idols. This was considered in the council at Jerusalem, Acts xv. and it was agreed to, for the peace of the churches, that the Gentiles, among other things, he advised to abstain from them; which, it seems, the church at Corinth knew nothing of, for the controversy was now moved among them: some that were weak in the faith, and had not, at least, clear notions of Gospel liberty, thought it very criminal and sinful to eat them; others that had, or boasted they had, more knowledge, would not only eat them privately at home, having bought them of the Heathen priests, or in the common shambles, where they were exposed to sale, and at public feasts, to which they were invited by their friends; but would even go into an idol's temple, and sit and eat them there, to the great grief and prejudice of weak Christians; and what they had to plead in their own defence was their knowledge, to which the apostle here replies: *we know that we all have knowledge*; which is said either affirmatively and seriously; and the meaning is, that the apostles and other Christians knew, and were conscious to themselves of their light and knowledge, and were assured, and might affirm with confidence, that they all, or the most part, only some few excepted, see ver. 7. had the same knowledge of Christian liberty as they had; knew that an idol was nothing, and that eating meats offered to them could not defile, or do them any hurt; for they were very sensible there was nothing common or unclean of itself, and yet did not think fit to make use of their knowledge to the grieving and wounding of their fellow-Christians: or else this is said ironically, we are wise folks; you particularly are men of knowledge, and wisdom will die with you; you know that you know; you are very knowing in your own conceits, and very positive as to your knowledge. 'Twas the saying of Socrates, that that this one thing he knew, that he knew nothing; but men wise in their own opinions know every thing: *knowledge puffeth up*: not true knowledge; not that which comes from above, which is gentle and easy to be entreated; not sanctified knowledge, or that which has the grace of God going along with it; that makes men humble, and will not suffer them to be puffed up one against another; but a mere shew of knowledge, knowledge in conceit, mere notional and speculative knowledge, that which is destitute of charity or love: *but charity edifieth*; that is, a man that has knowledge, joined with love to God, and his fellow-Christians, will seek for that which makes for the edification of others; and without this all his knowledge will be of no avail, and he himself be nothing.

Ver. 2. *And if any man think that he knows any thing, &c.*] Whoever has an opinion of himself, or is conceited with his own knowledge, and fancies that he knows more than he does; which is always the case of those that are elated with their knowledge, and treat others with contempt, and have no regard to their peace and edification: *he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know*; if he did, he would know this, that he ought to consult the peace, comfort, and edification of his brother; and therefore whatever knowledge he may fancy he has attained to, or whatever he may

be capable of, and hereafter obtain, for the present he must be put down for a man that knows nothing as he should do; for he knows neither his duty to God nor man; if he knew the former, he would know the latter.

Ver. 3. *But if any man love God, &c.*] As they do, and shew it, who love their brethren, and are careful not to grieve them; and make use of their superior knowledge, not for their destruction, but edification: *the same is known of him;* is taught by him, made to know more by him; such an one increases in spiritual knowledge, or he is highly approved of, esteemed, and beloved by God: he takes a special and particular notice of him, manifests his love to him, and will own and acknowledge him another day, when proud, haughty, overbearing, and hard-hearted professors, will be rejected by him.

Ver. 4. *As concerning therefore the eating of those things, &c.*] The apostle having enlarged on the head of knowledge, which those who made an ill use of their Christian liberty urged in favour of their conduct; he returns to the subject in question, in relation to meats, *that are offered in sacrifice unto idols.* The determinations of the Jewish schools concerning this affair are as follow, which admit of no manner of profit by them in any shape: "a beast, the whole of which they offer "to idols, is forbidden of profit, even its dung, and "its bones, and its horns, and its hoofs, and its skin, "all is forbid to be of any profit [y]." Again [z], "flesh "or wine, or fruits, which are brought in to be of-"fered up to idols, are not forbidden to profit with, "although they are brought into the idol's temple, "until they offer them up before it; הקריבום לפניה, "*but when offered up before it;* they become an offer-"ing: and though they may return them, and bring "them out, lo, these are forbidden for ever; and all "that is found in an idol's temple, even water and "salt, are forbidden of profit by the law, ואוכל ממנו כל, "*and he that eats any thing thereof* is to be beaten." Once more [a], "an Israelite that lifts up a cheese to "worship it, but does not worship it, but a Gentile "worships it, it is forbidden of profit, because the "lifting of it up is an action; and so if he lifts up "an egg, and a Gentile comes and worships it, it is "forbidden; he that cuts a gourd, or any such thing, "and worships it, it is forbidden, *&c.*" But by these decrees we Christians are not bound; *we know that an idol is nothing in the world;* among the things created by God in the world; for though the matter of it may be of God, the form is of men; nor has it any share in the government of the world: and though that of which it may be made, as gold, silver, brass, *&c.* is something; yet as it is a form and representation of God, it is nothing, because there can be no representation of the invisible God; it is nothing, that is, it has no divinity in it, it is no God. Though it may have an existence, as the sun, moon, and stars, yet not divinity; and in that sense nothing. The apostle here speaks the language of the Jewish doctors, who say [b], "why dost thou envy an idol? "שאין בה ממש, *since it is nothing,* or *there is nothing in it.*" And again [c], "the Rabbins say, *since* ואין "בע״ז ממש, *there is nothing in an idol,* why do they "call them deities;" Very likely the apostle may have reference to אלילים, the Hebrew word for idols, which signifies things of nought, that are good for nothing, are of no value, and are as nothing, Isa. ii. 20. *And that there is none other God but one.* This clause may be considered either as a reason of the former, why an idol is nothing, is no deity, is no God, *for there is none other God but one,* as it may be rendered; or as a part of what believers know; for as they know an idol is nothing, so they know, both from reason and revelation, from the books of the Old and New Testament, that there is but one God, and consequently that idols are nothing, and that they cannot defile them, nor any thing that is offered to them.

Ver. 5. *For though there be that are called gods, &c.*] That are so by name, though not by nature; who are called so in Scripture, as angels and magistrates, or by men, who give them such names, and account them so: *whether in heaven;* as the sun, moon, and stars: *or in earth;* as men who formerly lived on earth; or various creatures on earth, who have been accounted deities; or stocks and stones graven by man's device: *as there be gods many;* almost without number, as were among the Egyptians, Grecians, Romans, and others; yea, even among the Jews, who falling into idolatry, their gods were according to the number of their cities, Jer. ii. 28. *and lords many;* referring to the Baalim, or the several idols that went by the name of Baal, or lord, as Baal Peor, Numb. xxv. 3. Baal Zephon, Exod. xiv. 2. Baal Zebub, 2 Kings i. 2. Baal Berith, Judg. viii. 33.

Ver. 6. *But to us there is but one God, the Father, &c.*] In this Christians and Jews agree with the best and wisest philosophers of the Gentiles, that there is but one God; which is clear from the perfections of God, as necessary existence, eternity, infinity, omnipotence, all-sufficiency, goodness, and perfection; from one first cause of all things; from the government of the world; and from the writings of the Old and New Testament: so that to us believers this point is out of all doubt: but who this one God is the Gentiles knew not, and the Jews are very ignorant of; but we Christians know him to be *the father;* by whom is meant either God essentially considered, the one God, Father, Son, and Spirit, called the Father, not in relation to any person in the Godhead, but in relation to the creatures: so this one God, Father, Son, and Spirit, is the father of spirits, the creator of angels, and the souls of men, the God of all flesh, the father of all the individuals of human nature, the father or author of all the mercies and blessings the children of men enjoy, Or else personally considered, and so designs the first person in the Godhead, who is called so in relation to his son, who is styled the only-begotten of the father: and when he is said to be the one God, it must be understood, not as exclusive of the son and spirit; for if the son stands excluded in this clause

[y] Maimon. Hilch. Obede Cochabim, &c. c. 7. sect. 3.
[z] Ib. sect. 15.
[a] Ib. c. 8. sect. 3.

[b] Prefat. ad Echa Rabbati, fol. 40. 3.
[c] Debarim Rabba, fol. 236. 2. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 135. 2. & 138. 2. & 141. 4.

from being the one God with the father, by the same rule of interpretation, the father, in the next clause must stand excluded from being the one Lord with Christ; but as dominion or lordship belongs to the father, so deity to the son, and also to the spirit. *Of whom are all things*: all created beings and things; angels are of him, are created by him, serve and worship him; devils are of him, and under him, and at his control, though they have rebelled against him; all mankind are of him, and are his offspring; the whole universe, the heavens, the earth, and seas, and all that in them are, are of him; all things in nature, providence, grace, and glory, come of him: he is the author of every mercy, temporal and spiritual. *And we in him*: or *for him*: as creatures we are not only made by him, but live in him, and are supported in him, and by him, and are created for his glory: though this seems rather to respect what believers are, as new creatures; they are in God; they are interested in him as their covenant God, and in his everlasting and immutable love; they are engraven on his hands, and set as a seal on his heart; they are *into him*, as it may be rendered; they are brought into nearness to him, and communion with him; and are *for him*, are chosen, redeemed, regenerated, and called for the glorifying of his grace, and to shew forth his praise. *And one Lord Jesus Christ*; so called, not to the exclusion of the father and spirit, but in opposition to the lords many before mentioned, and with respect to all his people. Christ is the one Lord of all, as he is God over all, the Creator and Former of all things; and he is so likewise as Mediator, having all power, dominion, and government put into his hands: he is, in a special sense, the one Lord of his people, and that by right of marriage to them; by right of redemption of them; through his being an head unto them, and King of them; and by a voluntary surrender of themselves to him, rejecting all other lords, as sin, Satan, and the world, who have formerly had dominion over them, they acknowledge him to be their one and only Lord: *by whom are all things*; in nature; all the created beings of this, or the other world, whether visible or invisible, thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers, are by him; no creature was made without him, and all by him; and all things in grace, our election, redemption, reconciliation, pardon, justification, and everlasting glory and happiness. *And we by him*; we are redeemed by him from sin, Satan, the law, death, and hell; we are by him what we are, as Christians, as believers in him: by him, and from him, we have all the grace and the supplies of it we have; by him we have access to the father, and fellowship with him; by him we are governed, influenced, protected, and preserved to his kingdom and glory; and by him we are, and shall be, saved with an everlasting salvation.

Ver. 7. *Howbeit, there is not in every man that knowledge, &c.*] The apostle is not speaking of Heathens, in whom there was no knowledge of the one true God, the author of all things, and of the one Lord Jesus, the only Saviour and Redeemer; but of Christians, in whom there was the knowledge of these things, but not in all of them; the knowledge of this, that an idol was nothing; for though they knew that an idol was not God, and had no true deity in it, nor was it any true representation of God, yet fancied that it had an influence upon food that was offered to it, to defile it, and render it unclean, so that it ought not to be eaten; and since there were such persons that were so ignorant and weak, it became those who had more knowledge to be careful how they laid stumbling-blocks in the way of such, to the prejudice of their consciences: that there were such, the apostle affirms, *for some with conscience of the idol unto this hour, eat it as a thing offered unto an idol*; that is, there were some persons even at that very time, though they had been so long converted from Heathenism to Christianity, yet had such an opinion of an idol, that they really thought in their own consciences, that there were something in an idol, they could not well tell what, that defiled meats offered to it, and made them unlawful to be eaten; and yet, through the influence of the example of others, were prevailed upon to eat of them, having at the same time a notion of such food, as if it was not common food, but had received some virtue from the idol; and not without some regret, and uneasiness of mind, as being polluted with it. The Alexandrian copy, and some others, read, συνηθεια, *through custom of the idol*; and so the Ethiopic version seems to have read: and the sense is, that some having been formerly accustomed to worship idols, and to eat things offered to them, as having received some virtue from them, still retained an opinion, that there was some difference between such meats and others. *And their conscience being weak is defiled*; because such act against the dictates of their own conscience; which, though weak, is binding, and sinned against, defiles, according to the rules given by the apostle, Rom. xiv. 14, 23.

Ver. 8. *But meat commendeth us not to God, &c.*] These words are said by the apostle, either as expressing the argument of such as had knowledge in favour of themselves, that what they did was a thing indifferent, by which they were made neither better nor worse; nor did they look upon it as meritorious, or expect any favour from God on account of it, and therefore were not to be blamed for using their liberty in the manner they did: or else they are spoken by him as his own sense: and the meaning is, that eating of meat, any sort of meat, and so that which is offered to idols, or abstinence from it, neither one nor the other recommends any to the love and favour of God; לא מקרבא, *does not bring near*, or give access to God, as the Syriac version renders the phrase; does not ingratiate any into his affectionate regards, or make them acceptable unto him: *for neither if we eat are we the better*; or *abound*, not in earthly but spiritual things, in the graces of the spirit, and particularly in the esteem and good will of God, upon which such an action can have no influence: *neither if we eat not are we the worse*; or *are deficient*; meaning not in temporal things, but, as before, in spiritual; true grace and piety are not a whit the less; nor are such persons less in the love and favour of God, which is not to be known and judged of by any such action, or the omission of it.

Ver. 9. *But take heed lest by any means, &c.*] This is either a reply to the instance of such as argued in

favour of eating things offered to idols; or a limitation and explanation of the apostle's own concession, that it made a man, with respect to the favour of God, neither better nor worse: yet care should be taken, *lest this liberty of yours become a stumbling-block to them that are weak;* he owns they had a liberty, or a right, or power, as the word may be rendered, of eating, or not eating, as they pleased; but then they ought to be cautious, lest they should be the means of offending, or causing to offend, such who were weak in the faith, and had not that knowledge of Christian liberty they had: not the use of their power and liberty is here denied, but the abuse of it is guarded against; for though the action itself was indifferent, yet as it might be used, it might be sinful, being attended with very bad consequences, such as hereafter mentioned.

Ver. 10. *For if any man see thee which hast knowledge,* &c.] That is, not any person whatever; not one that has equal knowledge, and can with a good conscience take the same liberty; but one that is weak in the faith, that has not such a clear sight of the doctrine of Christian liberty: if such an one should observe one that is famous for his superior abilities, learning, and knowledge, *sit at meat in the idol's temple;* or at table, or at a feast, where, it seems, after the sacrifice was over, a feast was made of what was left, and friends were invited to partake of it; and some such there were in this church, who to shew their Christian liberty, and their knowledge of it, would go and sit down at these feasts publicly, looking upon such meats as having nothing different from common food, or what they bought in the markets, or brought up as their own: *shall not the conscience of him that is weak;* in knowledge, who is not clearly instructed in the doctrine of Christian liberty, but has some doubts upon his mind whether it is lawful to eat such meats, imagining them to be polluted by the idol: *be emboldened;* Gr. *edified;* that is, induced by such an example, and confirmed by such an instance with boldness, and without fear, *to eat those things which are offered to idols,* contrary to his light, and knowledge, and conscience; and so upon a reflection on what he has done, wound his weak conscience, destroy his peace, and distress his soul. This the apostle proposes to the consideration of these men of knowledge and liberty, as what might be the case, and which they could not well deny, to dissuade them from the use of their liberty, in all places and times, and under all circumstances; all which ought to be seriously weighed and attended to in this business.

Ver. 11. *And through thy knowledge,* &c.] These words contain an aggravation of the sin such persons are guilty of, who are the means, by their example, of ensnaring weak minds, and causing them to stumble and fall, even in some sense so as to perish: *shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?* every word almost carries in it an exaggeration of this matter; it is not some slight injury that is done to the person, but even causing him to *perish;* and this is not said of any person, but a *brother,* to whom the strongest affection, and strictest regard, should be shewn; and a *weak* brother, of whom the greater care should be taken; and therefore it is an instance of cruelty to do damage to such an one, and that not ignorantly, which can't be pretended, but *through thy knowledge;* not through the true use, but abuse of it: those that have knowledge should know better, and improve it to the edification, and not the destruction of fellow-Christians; and all this done in a case of indifference, that might as well be let alone, of which there was no necessity for the doing of it: but what aggravates most of all is, that this affects a person for *whom Christ died;* that he had such a value for as to purchase and redeem with the price of his own blood; and yet these men made so little account of, as by so trifling a thing to risk their good and welfare. Some would from hence conclude the doctrine of universal redemption, that Christ died for all men, even for them that perish; but it should be observed, that the words are put by way of interrogation, and prove no matter of fact, even supposing they could be understood of eternal ruin and destruction; and at most only imply the danger and possibility thereof through offences given, were they not preserved by the power and grace of God through Christ, who died for them, and so will not suffer them to perish; though this is no thanks to them who lay stumbling-blocks in their way, and, as much as in them lies, cause them to perish, in this sense: besides, the *perishing* of this weak brother is to be understood of his peace and comfort, and is explained by *defiling* his conscience, ver. 7. by *wounding* it, ver. 12. and making him to *offend,* ver. 13. through an imprudent use of Christian liberty in those who had the greater knowledge, and by a participation of things offered unto idols, in an idol's temple, and not of his eternal damnation in hell; which could never enter into the apostle's thought, as to be brought about hereby, as appears from ver. 8. and so is no proof of Christ's dying for such as perish eternally: for those for whom Christ has died, he has by his death procured such blessings for them, as a justifying righteousness, pardon of sin, peace with God, reconciliation unto him, and eternal salvation, which will for ever secure them from perishing in such sense.

Ver. 12. *But when ye sin so against the brethren,* &c.] Through sitting at meat in an idol's temple, and thereby violating the new commandment of love; by which saints are obliged to love one another as brethren, and take care to do nothing that may hurt and prejudice one another's peace and comfort, it being an incumbent duty upon them by love to serve one another: *and wound their weak conscience;* as before observed: it is contrary to the law of love to wound a brother; 'tis an aggravation of the sin to wound a weak one; what greater cruelty than to strike or beat, as the word here used signifies, a sick and infirm man? and greater still to strike and wound his conscience than any part of his body; for a wounded spirit is insupportable without divine aid and influence; and what serves most to enhance the crime and guilt is, *ye sin against Christ,* who has so loved this weak brother as to die for him; and between whom there is so close an union, as between head and members; and from whence such a sympathy arises, that what is done to or against such a person, Christ takes as done to himself. The Syriac version emphatically adds, ܗܘ, *himself.*

Ver. 13. *Wherefore if meat make my brother to offend,*

&c.] This is the conclusion of the whole, which the apostle makes with respect to himself, and proposes for the imitation of others; that since an imprudent use of Christian liberty, in this article of eating things offered to idols, might be attended with such bad consequences, as to lay a stumbling-block in the way of weak Christians, and be a means of emboldening them to do things contrary to their consciences, and so break the peace of their minds, wound their spirits, grieve and afflict their souls, and not only so, but so to do would be to sin against Christ himself; rather than do any of these things, or be accessary to them, he determines, in the strength of divine grace, that *he will eat no flesh while the world standeth*: or *for ever*: not only he resolves he'll not eat flesh offered to idols, but no other flesh, if this was an offence to a weak brother; and he not only concludes to abstain a few days, or months, or years, but as long as he should live in the world: he chose rather to live on herbs, or any other food but this, *lest*, says he, *I make my brother to offend*: this is truly Christian charity, a proof of brotherly love, and it shews a concern for the peace and welfare of others, when a person foregoes his own right, and drops the use of his liberty, rather than grieve, wound, and offend a brother in Christ.

CHAP. IX.

THE principal things in this chapter are the proof of the apostle's office and authority; arguments for his own maintenance, and the maintenance of Gospel ministers; reasons why he did not make use of his right and privilege in this respect: and the whole is concluded with an exhortation to diligence and perseverance in the Christian course of life, of which he himself was an example. He begins with his office, as an apostle, and proves it; partly by his independency on men, not having his call and mission from them; and partly by his corporeal sight of Christ, and the authority which he in person received from him; and also by the success of his ministry among the Corinthians, ver. 1. wherefore, whatever might be objected to him by other persons, they had no reason to object to his apostleship, seeing they, being converted under his ministry, were so many seals of it, ver. 2. and since his call to the ministry was firm and valid, he had a right, as other ministers, to a maintenance of himself and family, should he have any, from the churches, without labouring with his own hands, ver. 3, 4, 5, 6. which he proves from the law of nature and nations, exemplified in the cases of soldiers, planters of vineyards, and keepers of flocks, who by virtue of their calling and service have a right to a livelihood, between whom, and ministers of the Gospel, there is some resemblance, ver. 7. and also from the law of Moses, particularly the law respecting the ox, which was not to be muzzled when it treaded out the corn; and which he observes is to be understood, not only and barely in the letter of oxen, but of ministers of the word, who are as husbandmen that plough and thresh in hope, and therefore should be partakers of their hope, ver. 8, 9, 10. Moreover, the apostle argues the right of the maintenance of the ministers of the Gospel, from the justice and equity of the thing, that seeing they minister spiritual things, it is but reasonable that they should receive temporal ones, ver. 11. and which the apostle argues for himself, and Barnabas, as from the instances of other apostles, ver. 5, 6. so from the examples of those that succeeded him in Corinth, who were maintained by that church; though he did not think fit, when among them, to claim his right, and make use of his power, lest any check should be put to the progress of the Gospel, ver. 12. And he goes on to make this point clear and manifest from the case of the priests and Levites under the former dispensation, who ministering in holy things, had a provision made for them, ver. 13. And lastly, from the constitution and appointment of Christ himself, who has ordained it as a law of his, that the preachers of the Gospel should live of it, ver. 14, though the apostle himself did not make use of this his privilege; nor would he ever make use of it, especially at Corinth, for which he gives his reasons; and his principal one was, that his glorying might not be made void, ver. 15. which did not lie in preaching the Gospel, for that he was obliged to do, ver. 16. for if he had engaged in it of his own accord, he would have had his reward; but since it was through necessity, he could not claim any, ver. 17. or if any, it could be no other than to preach the Gospel *gratis*, and without charge, which was the thing he gloried in, ver. 18. and thus, though he lived independent of men, both with respect to his office and his maintenance, yet in order to gain souls to Christ, and be the instrument of their salvation, he became a servant to all, ver. 19. who are distributed into three sorts, the Jews that were under the law, ver. 20. the Gentiles that were without the law, ver. 21. and weak Christians, ver. 22. all which he did, not with any lucrative view to himself, but for the sake of the Gospel, that he might partake of that, and of the glory he was called unto by it, ver. 23. which, and not temporal things, he was looking unto, and pressing after; and which he illustrates by a metaphor taken from the Grecian games, well known to the Corinthians, particularly that of running races, in which all ran, but one only had the prize: wherefore he exhorts the Corinthians to run in like manner, that they may obtain the prize which he mentions, and describes as an incorruptible crown, in opposition to a corruptible one, which others strove for, ver. 24, 25. and to this he animates by his own example and conduct, which he expresses in terms borrowed from racers and wrestlers, expressive of his humility, sobriety, and temperance; which things he exercised, that whilst he was a preacher to others, he might not be worthy of reproof and disapprobation himself, ver. 26, 27.

Ver. 1. *Am I not an apostle? am I not free?* &c.] The Syriac, Ethiopic, and Vulgate Latin versions, put the last clause first; so the Alexandrian copy, and some other copies; and many interpreters are of opinion that it is the best order of the words, the apostle proceeding by a gradation from the less to the greater, having respect either to his freedom in the use of things indifferent, as eating of meats, *&c.* for though he did not think fit to use his liberty, to the wounding of weak consciences, it did not follow therefore that he was not free, as some might suggest from what he had said in the latter part of the foregoing chapter: or he may have respect to his freedom from the ceremonial law in general; for though, for the sake of gaining souls to Christ, he became all things to all men; to the Jews he became a Jew, that he might gain them: yet in such a manner as to preserve his liberty in Christ, without entangling himself with the yoke of bondage. Some have thought he intends, by his liberty, his right to insist upon a maintenance, and that he was no more obliged to work with his hands than other persons, of which he treats at large hereafter; but to me it rather seems that the words stand in their right order; and that, whereas there were some persons that either denied him to be an apostle, or at least insinuated that he was not one, nor was he to be treated as such, he goes upon the proof of it; and the first thing he mentions is his freedom, that is, from men; no man had any authority over him; he was not taught, nor sent forth, nor ordained by men as a minister, but immediately by Jesus Christ, as apostles were; they were set in the first place in the church, and had power to instruct, send forth, and ordain others; but none had power over them; and this being the apostle's case, proved him to be one; he was an apostle, because he was free: *have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord?* He had a spiritual sight of him by faith, but that did not shew him to be an apostle; this is what he had in common with other believers: whether he saw him in the flesh, before his crucifixion and death, is not certain; it is very probable he might; yet this was no more than what Herod and Pontius Pilate did; but he saw him after his resurrection from the dead, to which he refers, 1 Cor. xv. 8. and designs here, as a proof of his apostleship, this being what the apostles were chosen to be eye-witnesses of, Acts x. 41. and publish to the world: now our apostle saw him several times; first at the time of his conversion, next when in a trance at Jerusalem, and again in the castle where the chief captain put him for security, and very probably also when he was caught up into the third heaven: *are not you my work in the Lord?* as they were regenerated, converted persons, and were become new creatures; not efficiently, but instrumentally; they were God's workmanship, as he was the efficient cause of their conversion and faith; his only, as an instrument by whom they believed; and therefore he adds, *in the Lord*: ascribing the whole to his power and grace: however, as he had been the happy instrument of first preaching the Gospel to them, and of begetting them again through it; of founding and raising such a large flourishing church as they were; it was no inconsiderable proof of his apostleship.

Ver. 2. *If I be not an apostle unto others,* &c.] This is said by way of supposition, not concession; for he was an apostle to many others; he was an apostle of the Gentiles in general; as the apostleship of the circumcision belonged to Peter, that of the uncircumcision fell to his share: but however, as if he should say, be that as it will, *yet doubtless I am to you*; all the signs of apostleship were wrought among them; not only the grace of God was implanted in them under his ministry, but the extraordinary gifts of the spirit were received by them through it; and many signs, wonders, and mighty deeds, were done in the midst of them by him: see 2 Cor. xii. 12. which were sufficient to put the matter quite out of doubt with them: *for the seal of mine apostleship, are ye in the Lord*: alluding to the sealing of deeds and writings, which render them authentic; or to the sealing of letters, confirming the truth of what is therein expressed; and the sense is, that their being converted persons, and so openly in the Lord, in union with him; or being made new creatures by the power of his grace, through his preaching, was an authentic proof of his apostleship, and served him instead of a letter testimonial and recommendatory; see 2 Cor. iii. 1, 2, 3. Some copies read, *the seal of my epistle*, and so the Ethiopic version.

Ver. 3. *Mine answer to them that do examine me is this.*] These words are referred by some to the following, as if the apostle's answer lay in putting the questions he does in the next verses; but they rather seem to belong to the preceding, and the meaning to be this, that when any persons called in question his apostleship, and examined him upon that head, what he thought fit to say in answer to them, and in defence of himself, was by referring them to the famous church at Corinth, who were as particular persons, and as a church, his work in the Lord, and every one of them as so many seals of his apostleship; he being the first preacher of the Gospel to them, the founder of them as a church, and the instrument of their conversion.

Ver. 4. *Have we not power to eat and to drink?*] Having proved his apostleship, he proceeds to establish his right to a maintenance as a Gospel minister; which he expresses by various phrases, and confirms by divers arguments: by *a power to eat and drink*, he does not mean the common power and right of mankind to perform such actions, which every one has, provided he acts temperately, and to the glory of God; nor a liberty of eating and drinking things indifferent, or which were prohibited under the ceremonial law; but a comfortable livelihood at the public charge, or at the expense of the persons to whom he ministered; and he seems to have in view the words of Christ, Luke x. 7, 8.

Ver. 5. *Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife,* &c.] The phrase *a sister, a wife*, is an Hebraism, and answers to אחתי כלה, *my sister, spouse*, Cant. iv. 9, 10, 12. and v. 1. The Jews called their wives, sisters, not on account of religion, which also is not the meaning here; but because of the common relation that men and women, all mankind, stand in to one another, antecedent to any nearer relation, as that of man and wife. The sense the Papists put on these words, to secure them from being a proof of the lawfulness of the marriage of the ministers of the Gospel, can by no means be the true one; which is, that they are to be understood of a rich woman, or women, the apostles had a

power to carry about with them, to minister of their substance to them, and provide for them; for such a sense is directly contrary to the subject and argument the apostle is upon, which is to shew the right that he and others had, of casting themselves entirely upon the churches for a maintenance; whereas this is contriving a way for relieving the churches of such a charge; besides, the act of *leading*, or carrying *about*, is expressive of such a power over them, as cannot be thought to agree with persons of such substance; and whose voluntary act this must be, to go along with them and supply them; add to this, that for the apostles to lead about with them wherever they went women, whether rich or poor, that were not their wives, would be of no good report, and must tend to hurt their character and reputation: moreover, though these words clearly imply the lawfulness of a minister's marriage, and suppose it, yet they do not express the act itself, or the lawfulness of entering into such a state, but rather what follows after it; and the sense is this, that the apostle and others, supposing them to have wives, and it may be added also, and children, they had a right to take these with them wherever they went, and insist upon the maintenance of them, as well as of their own, at the public expense: *as well as other apostles;* who it seems did so, that had wives and families, as Philip the Evangelist had four daughters, Acts xxi. 8, 9. *And as the brethren of the Lord:* who it seems were married persons, and took such a method; by whom are meant James, Joses, Judas, and Simon; who were the near kinsmen of Christ, it being usual with the Jews to call such brethren: *and Cephas:* that is, Peter, who 'tis certain had a wife; see Matt. viii. 14. and therefore it is with a very ill grace that the pope, who pretends to be Peter's successor, should forbid the marriage of ecclesiastical persons.

Ver. 6. *Or I only and Barnabas,* &c.] Who were for a great while companions and fellow-travellers; are we alone? are we exempted from those rights and privileges, common to others? *have not we power to forbear working?* that is, with their hands, at their trades and occupations, to get their living by: Paul worked at his trade, and so it seems Barnabas did likewise: Paul wrought with his hands at Corinth, in company with Aquila and Priscilla, they being tent-makers as he, Acts xviii. 3. and so he did in other places; he appeals for the truth of this to the elders of the church at Ephesus, Acts xx. 34. and to the church of the Thessalonians, 1 Epist. ii. 9. 2 Epist. iii. 8. not but that he had a right and power to leave off business, to forbear working, and require a maintenance from those to whom he ministered; but for some reasons he chose not to make use of this his power and liberty, because he would not be chargeable to them; and lest that upon his first preaching the Gospel to them, they should think he had worldly selfish ends in view, and not the good of souls, and glory of Christ; however, he hereby lets them know, that though Barnabas and he continued to get their bread by their own hand-labour, they had a right to quit their trades, and throw themselves upon them for a maintenance. The apostle seems, in this, to imitate the ancient, wise, and holy men of his nation, who taught the law freely, and took nothing for it; not that they thought it was unlawful, or that they had no right to a maintenance on account of it, but for the honour of religion, and that piety they professed; and lest the law should be thought to be made a trade of, they chose not to insist upon it[d].

Ver. 7. *Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges?* &c.] Some people have done so, as did the Habessines[e], and the ancient Romans[f]; though before the apostle wrote this, the senate had made an act, that the soldiers should have a stipend from the public; and this being now so common, and universally obtaining everywhere, the apostle puts the question he does; and his meaning is, that since ministers of the Gospel are the good soldiers of Jesus Christ, and are engaged in a warfare state, in fighting the good fight of faith, against his enemies, and those of his church, it is but reasonable that their charges should be bore, and they maintained at the public expense: *who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof?* The church of Christ is a vineyard, it is often so called in Scripture; ministers are planters, vine-dressers, and labourers in it; and as the mystical Solomon, the owner of the vineyard, ought to have his thousand, the cultivators of it, the keepers of the fruit, should have their two hundred, Cant. viii. 12. *Or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock?* The churches of Christ are compared to flocks of sheep; the ministers of the word are pastors, or shepherds, who have the care and oversight of them, and feed them with knowledge and understanding; and it is but right and just that they enjoy the fruit of their labours, and have a proper and suitable maintenance, as it is that he who feeds a flock should eat of the milk which that produceth.

Ver. 8. *Say I these things as a man?* &c.] After the manner of men, reasoning from things common among men, and obvious to every one's observation: *or saith not the law the same also?* As the subject the apostle is upon was capable of being illustrated and confirmed by instances common unto, and easy of observation among men; so it might be supported by divine authority; it was not only a clear point from the reason of things, but was certain by the law of God.

Ver. 9. *For it is written in the law of Moses,* &c.] Deut. xxv. 4. *Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn.* The manner of threshing, or beating out the corn among the Jews, was not the same with ours; it was not done by the flail, at least not always, but by the means of oxen; and by these not only treading upon it to and fro, but drawing a wooden instrument after them, the bottom of which was stuck with iron teeth, and the top of it filled with stones, to press it down close by the weight thereof; the sheaves put in proper form, the oxen were led to and fro upon them, drawing this threshing instrument after them, by which means the grain was separated from the husk and ear[g]; see Isa. xli. 15. The learned Beckius[h] has given us a figure of this instrument, and the manner of using it: now according to this law,

[d] Maimon. & Bartenora in Pirke Abot, c. 4. sect. 5.
[e] Ludolph. Hist. Ethiop. l. 2. c. 14.
[f] Liv. Hist. l. 4. prope finem. Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 6. c. 22.

[g] Ben Melec. in 2 Sam. xii. 31. & Jarchi in Isa. xli. 15.
[h] Not. in Targum in 1 Chron. xx. 3. p. 210. Vid. Surenhusii Biblos Kattallages, p. 335.

whilst the ox was thus employed, its mouth was not to be muzzled, but it might freely eat of the corn it trod upon, excepting, the Jews say[j], what was dedicated to sacred uses. They give many rules relating to this law, and particularly observe, that it is to be extended to all sorts of creatures, as well as the ox, and to all sorts of business[k]; and that what is said of the ox, is much more to be observed with respect to men[l]; and which agrees with the apostle's reasoning here: *doth God take care for oxen?* yes, he does, and for creatures of less importance than they, even the fowls of the air, and the most worthless of them, sparrows, two of which are sold for a farthing; but not for them only, nor principally, but chiefly for men.

Ver. 10. *Or saith he it altogether for our sakes, &c.*] That is, God says this, or delivers out this law, forbidding the muzzling the ox, while it treads out the corn; not merely for the sake of the ox, but chiefly for the sake of men; and so Jarchi upon the place says, that the ox is mentioned, להוציא את אדם, *to express man*; and so another of the Jewish writers[m] interprets the law in Deut. xxii. 6. *Thou shalt not take the dam with the young*: "the intention of the command is, "not to have mercy on birds, *but for the sake of men*, "he (God) says this, whom he would accustom to "meekness and compassion:" and particularly this is here said, for the sake of ministers of the Gospel, who for their spiritual strength, and laboriousness in their work, may be compared to oxen; see Ezek. i. 10. This law is elsewhere produced by the apostle, and urged in favour of the maintenance of ministers, as here, 1 Tim. v. 17, 18. and therefore *for our sakes no doubt it is written*; to teach men, that as any workmen are not to be deprived of proper sustenance, so neither they that labour in the word and doctrine: *that he that plougheth should plough in hope*; of enjoying the fruit of his labours: *and that he that thresheth in hope, should be partaker of his hope*; of having a supply out of that he is threshing.

Ver. 11. *If we have sown unto you spiritual things, &c.*] The preachers of the Gospel are compared to sowers of seed; the seed they sow is the word of God, which is like to seed, for its smallness and despicableness in the eyes of carnal men; and yet as the seed is the choicest which is laid by for sowing, the Gospel is most choice and excellent to true believers; like seed, it has a generative virtue through divine influence; and whereas unless sown into the earth, it brings forth no fruit, so neither does the word, unless it has a place in the heart, where, as seed in the ground, its operation is secret, its increase gradual, and its fruitfulness different. The ground they sow upon is very various; some of their hearers are like the way-side, careless, ignorant, and on whom no impression is made; others are like the stony ground, who though for a while they express some affection and liking, yet not having the root of grace in them, whenever persecution arises, forsake the hearing of it; others are like the thorny ground, which are at first very promising, and greatly reformed, but inwardly full of the cares and lusts of the world, which choke the word, and make it unfruitful; and others are like the good ground, who are made good by the grace of God, understand the word, receive it, hold it fast, and in whom it is fruitful: sowing requires skill and art, and so preaching the Gospel does, and that more than human; and is constantly in its returning season to be attended to, notwithstanding the winds and clouds, and so the ministry of the word, notwithstanding all reproaches, persecutions, and afflictions; and as the same sort of seed, without mixture, and in plenty, is to be cast into the earth, so the same pure and unmixed Gospel of Christ is to be preached, and that without keeping back any thing that is profitable: and once more, as the sower, when he has cast his seed into the earth, waits long and with patience for its springing up and increase, so do the faithful dispensers of the Gospel: and what they sow or minister is of a spiritual nature; it comes from the spirit of God, he is the dictator of it; he by his gifts qualifies men to preach it, and by his power makes it effectual to the souls of men; and through it conveys himself to them, as a spirit of regeneration and sanctification: the matter of the Gospel is spiritual; it contains spiritual doctrines, such as justification, pardon of sin, adoption, regeneration, &c. and are what concern the souls and spirits of men, and their spiritual and eternal welfare: *is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?* meaning temporal ones, what concern the flesh, the body, the outward man, and the support thereof. The argument is from the greater to the less, and much the same with that in Rom. xv. 27. The difference between carnal and spiritual things is very great; the one has a vastly superior excellency to the other; and therefore if for carnal things men receive spiritual ones, they can be no losers thereby, but must be gainers; nor should it be thought any hardship or burden upon them, or any great and wonderful thing done by them, to support and maintain such who are so useful to their souls, and the spiritual welfare of them.

Ver. 12. *If others are partakers of this power over you, &c.*] Meaning not any tyrannical power and jurisdiction over them, with respect either to faith or practice; but the right of a maintenance, which either the false apostles, or the true ordinary ministers of the word there, justly claimed, and did enjoy: *are not we rather?* he and Barnabas, especially himself, who was more than an ordinary minister, an apostle, and the first preacher of the Gospel to them: *nevertheless, we have not used this power*; though others had, and they had a right to it, but did not choose to insist upon it; and, rather than do so, worked with their own hands; their not making use of this power was not because they stood in no need of it, and enjoyed an affluence of temporal things, for the reverse of this was their case: *but suffer all things*; famine, thirst, nakedness, hard labour, and many other hardships; *lest we should hinder the Gospel of Christ*; some might suggest, that they preached the Gospel only for gain, and not for the good of souls, and glory of Christ; and other mean-spirited persons might be backward

[j] Maimon. & Bartenora in Misn. Meilah, c. 3. sect. 6. & Trumot, c. 9. sect. 2.

[k] Jarchi in loc. Maimon. Hilch. Shecirot, c. 13. sect. 1, 2, 3. Moses Kotsensis Mitzvot Tora, pr. neg. 184. & affirm. 91.

[l] T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 88. 2.

[m] R. Menachem apud Ainsworth on Deut. xxii. 7. & Drusium in loc.

of embracing and professing the Gospel, lest it should become chargeable to them; wherefore that the Gospel might not be retarded in its course by the calumny of some, and the sordidness of others, the apostle thought fit to drop his claim to a maintenance from them: though at the same time he would have them know it was a just due, and therefore goes on to defend it by other arguments.

Ver. 13. *Do ye not know, that they which minister about holy things*, &c.] Not the priests in the temples of the Heathen deities, as the Ethiopic version suggests; but the priests in the temple at Jerusalem, who were employed in slaying the sacrifices, taking off their skins, cutting them into pieces, laying them in order with the wood upon the altar, and burning them, with other services they there performed, which were well known to the Corinthians, many of this church being Jews: *live of the things of the temple;* the tithes and first-fruits, and other oblations, and presents in money or goods, thither brought; nor had they any other way of living and supporting their families; for the priests and Levites had no inheritance among the children of Israel, and therefore provision was made for them in this way: *and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar;* some read it, *who sit at the altar;* but none might sit in the temple but a king of the house of David[n]; the priests and Levites always stood in their ministry, some doing one thing, and some another; some slew the sacrifice, others sprinkled the blood; some took away the ashes, others laid the wood, others brought up the parts of the sacrifice when slain, skinned, and cut asunder, and laid them on the altar[o], and these partook with the altar; some parts the altar devoured, being consumed by fire upon it; but then there were other pieces, which by law were reserved for the priests, and upon which they and their families lived: hence the distinction of אכילת מזבח, *the food of the altar*, and אכילת אדם, *the food of man*[p]; and therefore as it was but just and equitable that persons so employed should be maintained out of the revenues of the temple and altar, it is but right that Gospel ministers should be provided for with a suitable maintenance.

Ver. 14. *Even so hath the Lord ordained*, &c.] That is, the Lord Jesus Christ, in Matt. x. 10. and Luke x. 7, 8. it is an order and appointment of his that his ministering servants, who labour in preaching his Gospel, should be sufficiently taken care of, as to a comfortable livelihood; he has not indeed fixed it in the same way as the priests and Levites had theirs under the law; but as the one was just and right, that they should be maintained out of the things belonging to the temple and altar, and live on them, so it is his will and pleasure, *that they which preach the Gospel;* that continue to do so, that labour, and not loiter in the word and doctrine, who do the work of the ministry fully and faithfully, and not bear the name only of Gospel preachers: *should live of the Gospel;* not the Gospel itself, which is spiritual, and not corporeal food; but the sense is, that in consideration, and because of their preaching the Gospel, they should be supplied with the proper necessaries of life: the learned Mr. Mede has proved, by various instances, that the word Εὐαγγέλιον, here rendered *Gospel*, and which signifies good news and glad tidings, is in other writers used for a reward given to such that bring good tidings; and has rightly observed, that the Hebrew word בשורה, which signifies the same, is used in a like sense in 2 Sam. iv. 10. and accordingly the sense here will be, that it is the ordination of Christ, that such who faithfully bring the good news and glad tidings of salvation to sinners, should, as a reward for such good news, be provided for with a comfortable maintenance, on which they should live.

Ver. 15. *But I have used none of these things*, &c.] Either none of these arguments or reasons, for a minister's maintenance, taken from the reason of things, the law of Moses, the examples of the priests and Levites, and the order and appointment of Christ, in favour of himself, and that he might be provided for by them accordingly; or none of the things he had a right to do as other apostles, as to eat and drink at the public expense, to lead about with him a sister, a wife, had he any, and to forbear working with his own hands: *neither have I written these things, that it should be so done unto me;* it was not on his own account that he gave these strong reasons, urged these instances, and so undeniably proved this point, that ministers should be maintained by the people; and this he says to prevent what some might be ready enough to suggest, that though the apostle had as yet took nothing of the church at Corinth, it was plain, that for the time to come, he meant to do it; and therefore had written these things with such a view, to make way for his after-supply from them. This he denies, and gives his reason for it, *for it were better for me to die;* through want, with famine, could he be supplied no other way, than to take the least farthing of them: or *than that any man should make my glorying void;* meaning not so much his inward pleasure, joy, and satisfaction in preaching the Gospel freely, it being more blessed to give than to receive; but his boasting or glorying, not before God, but against the false apostles; that he had never taken any thing of the church at Corinth for preaching, nor never would, when they had insinuated he preached for gain, and by artful methods had got their money, and drained their purses.

Ver. 16. *For though I preach the Gospel, I have nothing to glory of*, &c.] The sense is not, that if he preached the Gospel in order for a livelihood, and to serve his private advantage, he should have no room for glorying; since, if this was the case, he should be obliged to do it, or perish for want: but his meaning is, that though he preached the Gospel ever so well, or ever so freely, and might glory before men, and against the false teachers, who insulted him in his character and office; yet not before God, from whom he received all his gifts, abilities, and qualifications, to preach the Gospel; all his light and knowledge in it; all his enlargements in meditation, and liberty in expression; all his faithfulness and integrity, courage

[n] Bartenora in Misn. Yoma, c. 8. sect. 1.
[o] Misn. Yoma, c. 2. sect. 3. Tamid. c. 3. sect. 1.
[p] Vid. Maimon. & Bartenora in Menachot, c. 3. sect 1.

and intrepidity, in the discharge and performance of his work, were by divine grace and assistance; and his success in it owing to the power and spirit of God, so that he had nothing to glory of on any of these accounts: hence these words are a correction, or rather an explanation of the preceding: *for necessity is laid upon me*: not of getting a livelihood by preaching, for he could have got, and did get this another way, even by labouring with his hands; nor of force and compulsion, for no one more readily engaged in it, or more cheerfully performed it; but of obligation from the divine call to this work, and from his own conscience, in which he knew it to be an heavenly one, and from the nature of the trust committed to him, and because of the good of immortal souls, and the honour of Christ; all which lay with weight upon him, and obliged him in duty, love, and gratitude, to attend to it: *yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the Gospel*: which is to be understood, not of any temporal affliction, as reproach, persecution, famine, nakedness, sword, &c. for such sort of woes frequently attend those that do preach the Gospel; but of the wounding of his conscience, and exposing himself, through the neglect of his calling, and contempt of the divine will, to the wrath and curse of God for ever; not that the apostle feared this would be his case, or that it possibly could be; but he thus speaks, to shew what he or any other minister of the Gospel would deserve, at the hand of God, who having abilities to preach, should not make use of them; or should preach, but not the Gospel; or only a part of it, and not the whole; or should entirely desist from it, through self-interest, or the fear of man, or through being ashamed of Christ and his Gospel, or as not able to bear the reproach and persecution attending it.

Ver. 17. *For if I do this thing willingly*, &c.] That is, not freely and without receiving any thing for preaching, without seeking any temporal profits and advantages; nor in pure love to Christ, and the good of souls, without any fear of punishment, or hope of reward; but the apostle supposes a case which was not, and his sense is, that supposing no necessity had been laid upon him, or any injunction or command given him to preach the Gospel, but he had entered on it without any obligation upon him, then, says he, *I have a reward*; or should have one, or might expect one; so the Jews [q] say, that a reward is given to him, who does any thing unbidden: *but if against my will*, or unwillingly, *a dispensation of the Gospel is committed to me*; which was his case; the Gospel was committed to his trust, as any thing is to the trust and charge of a steward by his lord, who is obliged to take care of it, and is accountable for it, and of whom faithfulness is required; he did not undertake this economy, or dispensation of the Gospel of himself, of his own mind and will, but it was enjoined him by one that had the command over him, and could and did oblige him to take the charge of it; though he made him willing, as well as able to do it: and therefore since this was the case, that it was not at his own option whether he would preach the Gospel or no, but he was obliged to it by one, that had a superior power and influence over him; hence, though he performed it ever so well, and with never so much faithfulness and integrity, he asks in the following verse,

Ver. 18. *What is my reward then?* &c.] None at all, I have none to expect, hope for, or claim, in a way of debt; I am a servant intrusted by my Lord with the Gospel, and an unprofitable one I am; I do, at most and best, but what's my duty, and for that I can claim no reward: all the reward that remains is only this, *verily, that when I preach the Gospel*, which I am obliged to do, *I may make the Gospel of Christ without charge*; to them that hear it, as he did to the Corinthians, which was his glorying in ver. 15. and is the same with his reward here; for this means not any reward from God, but his glorying among men, and against the false teachers; that when he preached the word at Corinth, he was not chargeable to any, nor would he ever be: his reason for it is, *that I abuse not my power in the Gospel*: his right of having a maintenance, whilst he was preaching the Gospel; to have made use of which would have been an abuse of it, since it would have given occasion to the false apostles to reproach and calumniate, and might have been an hinderance to the Gospel of Christ, and a stumbling to some weak minds.

Ver. 19. *For though I be free from all men*, &c.] As an apostle, being in the highest office in the church, he had none superior to him, that could exercise any power and authority over him, and was also independent of men for his maintenance, which he got by his own hand-labour: though it may be observed, that the word *men* is not in the original text, and the word *all* may as well have respect to things as men; and the sense be, that he was free, as from the curse of the moral law, so from the yoke of the ceremonial law, and all the rituals of it, and might, if he would, make use of his Christian liberty; the following verses seem to incline to this sense, as the preceding ones do to the former: *yet have I made myself servant unto all*: in faithfully and indefatigably preaching the Gospel to them; undergoing all manner of affliction and persecution for the sake of that and them; behaving towards them with all meekness and humility; condescending to their weakness, and accommodating himself to their capacities and customs: *that I might gain the more*; than other apostles have done, or than it could be reasonably thought he should, had he behaved in a more lordly and domineering manner: his end was not to amass wealth, to gain riches and treasures of good things to himself, but many souls to Christ, who otherwise must have been lost; but being brought to the knowledge of Christ, and salvation by him through his ministry, it was profit to them, and gain to Christ: the metaphor is taken from merchants, who spare no pains, but take every method to acquire gain and profit: the ministers of the word are spiritual merchants, their traffic lies in the souls of men, whom they are studiously and anxiously careful to bring to Christ.

Ver. 20. *And unto the Jews I became as a Jew*, &c.] That is, in religion; or with respect to some religious observances peculiar to the Jews, for he himself was

[q] Maimon. apud Hammond in loc.

really a Jew by nature; who became as one unto them in this sense, when he for their sakes circumcised Timothy at Derbe, or Lystra, purified himself at Jerusalem, shaved his head at Cenchrea, observed their sabbath, and abstained from some sorts of food forbidden in the law; and his end in so doing was, not to confirm them in such usages, but that he might hereby have the greater influence over them, and by little and little bring them off of these things, or, as he says, *that I might gain the Jews;* bring them over to Christ, and off of a dependence on their own righteousness, for justification before God: *to them that are under the law, as under the law;* the Vulgate Latin version adds, *when I was not under the law,* and so the Alexandrian copy and some others; by whom seem to be meant the same persons as before; though some have thought that the Samaritans are intended, and others the Sadducees: but if any as distinct from the former are designed, they should rather seem to be the converted Jews; who though they believed in Christ, looked upon themselves to be still under the law, and therefore observed it; with whom the apostle on certain occasions complied, as if he was under it too, that he might have the greater share in their affections and credit; hoping in time that by such means he might be able to prevail upon them to relinquish these things, and wholly attend to the Gospel and ordinances of Christ, or, as he says, *that I might gain them that are under the law;* meaning the Jews, who were observers of the law of Moses.

Ver. 21. *To them that are without law, as without law,* &c.] Meaning the Gentiles, who, though they were not without the law of nature, nor without many good civil laws, by which the more cultivated and civilized nations among them were governed, yet they were without the written law of Moses; a description of the Gentiles, usual with the Jews; see Rom. ii. 12, 14. And to these the apostle accommodated himself, as if he was without the law; by conversing with them without any difference; by eating any sort of food with them; by not circumcising Titus, when the Jews would have had it done; and by resisting Peter, when he, by his example, would have influenced the Gentiles to have lived as did the Jews: *being not without law to God;* or *the law of God,* the moral law; for though he was delivered from the curse and condemnation of it, and as a covenant of works, and the ministry of it by Moses, yet not from the matter of it, and obedience to it, as a rule of walk and conversation: and therefore his compliance with the Gentiles was not in any thing that was contrary to the moral law; nor did he act as one that had nothing to do with that law, *but* as one that was *under the law to Christ,* or *under the law of Christ:* that is, the law of love, which obliged him to take every lawful and proper method for the good of such souls: *that I might gain them that were without law:* to believe in Christ for life and salvation, and to serve the law of God as in the hands of Christ, the only Lawgiver and King in his church; in testimony of their gratitude to him, for the blessings of grace received by him, without having any dependence on their obedience to it, for acceptance with God.

Ver. 22. *To the weak became I as weak,* &c.] That is, to weak Christians, who were weak in faith, and had not such clear knowledge of Gospel liberty, and therefore scrupled the eating of some sorts of meat, and particularly meats offered to idols; and the apostle so far consulted the peace and edification of these weak brethren, and so far complied with them, and became as one of them, that, rather than offend them, he determined to eat no meat while the world stood: *that I might gain the weak;* promote their edification and welfare, who otherwise might be stumbled, be in danger of falling from, and laid under a temptation to desert the faith of the Gospel: *I am made all things to all men;* which is to be understood, as in all the other instances of his being so, not in cases and things criminal and sinful, contrary to the moral law, and the dictates of his own conscience, subversive of the Gospel of Christ, and of the order and discipline of it, but in cases and things of an indifferent nature: *that I might by all means save some;* that is, that he might be the means of saving some of Jews and Gentiles, and of all sorts of men; by preaching the Gospel of salvation to them, and by directing them to Christ, the only Saviour of lost sinners; thus he explains what he means by so often saying that he might *gain* them.

Ver. 23. *And this I do for the Gospel's sake,* &c.] The Alexandrian copy and some others read, *all things I do,* &c. and so the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions; that is, he became all things to all men, and so and so to different persons; not for his own sake, for his own temporal advantage, or to curry favour with men; not for the sake of gaining wealth, or honour and applause to himself, but for the spread of the Gospel, and its greater usefulness among men: to which he adds, *that I might be partaker thereof with you;* meaning either the fruit of the Gospel, the conversion and salvation of sinners, which would be matter of joy both to him and them; or the blessings of grace and eternal life, which the Gospel reveals and promises, which he desired to enjoy in common with others, not only with the Corinthians, for the word *you* is not in the original text, but with Jews and Gentiles; with men of all sorts, who may be gained over to Christ, and saved by him, through the ministry of the word.

Ver. 24. *Know ye not that they which run in a race,* &c.] The allusion in this and the following verses is to the Grecian games, which consisted, among other things, of running of races, and of wrestling, combating, and fighting; and which are in this and the context particularly mentioned: and the apostle the rather makes use of these terms, and refers to these things, because they were well known to the Corinthians, and refers to them as well known; for the Isthmian games were performed in their neighbourhood, and doubtless had been seen by many of them, for the Corinthians were presidents of them. The *race,* or *stadium* in which they ran, was the space or interval between the place they set out from, and that which they ran unto, and consisted of 125 paces, or 625 feet; it was the space of a furlong, and about the eighth part of a mile: in this they *run all;* as many as would, that came around from all parts, striving who should be foremost and get the crown; *but one receives the prize;* which was held by the president of

the game, or judge of the race, and received by the winner, who was judged to be so by him; and was no other in the Isthmian games, which are most likely to be referred to here, than a crown made of pine-tree branches, or leaves, and sometimes of dried parsley *: *so run that ye may obtain.* The apostle accommodates or applies the above account to the Christian's course of life, and exhorts to run in it in like manner as racers do in a race. The *stadium*, or *race* plot in the which the believer runs, is this world, or this present life: he is only a runner now and here, for no sooner is the time of his departure come, but his course or race is finished; and, as his forerunner Christ, sits down in full rest from all his labours as at a table, with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and on a throne with Christ: the course he runs includes the exercise of every grace, particularly faith, which is expressed not only by going to Christ, walking in him, but by fleeing and running to him; and the discharge of every duty, signified by a running in the way of God's commandments; and, in a word, the whole of a Christian profession, and the holding of it fast, and holding on in it unto the end. The act of *running* is a motion forward, a following on to know the Lord, a going from strength to strength, from one degree of grace to another, a pressing forward toward the mark for the prize; and requires spiritual strength from Christ, and a daily renewal of it; is to be performed with readiness, swiftness, and cheerfulness, in opposition to a slowness of heart to believe, and a slothfulness and sluggishness in the business and service of Christ. The manner of running, *so*, that is, as the Grecians ran in their races; they ran *all*, so should all believers run, ministers and churches, churches and the several members thereof, old and young professors; so the church determines for herself, her members, and the daughters of Jerusalem, *we will run after thee*, Cant. i. 4. and they have this encouragement which the others had not, for only one received the prize with the Grecians, but here all, that run well, obtain: again, they ran and strove to be foremost, who should get to the goal first and receive the prize, so should believers be emulous to outdo each other, to go before one another, in faith and holiness; striving in the strength of Christ, who should do most service for him, and bring most glory to him: moreover, as they ran in the way that was marked out for them, not turning to the right hand or the left, so should believers run in the way of salvation, which is Christ; in the way of holiness, faith, and truth; and in the path of duty and ordinances, which are all clearly pointed out unto them: once more, as they while running kept their eye upon the mark, so should believers, while running the race set before them, be continually looking to Jesus, the author and finisher of faith: to say no more, as they kept running till they came to the end of their race, so should the saints; there's no time for stopping or looking back; remember Lot's wife. The end of running is to *obtain* the prize, the incorruptible crown of eternal life; not that this is to be procured in a way of merit by running; for the best services of the saints have no merit in them, they are previously due to God, nor can they be profitable to him; and besides, are done by the assistance of his own grace and strength; nor is there any proportion between the best works of men, and this crown of glory, life, and righteousness; yea, salvation, or eternal life, is expressly denied to be of him that willeth, or of him that runneth, and is always represented as this crown is, to be a free gift: the meaning of the expression is, that believers are to run on in their Christian race, that they may, and when they are come to the end of it they shall, as he that came foremost in the race did, stretch forth their hand, lay hold on, and receive the crown which the righteous Judge will give them; and is the true import of the word made use of here, and the sense the same with 1 Tim. vi. 12. *Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life*, and denotes that the persevering saint shall enjoy the crown.

Ver. 25. *And every man that striveth for the mastery*, &c.] Either in running a race, or in wrestling: for the word here used agrees with both, and both are in the context referred to, nor has the apostle as yet done with his allusion to running in a race; *is temperate in all things*: contains himself from venery, abstains from certain sorts of food, which tend to hinder the agility, or weaken the strength of the body; and indulges not himself in sloth and idleness, but exercises himself in various manners, that he may be prepared for running or wrestling: the apostle's view in this, seems to be to strengthen some exhortations he had already given, to abstain from fornication, and the immoderate use of venery; to forbear eating things offered to idols, and not give themselves up to luxury and intemperance; for should they be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and the cares of this life, they would be very unfit for their Christian race, or for wrestling with principalities and powers, and the discharging of the business of a Christian profession: *now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown*: they confine themselves to a certain diet and course of living, and abstain from things otherwise desirable to nature; and this they do for the sake of a fading crown, a crown of leaves, made of the boughs and leaves of olives, laurels, pine, &c. or of parsley, green or dried, as before observed †: *but we an incorruptible*; even eternal life; compared to a crown, for the riches, glory, and lustre of it; and as suitable to the character and dignity of saints, who are kings as well as priests unto God: it is called *incorruptible*, because it is so in its own nature; nor can it be corrupted by other things, as crowns even of gold may; nor shall any corrupt person wear it; the corruption of nature must be removed from the saints, yea, that frailty and mortality of human nature, which sometimes goes by the name of corruption, must be taken away, ere they can inherit this crown and kingdom; nor will it ever fade away, as the corruptible crowns of the conquerors in these games did, and that in a very short time; but this will last for ever, and always continue in the same glory and lustre.

Ver. 26. *I therefore so run*, &c.] The apostle animates the Corinthians by his own example, telling them that he ran so as he exhorted them; he ran with

* Schmid. Prolegom. in Isthm. Pindar, p. 5, 6. & Not. in Olymp. p. 212. Paschalius de Coronis, l. 6. c. 27. p. 441.

† Vid. Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 5. c. 8.

cheerfulness and swiftness in the way marked out for him, looking to Jesus; continuing steadfast in the profession of his faith, and discharge of his duty as a Christian, and in preaching the Gospel as a minister; and nothing had he more at heart, than to finish his course with joy: *not as uncertainly;* as one that knew not, or was in doubt about the way in which he should run, and so ran in and out, sometimes in the way, sometimes out of it; since it was clearly pointed out to him in the word of God: the allusion is to the white line which was drawn from the place the runners set out at to the goal; so that they did not run uncertainly, nor could they be at a loss to steer their course: nor did the apostle run, for what, as the Syriac version renders it, כמא ידיע, *is unknown:* he knew what he ran for, for the incorruptible crown of glory, he knew the nature of it; nor was he uncertain as to the event and issue of his running; he knew that this crown was laid up safe and secure, that it would be given him, and he should wear it; he had no doubt at all about it; and with this certain knowledge both of the way and prize, and full assurance of faith and hope, he ran: *so fight I, not as one that beateth the air.* The allusion is here to fighting with the fist, when, before the combat was entered on, the person used to swagger about, and beat about with his fists, striking the air with them, having no adversary before him; only shewing what he could do if he had one, or when he should encounter: so did not the apostle, he did not fight with his own shadow, or a man of straw, or beat the empty air; but gave home blows to real adversaries, Satan, the world, and the flesh; the latter of which is particularly mentioned in the next verse.

Ver. 27. *But I keep under my body,* &c.] The allusion is still to fighters, who, by cuffing and boxing, give their antagonists black and blue eyes, which is the proper signification of the word here used: so it is said [u] of Menedemus, that in questions or scholastic exercises, he was so vehement and pugnacious, that he never departed without ὑπωπια φερων, *carrying away black and blue eyes.* This is not be understood by the apostle of his natural body, and of his keeping it under by immoderate watchings, fastings, and labours, or by whipping and scourging, and lying upon the bare ground, and other such practices; but of the body of sin, the corruption of nature, and of that being laid under some restraints; of the mortifying the deeds of the body through the spirit, of crucifying the affections with the lusts, of putting off the old man with his deeds, as concerning the former conversation, and of making no provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof: it seems to be the same with what the Jews call [w], כובש יצרו, *a subduing of a man's evil concupiscence:* who is a strong man? they say [x], הכובש את יצרו, *he that subdues his corruption,* according to Prov. xvi. 32. and again [y], "the sons of Ulam were mighty and "powerful men, כבשין יצרידהון, *subduing their corrup-* "*tions,* as a man that draws a bow with wisdom." *And bring it into subjection;* so as not to serve and obey it in the lusts thereof; but to have the ascendant of it, and government over it, that it does not, and cannot reign as it formerly did: the allusion is still to the combatant, who gets and keeps his antagonist under him, and has the command of him, and throws him on the ground, or drags him about at pleasure: *lest that by any means when I have preached to others;* the Gospel of the grace of God, for their souls' profit and advantage, to gain and save them; and have called upon them so to run, that they might receive and enjoy the incorruptible crown: *I myself should be a cast-away,* or *rejected,* or *disapproved* of; that is, by men: the apostle's concern is, lest he should do any thing that might bring a reproach on the Gospel; lest some corruption of his nature or other should break out, and thereby his ministry be justly blamed, and be brought under contempt; and so he be rejected and disapproved of by men, and become useless as a preacher: not that he feared he should become a reprobate, as the word is opposed to an elect person; or that he should be a cast-away eternally, or be everlastingly damned; for he knew in whom he had believed, and was persuaded of his interest in the love of God, and that he was a chosen vessel of salvation, that could not be eternally lost: though supposing that this is his sense, and these his fears and concern, it follows not as neither that he was, so neither that he could be a lost and damned person: the fears of the saints, their godly jealousies of themselves, and pious care that they be not lost, are not at all inconsistent with the firmness of their election, their security in Christ, and the impossibility of their final and total falling away; but on the contrary are overruled, and made use of by the spirit of God, for their final perseverance in grace and holiness.

CHAP. X.

In this chapter the apostle cautions the Corinthians against security on account of their gifts, knowledge, and profession, since men of great characters, and enjoying high privileges, have fallen into sin, and have been severely punished; and he particularly cautions against idolatry, and all appearances of it, on which account he again introduces the case of eating things offered to idols, and dissuades from it, when it tended to idolatry, and had the appearance of it; though in some cases he allows of eating them, but directs that all should be done to the glory of God, and without offence to any, as they had him for an example. And now, whereas in the latter part of the preceding chapter he had signified his jealousy of himself, lest he should be a cast-away, he pursues the thought, and improves it to the use of the Corinthians, that they, on account of their high attainments, should not think themselves secure of all danger; and for this purpose

[u] Hesychius de Philosophis, p. 48.
[w] Tzeror Hammor, fol. 145. 2, 2. T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 69. 2.
[x] Pirke Abot, c. 4. sect. 1.
[y] Targum in 1 Chron. viii. 40.

sets before them the instances and examples of the Jewish fathers, of which he would not have them ignorant, who were persons that enjoyed great privileges, and were partakers of things which bore some resemblance to Gospel ordinances; as their passing under the cloud through the sea was a figure of baptism, and their eating manna, and drinking water out of the rock, which was a type of Christ, had some likeness to the ordinance of the Lord's supper, of eating his flesh, and drinking his blood, which are meat and drink indeed in a spiritual sense, ver. 1, 2, 3, 4. and yet all these persons that enjoyed these privileges were not acceptable to God; nor did they enter into the land of Canaan, but fell in the wilderness, ver. 5. in which they were examples to men under the Gospel dispensation, that they may shun the evils which were the cause of their fall and overthrow, ver. 6. particularly idolatry, of which their making and worshipping the golden calf is an instance, ver. 7. also fornication, on account of which three-and-twenty thousand fell in one day, ver. 8. likewise tempting Christ, which brought upon them destruction by the fiery serpents, ver. 9. moreover, murmuring against God, and his servants, for which reason the destroyer was sent among them, and destroyed them, ver. 10. All which happened, and are recorded for the use, instruction, and admonition of professors of religion in these last times, ver. 11. from all which the apostle infers, by way of caution to the saints, that they should not be secure of standing, but take heed lest they fall, since so many and such great persons had before fallen, ver. 12. But for their comfort, under afflictions, he observes, that as they were common to men, so the faithfulness of God was concerned to support them under them, and deliver them out of them, that they might not utterly fail of the grace of God, and perish by them, ver. 13. And in order to their standing, he particularly dehorts them from idolatry, ver. 14. and every appearance of it, as eating things offered to idols, in an idol's temple, which is what he has chiefly in view, as appears by the following verses: and whereas they were men of wisdom and judgment whom he addressed, he was the more encouraged to use the following arguments with them, the force of which they would understand, ver. 15. And his first argument is taken from the Lord's supper, and the communion of his body and blood, which believers have with him in eating the bread, and drinking the wine; suggesting, that in like manner such who eat things offered to idols, as such, had communion with them, and so were guilty of idolatry, and therefore should be abstained from, ver. 16. His next argument is taken from the union and communion which saints have one with another at the Lord's table, whereby they appear to be one body and one bread; and so such that associate themselves with idolaters in their temples, and eat with them things offered to idols, are one with them in a like sense, and chargeable with idolatry, ver. 17. To which is added a third, taken from the priests of the Israelitish nation, who eating of the sacrifices, were partakers of the altar, worshipped the God of Israel, and had communion with him; and so in like manner eating of the sacrifices offered to idols, and especially in one of their temples, might be very well interpreted a partaking of their altars, a worshipping of them, and so idolatry, ver. 18. not that he thought that an idol was to be considered as a deity, or that things offered to it were upon an equal foot with the Lord's supper, or Jewish sacrifices, ver. 19. but as there was a communion in the one, so in the other; for as for the sacrifices of the Gentiles, they were offered to devils, and not to God; and which he mentions to deter them from having the most distant regard to such sacrifices, ver. 20. it being the most inconsistent, as well as shocking thing in the world, to partake of both cups and tables, those of the Lord, and those of devils, ver. 21. wherefore the apostle dissuades from such idolatrous practices, from the pernicious and dangerous consequences of them, stirring up the Lord to jealousy, fighting against him, and being destroyed of him, ver. 22. But inasmuch as things offered to idols were in themselves indifferent, the apostle directs to a proper use of them; and observes, that though they might be lawfully eaten, yet the expediency of time and place, and the edification of others, ought to be considered, ver. 23. for we are not to seek our own pleasure, but the welfare of others, ver. 24. If indeed such meat is sold in the butchers' shambles in common with others, it may be bought and eat, when no questions are asked about it, what it is, ver. 25. and that for this reason, because the earth, and all that is in it, are the Lord's, and his people have a right to all through him, and therefore may make use of every creature in it, ver. 26. So if an idolater invites a believer to dine with him, and he accepts the invitation, he may very lawfully eat whatever is before him, even though it be meat offered to idols, provided he asks no questions about it, ver. 27. But should any one present point at certain meat, and say that was offered to idols, then it was advisable not to eat of it; partly for the sake of the unbeliever that pointed at it, who would be hardened in his idolatry by it; and partly for the sake of the conscience of a weak believer present, who might be offended at it; and the reason given to enforce such a conduct is, because there is plenty of other food without it, ver. 28. And then the apostle explains whose conscience he means; not the conscience of him that is invited, but either of the unbeliever, or the weak brother; and suggests a reason why he should not make use of his liberty in their presence, and under such circumstances, lest it should be censured and condemned, ver. 29. or he be reproached for what he had, through good will, and had reason to be thankful for, ver. 30. wherefore, upon the whole, the apostle advises in this affair, and in all others, to have the glory of God in view in the first place, ver. 31. and next to that to be careful not to offend any sort of persons whatever, ver. 32. and proposes himself as an example in these things to be followed; who sought not his own advantage, but the pleasure and profit of others, and to promote, as much as in him lay, their salvation, and not hinder it, ver. 33.

Ver. 1. *Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant*, &c.] The apostle having suggested his own fears and jealousies, lest, notwithstanding all his gifts and grace, he should be left to do any thing that might be a means of laying him aside, and rendering him useless in his ministerial work; and which he hints for the use of these Corinthians, who boasted of

their knowledge, and made an imprudent use of their Christian liberty, to the hurt of weak minds; he proceeds to lay before them the case of the Jewish fathers, who, notwithstanding the many favours and privileges they were blessed with, yet falling into lust, fornication, intemperance, and idolatry, their carcasses fell in the wilderness, and entered not into the land of rest; wherefore the apostle would not have them be ignorant, or unmindful, or take no notice of these things, since they were for ensamples to them, and written for their admonition, and were warnings to them to take care lest they should also fall: particularly the apostle's view is to dissuade from the eating of things offered to idols, though a thing indifferent, and from their imprudent use of their Christian liberty with respect unto it; since it was not only doing an injury to weak believers, but it likewise exposed themselves to danger, who, by using such freedom as to sit in an idol's temple, and there publicly eat, might be drawn into idolatry itself; nor should they depend upon their knowledge, and gifts, and attainments, since it is clear, from these instances, that the highest external privileges, favours, and enjoyments, can't secure men from falling: for which purpose it was proper to call to mind, *how that all our fathers were under the cloud;* which was a symbol of the divine presence with the Israelites, as it was on Mount Sinai, and in the tabernacle and temple; was a protection of them, being in the day-time as a pillar of cloud to screen them from the scorching heat of the sun, and in the night-time as a pillar of fire to preserve them from beasts of prey, as well as in both to guide and direct them in the way; and was a type of Christ, who is a covert from the heat, as well as the wind and storm; a protection of his people from the vindictive justice and wrath of God, and from the rage and fury of men and devils. This also might express the state and condition of the former dispensation, which was dark and obscure in comparison of the present one, in which saints, with open face, behold the glory of the Lord; and likewise the state of the people of God in this world, even under the present dispensation, who, in comparison of the heavenly glory, and the beatific vision the saints enjoy there, see but through a glass darkly. This cloud, which is sometimes represented as a pillar, was not an erect solid body, which was at some distance before the Israelites, and merely as a guide, but was all around them; it was before them, and behind them, and on each side, and was over them; see Numb. xiv. 14. so that the apostle rightly says they were *under* it. And to distant beholders in the day-time it looked like a pillar of cloud; and in the night-time, the sun being down, it looked like a pillar of fire; for one and the same thing is meant by both: and so the Jews say [z], that "the pillar of cloud, סובבו, "*encompassed* the camp of Israel, as a wall encompasses "a city, nor could the enemy come at them." Hence those allusions to it in Isa. iv. 5. Zech. ii. 5. The Jews indeed speak of several clouds of glory; nor are they agreed about the number of them: "when the "people of Israel were travelling in the wilderness, "they say [a], they had clouds of glory, מסחרן, *that surrounded them*, four at the four winds of the world, "that the evil eye might not rule over them, חד מן "עלויהון, *and one above them*, that the heat and sun, "as also the hail and rain, might not have power over "them; and one below them, which carried them as "a nurse carrieth her sucking child in her bosom; and "another ran before them at the distance of three days' "journey, to level the mountains, and elevate the "plains, and it slew all the fiery serpents and scorpions "in the wilderness." And elsewhere [b] 'tis said, "how "many were the clouds of glory, מקיפין, *that encompassed Israel* in the wilderness? R. Hoshea and R. "Josiah are divided. R. Josiah says five, four at the "four winds, and one went before them. R. Hoshea "says seven, four at the four winds of the heavens, and "one מלמעלן, *above them*, and one below them, and "one ran before them;" to which he ascribes the above effects: but the Scripture speaks but of one cloud, which departed at the death of Moses: *and all passed through the sea:* the Red sea, in a very miraculous manner; Moses by a divine order lift up his rod, and stretched out his hand over it, and the Lord by a strong east wind caused it to go back, and made it dry land; the waters were divided, and rose up as a wall, on the right hand, and on the left, so that the children of Israel passed through it on dry ground, and all came safe to shore, and not one perished; and yet but two of these entered into the land of Canaan. Origen [c] says, "he had heard it as a tradition from the ancients, that "in the passage through the sea, to every tribe of "Israel were made separate divisions of water, and that "every tribe had its own way open in the sea." And indeed this is a tradition of the Jews, whom he means by the ancients, or at least such who had received it from them; by which it appears to be a very ancient one. "R. Eliezer says [d], that in the day in which the "waters flowed, and were congealed together, there "were twelve paths made, according to the twelve "tribes, and the waters became a wall." The same is related by others [e]: Mahomet has it in his Alcoran [f], in which he was assisted by a Jew, and from whom he doubtless had it. He observes, it was said to Moses, "smite the sea with thy rod, and when he had smitten "it, it became divided into twelve parts, between "which were as many paths, and every part was like a "vast mountain." But be this as it will, it is certain that they all passed through it, and came safe to shore.

Ver. 2. *And were all baptized unto Moses, &c.*] *In* or *by Moses;* and so the Syriac version renders it, ביד מושא, *by the hand of Moses;* by his means and direction, he going before, they followed after him into the sea, and passed through on dry land, and came out on the shore, which carried in it a resemblance of baptism; when they believed the Lord, and his servant Moses, Exod. xiv. 31. and gave up themselves to him as their leader and commander through the wilderness: and this their baptism was *in the cloud, and in the sea;* which may be considered either as together or separately; if together, the agreement between them and

[z] Pirke Eliezer, c. 44.
[a] Targum in Cant. 2. 6.
[b] Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 1. fol. 177. 1, 2.
[c] Homil. 5. in Exod. fol. 27. col. 3. E.
[d] Pirke Eliezer, c. 42.
[e] Maimon. & Bartenora in Pirke Abot, c. 5. sect. 4.
[f] C. 26. p. 304. Ed. Sale.

baptism lay in this; the Israelites, when they passed through the Red sea, had the waters on each side of them, which stood up as a wall higher than they, and the cloud over them, so that they were as persons immersed in and covered with water; and very fitly represented the ordinance of baptism as performed by immersion; and which is the way it was administered in the apostles' time, to which he refers; and is the only way it ought to be administered in; and in which only the Israelites' passage through the sea, and under the cloud, could be a figure of it: or this may be considered separately, they were baptized in the cloud; which was either, as Gataker[g] thinks, when the cloud went from before the face of the Israelites, and stood behind them, and was between the two camps, to keep off the Egyptians from them, which as it passed over them let down a plentiful rain upon them, whereby they were in such a condition as if they had been all over dipp'd in water; or their being all under the cloud, and all over covered with it, was a representation of the ordinance of baptism, in which a person is all over covered with water; and then they were baptized in the sea, as they passed through it, the waters standing up above their heads, they seemed as if they were immersed in it. Very great is the resemblance between that passage of theirs, and baptism. For instance, their following Moses into the sea, which is meant by their being *baptized into* him, was an acknowledgment of their regard unto him, as their guide and governor, as baptism is a following of Christ, who has left us an example that we should tread in his steps; and is an owning him to be our prophet to teach us, and lead us the way; and it is a profession of our faith in him, as our surety and Saviour, and a subjection to him as our King and Governor. This their baptism in the sea was after their coming out of Egypt, and at their first entrance on their journey to Canaan's land, as our baptism is, or should be, after a person is brought out of worse than Egyptian bondage and darkness, and has believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, and at the beginning of his profession of him, and entrance on his Christian race. The descent of the Israelites into the sea, when they seemed as buried in the waters, and their ascent out of it again on the shore, has a very great agreement with baptism, as administered by immersion, in which the person baptized goes down into the water, is buried with Christ therein, and comes up out of it as out of a grave, or as the children of Israel out of the Red sea; and as they, when they came out of it, could rejoice and sing in the view of their salvation and safety, and of the destruction of all their enemies, so the believer can, and does rejoice in this ordinance, in the view of his salvation by Christ, and safety in him, and of all his sins being buried and drowned in the sea of his blood; witness the instances of the eunuch and jailer. But though the Israelites were all in this sense baptized, yet they did not all inherit the land of Canaan.

Ver. 3. *And did all eat the same spiritual meat.*] Meaning the manna; and which the Jews also call[h] מאכל רוחני, *spiritual food*, as also their sacrifices,[i] לחם רוחני, *spiritual bread*; not that the manna was so in its own nature; it was corporeal food, and served for the nourishment of the body; but either because it was prepared by angels, who are ministering spirits, at the command of God, and hence called angels' food, Psal. lxxviii. 25. or rather because it had a mystical and spiritual meaning in it; it was not the true bread, but was typical of Christ, who is so; it resembled Christ in its original; it was prepared of God, as Christ is, as his salvation prepared before the face of all his people; it was the free gift of God, as Christ is to the mystical Israel; it came down from heaven, as Christ, the true bread of life did: it answered to him in its nature; it was in form round, expressive of his being from everlasting to everlasting, and of the perfection both of his divine and human natures; it was in colour white, signifying his purity of nature, and holiness of life and conversation; it was in quantity small, setting forth his outward meanness and despicableness in the eyes of men; and in quality it was sweet in taste, as Christ, and all the blessings and fruits of his grace are to believers. The usefulness of the manna was very great, a vast number, even all the Israelites, were supplied with it, and supported by it for forty years together, as all the elect of God, and the whole family of Christ are by the fulness of grace which is in him; and as in order that it might be proper and suitable food, it was ground in mills, or beaten in a mortar, and baked in pans; so Christ was bruised, and wounded, and endured great sufferings, and death itself, that he might be agreeable food for our faith: and as the Israelites had all an equal quantity of this food, none had more or less than others, so all the saints have an equal share and interest in Christ, in his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice; as they have the same like-precious faith, they have the same object of it. To say no more, as the manna was the food of the wilderness, or of the people of Israel, whilst travelling in it, so Christ, and the fulness of grace that is in him, are the food and supply of the spiritual Israel, and church of God, whilst they are passing through this world to the heavenly glory. Now, though all the Israelites did not eat of Christ, the true bread, which was typified by the manna; yet they all ate the same food, which had a spiritual meaning in it, and a respect to Christ, but did not all enter into the land flowing with milk and honey.

Ver. 4. *And did all drink the same spiritual drink*, &c.] By which is meant the water out of the rock, which was typical of the blood of Christ, which is drink indeed, and not figurative, as this was, for which reason it is called spiritual; or of the grace of Christ, often signified by water, both in the Old and New Testament; and is what Moses and the law could not give; for righteousness and life, grace and salvation, could never be had by the works of the law: and very unpromising it was, and is to carnal men, that these should come by a crucified Christ, as it was to the Israelites, that water, in such plenty, should gush out of the rock in Horeb; but as those waters did not flow from thence without the rock being stricken by the rod of Moses, so the communication of the blessings of grace from Christ is through his being smitten by divine justice with the rod of the law; through his being stricken for the transgressions of his people, and

[g] Adversar. Miscellan. p. 30.
[h] Vide Mosc in Shemot Rabba, fol. 109. 2.

[i] Tzeror Hammor, fol. 72. 2.

and being made sin, and a law-curse in their room and stead. And as those waters continued through the wilderness as a constant supply for them, so the grace of Christ is always sufficient for his people; a continual supply is afforded them; goodness and mercy follow them all the days of their lives: *for they drank of that spiritual rock that followed them;* by which the apostle means not Christ himself, for he went before them as the angel of God's presence, but the rock that typified him; not that the rock itself removed out of its place, and went after them, but the waters out of the rock ran like rivers, and followed them in the wilderness wherever they went, for the space of eight-and-thirty years, or thereabout, and then were stopped, to make trial of their faith once more; this was at Kadesh when the rock was struck again, and gave forth its waters, which, as the continual raining of the manna, was a constant miracle wrought for them. And this sense of the apostle is entirely agreeable to the sentiments of the Jews, who say, that the Israelites had the well of water all the forty years[k]. The Jerusalem Targum[l] says of the "well given at Mattanah, that it again became unto them violent overflowing brooks, and again ascended to the tops of the mountains, and descended with them into the ancient valleys." And to the same purpose the Targum of Jonathan ben Uzziel[m], "that it again ascended with them to the highest mountains, and from the highest mountains it descended with them to the hills, and encompassed the whole camp of Israel, and gave drink to every one at the gate of his own dwelling-place; and from the high mountains it descended with them into the deep valleys." Yea, they speak of the rock in much the same language the apostle does, and seem to understand it of the rock itself, as if that really went along with the Israelites in the wilderness. Thus one of their writers[n] on those words, *must we fetch you water out of this rock?* makes this remark: "for they knew it not, לפי שהלך הסלע, *for that rock went,* and remained among the rocks." And in another place 'tis said[o], "that the rock became in the form of a beehive; (elsewhere[p] it is said to be round as a sieve;) and rolled along, ובאת עמהם, *and came with them,* in their journeys; and when the standard-bearers encamped, and the tabernacle stood still, *the rock came,* and remained in the court of the tent of the congregation; and the princes came and stood upon the top of it, and said, ascend, O well, and it ascended." Now, though in this account there is a mixture of fable, yet there appears something of the old true tradition received in the Jewish church, which the apostle has here respect to. *And the rock was Christ;* that is, it signified Christ, it was a type of him. So the Jews[q] say, that the Shekinah is called סלע קדוש, *the holy rock;* and Philo the Jew says[r] of this rock, that the broken rock is ἡ σοφια τȣ Θεȣ, *the wisdom of God.* Christ may be compared to the rock for his outward meanness in his parentage and education, in his ministry and audience, in his life and death; and for his height also, being made higher than the kings of the earth, than the angels in heaven, and than the heavens themselves; and for shelter and safety from the wrath of God, and from the rage of men: and for firmness, solidity, and strength, which are seen in his upholding all things by his power, in bearing the sins of his people, and the punishment due unto them, in the support of his church, and bearing up his people under all afflictions and temptations, and in preserving them from a total and final falling away: and a rock he appears to be, as he is the foundation of his church and every believer, against which hell and earth can never prevail; and to it he may be likened for duration, his love being immovable, his righteousness everlasting, his salvation eternal, and he, as the foundation of his church, abiding for ever.

Ver. 5. *But with many of them God was not well pleased,* &c.] As he is with none but those that are in Christ; and with none of the services of men, but what are done in faith, which become acceptable to him through Jesus Christ; for in him only persons and services are accepted with God; and this was the way of acceptance in the Old, as in the New Testament dispensation: how many of the Jewish fathers God was not well pleased with, or took no delight in, but hated and abhorred, which is the sense of the phrase here, whether they were the greatest part or not, is not certain; however, they were not all, excepting Joshua and Caleb, as some interpreters understand it; for not all that died in the wilderness were out of the special grace and favour of God, witness Moses, Aaron, Miriam, and, it is to be supposed and hoped, hundreds and thousands more; but the apostle has respect to such who were the instances of God's direful vengeance and displeasure, as appears from the reason given; *for they were overthrown in the wilderness:* he does not say merely that they died there, for many with whom God was well pleased died there; but these, their carcasses fell in the wilderness, being stricken, thrown down, and overthrown by the immediate hand of God; they did not die a common death, according to the ordinary course of nature; but by the plague, or by the sword, or by fire from heaven, or by fiery serpents, or by a destroying angel, or by one judgment or another, as hereafter mentioned.

Ver. 6. *Now these things were our examples,* &c.] Or *types;* that is, these punishments which were inflicted on these persons for their sins, were designed as instructions for others to avoid the like sins, that they may escape the same punishment; just as the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, being condemned with an overthrow, as these men were, were made ensamples to all that should hereafter live such vicious lives and conversations; and in a very lively manner, as in a type or print, these exhibited the displeasure of God against sin, what such must expect who commit it; so men are called out of Babylon, lest, partaking of her sins, they also receive of her plagues. The Jews have a common saying[s], שאירע לאבות סימן לבנים, *that what happened to the fathers is a sign unto the children;* to which the apostle may have respect: *to the intent that*

[k] Jarchi in Numb. xx. 2.
[l] In Numb. xxi. 20.
[m] In ib.
[n] Jarchi in Numb. xx. 10.
[o] Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 1. fol. 177. 2.
[p] Gloss. in T. Bab. Pesach. fol. 54. 1.
[q] Zohar in Num. fol. 67. 4. & Imre Binah in ib.
[r] Lib. Allegor. l. 2. p. 1102.
[s] Tzeror Hammor, fol. 77. 4.

we should not lust after evil things. The apostle proceeds to enter into particular instances, in which these things were examples, teaching us to avoid sin, and so punishment: and begins with lust, which is the root and foundation of all sin; all the evil in the world arises from it, and the world itself is full of it, and is in God's account the same as action: and here he particularly strikes at those Corinthians, that lusted after the feasts in the idols' temples; and hints that that arose rather from a carnal sensual appetite, which ought not to be indulged, than from any other principle: *as they also lusted;* that is, after evil things, the fish, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, onions, and garlic of Egypt, Numb. xi. 4, 5, 6. which though they were not evil in themselves, yet the Israelites sinned in lusting after them, in not being content with the manna, the food which God had prepared for them; and besides, their desire after these things did not arise from want, but from a sensual appetite, and was attended with murmuring against the Lord and his servants, and was highly resented; for though the Lord gave them flesh according to their desire, yet while it was between their teeth, he sent a plague among them, by which multitudes were taken off, and the name of the place was called קברות התאוה, *Kibroth Hataavah, the graves of lusts;* the people that lusted being buried there, Numb. xi. 34.

Ver. 7. *Neither be ye idolaters,* &c.] To which they seemed inclined to be, at least there was great danger that such they would be, by carrying their liberty to such a pitch, as to sit in an idol's temple, and there eat things sacrificed unto them; and which the apostle cautions against, and uses arguments to dissuade them from in the following part of this chapter: *as were some of them, as it is written, the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play;* referring to Exod. xxxii. 6. when the Israelites, whilst Moses was in the mount, made a molten calf, and worshipped it, built an altar before it, and instituted a feast and a play; and which was performed by dancing about the calf, and singing to the honour of it, ver. 18, 19. for their sitting down to eat and drink is not to be understood of an ordinary meal, but of a feast kept in honour of the golden calf, and which they covered by calling it a feast to the Lord; and their playing also was on the same account, in imitation of the Heathens, who made feasts, and appointed plays to the honour of their deities: some indeed interpret [t] this last action of uncleanness, which they committed after their feast was over, and which also was sometimes done in the Heathen temples, the word being sometimes used in this sense; see Gen. xxxix. 14, 17. but others understand it of the act of idolatry; so two of the Chaldee paraphrases interpret the words in Exodus [u]; *they rose up to play,* בפולחנא נוכראה, *in strange service, i. e.* idolatry; and though the apostle does not mention their punishment, yet it was a very great one, three thousand persons fell by the sword on that account, ver. 28.

Ver. 8. *Neither let us commit fornication,* &c.] To which the Corinthians were much addicted: hence the apostle elsewhere, in this epistle, makes use of arguments to dissuade from it, as he does here, they judging it to be no evil: *as some of them committed:* i. e. fornication; as they did at Shittim, with the daughters of Moab, Numb. xxv. 1. which was a stratagem of Balaam's, and the advice he gave to Balak king of Moab, to draw them into that sin, which made way for their commission of idolatry, which they committed by eating the sacrifices of their gods, and bowing down unto them; particularly they joined themselves to Baal Peor, the same with Priapus, one part of whose religious rites lay in acts of uncleanness, and this brought the divine displeasure on them: *and fell in one day three and twenty thousand;* in Numb. xxv. 9. the number is said to be *twenty and four thousand;* and so say all the three Targums on the place [w], and both the Talmuds [x], and others [y]; on the other hand, all the Greek copies of this epistle, and the Oriental versions, agree in the number of twenty and three thousand; so that it does not appear to be any mistake of copies, in either Testament. To reconcile this matter, or at least to abate the difficulties of it, let the following things be observed; as that the apostle does not write as an historian, and so not with that exactness as Moses did; besides, he does not say that there fell *only* three-and-twenty thousand, and this being a lesser number than Moses's, is contained in his, and so a certain truth; moreover, Moses and the apostle use different words in their account; Moses says there *died* so many, including the heads of the people that were hanged up against the sun, and all that perished by the sword; the apostle says, that there *fell* such a number, referring only to the latter, who only could be properly said to fall, and not those that were hanged up: now the heads of the people that suffered the first kind of death, might, as is very probable, be a thousand; and they that died in the other way, three-and-twenty thousand, which make the sums to agree, and both are expressed by Moses, under the general name of a *plague* or stroke; add to all this, that the apostle uses a limiting clause, which Moses does not, and says that these three-and-twenty thousand fell *in one day.* So that it is very likely that the heads of the people, supposed to be a thousand, were hanged up in one day; and the three-and-twenty thousand that fell by the sword died the next, which the apostle only takes notice of. Hence the Jew [z] has no reason to charge the apostle with an error.

Ver. 9. *Neither let us tempt Christ,* &c.] As all such persons do, who, presuming on the power and grace of Christ to keep them, or upon what they have received from him, unnecessarily expose themselves to snares and temptations, and so to danger; and as many of the Corinthians did, who are here chiefly respected, who trusting to their gifts and attainments, their knowledge and Christian liberty, would go into an idol's temple, sit down at meat there, and exposed themselves to great and imminent danger; which was a tempting Christ, whether he would preserve them or no: *as some of them also tempted;* that is, as some of the

[t] Vid. Jarchi in Exod. xxxii. 6.
[u] Targum Jon. ben Uzziel & Jerusalem in ib. Vid. Bereshit Rabba, sect. 53. fol. 47. 4. & Shemot Rabba, sect. 1. fol. 69. 3.
[w] Targum Onkelos, Jon. ben Uzziel & Jerusalem in Numb. xxv. 9.
[x] T. Hieros. Sota, fol. 21. 4. T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 106. 1.
[y] Midrash Kohelet, fol. 68. 4. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 127. 3.
[z] R. Isaac Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 85. p. 468.

Israelites tempted, which they did more than once; but what is referred to here, is the time they spake against God and Moses, in Numb. xxi. 5, 6, as appears from the punishment annexed, their being destroyed by serpents. The Arabic version adds *him*, meaning Christ, which is a right interpretation of the text; otherwise there would be no force in the apostle's reasoning; for Christ was the angel that went before the Israelites in the wilderness, the angel of God's presence, that bore, and carried, and saved them; he is the Jehovah they tempted at Massah and Meribah, and elsewhere, and God they spake against at this place referred to; hence it is clear that our Lord existed before his incarnation, and that he is truly and properly God; the Alexandrian copy reads, *neither let us tempt God*, and so the Ethiopic version: *and were destroyed of serpents*: fiery ones, which were sent among them by the Lord Christ, they tempted and spoke against, which bit them, and of which bitings many of them died. This might lead to the consideration of the original cause of man's sin and fall, and the ruin of human nature, by the means of a serpent; and may be an emblem of the future destruction of the wicked, which will be everlasting fire, prepared for the devil, the old serpent, and his angels.

Ver. 10. *Neither murmur ye*, &c.] Against the true apostles of Christ, and faithful ministers of the word; nor against the laws and ordinances of Christ, or providences of God; so some of the members of this church did, or were inclined to do: *as some of them also murmured*: as against the Lord, so against Moses and Aaron. The people of Israel were very prone unto, and often guilty of this sin; but what the apostle here has respect unto, is either their murmuring upon the report the spies made of the good land, Numb. xiv. or that of Korah and his company against Moses and Aaron, as principal officers, who were for setting all upon a level; and of all the people against them, for the death of these men, Numb. 16. *and were destroyed of the destroyer*; meaning either some judgment of God upon them, as the earth's opening and swallowing up Korah and all that belonged unto him; and the fire that came down from heaven, and consumed the two hundred and fifty men that offered incense; and the plague which swept away fourteen thousand and seven hundred of those that murmured against Moses and Aaron, on the account of the death of the said persons; and any other judgment by which the carcasses of those fell in the wilderness, that murmured upon the report of the spies; or else since angels were usually employed by God, in inflicting such judgments, by the destroyer may be meant an angel, such an one as smote the first-born in Egypt, and bears the same name, Heb. xi. 28. and as smote Israel with a pestilence upon David's numbering the people, and was about to have destroyed Jerusalem, had he not been restrained, 2 Sam. xxiv. 15, 16. and as smote an hundred fourscore and five thousand in the camp of the Assyrians, in one night, 2 Kings xix. 35. So that though an angel may be intended, it is not necessary, on account of the character given him, to understand an evil angel; 'tis true indeed, that Satan is by the Jews[a] called המשחית, *the destroyer*; and Samael, the same with Satan, is called the *angel of death*; to which the allusion is in Heb. ii. 14. and evil angels are frequently styled מלאכי חבלה, *destroying angels*[b]; as distinct from ministering ones, and to which some think the apostle here refers.

Ver. 11. *Now all these things happened unto them*, &c.] All these punishments came upon them in various ways, not by chance, but by the will of God, and as their sins deserved: *and were for ensamples*; to others, to their future posterity, and to the churches of God in all ages: *and they are written for our admonition*; that men in a church-state particularly may take warning, by these instances of their sin and punishment, to avoid the one and escape the other, and not presume upon their external privileges and favours: *upon whom the ends of the world are come*; or *in whom the ends of ages are met*; for the apostle does not mean this material visible world, the universe and all things in it, which has continued, since the writing of this, about seventeen hundred years[*]: but the Jewish ages, or times of the Mosaic economy, which begun when these instances of sin and punishment were, and which now in the times of the apostles were at an end; every thing in those periods that were figurative and emblematical, having their fulfilling end and accomplishment, and also were now abrogated: likewise the ages or times of Gentile darkness and ignorance may be intended, which now were come to an end, through the light of the Gospel, and the power of God attending the ministration of it; and hence the ends both of the Jewish and Gentile ages may be said to come upon, or meet in the apostles and their times, who had the advantage of looking back on former ones, and of receiving instruction from thence.

Ver. 12. *Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth*, &c.] Since the Jewish fathers, who enjoyed such peculiar favours and eminent privileges, had such various judgments inflicted on them; since they stood not, but many of them were visible instances of God's displeasure; they were overthrown and cast down, their carcasses fell in the wilderness, and entered not into the land of rest; therefore all such persons who think themselves safe and sure, trusting to themselves, or depending upon the knowledge and gifts they have, the favours and privileges they enjoy; every one of these should *take heed lest he fall*. This advice was exceeding proper, whether it be considered as spoken to true believers, or formal professors; for true believers may fall into temptation, into sin, from a degree of steadfastness in the Gospel, and from a lively and comfortable exercise of grace; but not finally, totally, and irrecoverably; since they are enclosed in the arms of everlasting love, secured in the hands of Christ, built on a foundation that will never fail, and are kept by an almighty power which can never be overcome; but yet, since they may fall to the dishonour of God, the reproach of the Gospel of Christ, the grieving of the spirit of God, the wounding of their own souls, the stumbling of weak believers, and the strengthening of the hands of the wicked; such an exhortation is not superfluous, even to such; and many and strong are

[a] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 16. 2.
[b] T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 72. 1. Beracot, fol. 51. 1.

[*] The reader will observe, that this calculation was made in the year 1747.—Ed.

the reasons and arguments why they should take heed lest they fall; nor are admonitions needless to that which God's decree and promise secure: since these are often the means in and by which God executes his decree, and makes good his promise; see Acts xxvii. 22, 24, 31. Moreover, if this exhortation be considered as given to formal professors, it is very pertinent; for such as these may fall, as they often do, from that which they seemed to have, from the truths of the Gospel, and a profession of them, and into scandalous sins, and at last into condemnation; and the rather since the apostacy of such persons is injurious to the honour and interest of true religion; hereby the ways of God are evil-spoken of, the name of Christ blasphemed, profane sinners hardened, and weak believers stumbled, as by the falls of real Christians: besides, it must be worse for themselves, who hereby bring upon themselves a severe punishment; see 2 Pet. ii. 21. and indeed these seem to be the persons the apostle chiefly respects; not such who truly thought they stood, and did really stand; for such stand in the true grace and love of God, in Christ, in whom they are chosen, and by whom they are redeemed and saved, and by that faith which he is the author and finisher of; and so shall never finally and totally fall away; but such *that thinketh*, ὁ δοκῶν, *who seemeth*, to himself and others, *that he standeth*; and manifestly designs such who were swelled with a vain opinion of themselves, their gifts and knowledge; who tempted God, and *trusted to* themselves, as the Ethiopic version reads it, and despised weak believers; but lest real believers should be hereby discouraged, the apostle adds,

Ver. 13. *There hath no temptation taken you*, &c.] Some, indeed, understand these words by way of reproof, that whereas their trials and exercises which had attended them were very light ones, and comparatively trivial; and yet they had given way to these temptations, and had sunk under them, and fallen by them, for which they were greatly to be blamed; or as threatening them with something more severe than any thing as yet had befallen them, signifying that though they had as yet stood, and thought they still should; yet they ought not to presume on their own strength, or depend on outward things; since the temptations that as yet had come upon them were such as men might easily bear; there was no great trial or experiment of their grace and strength by them; they had not yet resisted unto blood; there were heavier and severer trials they might expect; and therefore should not be too secure in themselves, but take heed lest when these things should come upon them, in such a time of great temptation, they should fall away: but I rather think the words are spoken by way of comfort to the saints: intimating that as no temptation or affliction had befallen them, so none should, but what either came from men, or was common to men, or which men by divine assistance, and under divine influence, might bear; and therefore should not distress themselves with the apprehensions of it, as if it was some strange or unusual thing, and as if they must unavoidably perish and be destroyed by it: *but such as is common to man; or is humane*. There are divine temptations, or such as come from God; God may be said to tempt his people, as he did Abraham, by enjoining them things very hard and disagreeable to nature; and by afflicting them either in body or estate; and by withdrawing his presence, and withholding the communications of his grace, to try their faith, shew them their weakness and need of himself. There are also diabolical temptations, or such as come from Satan; who tempts by soliciting to sin, by suggesting blasphemous thoughts, and filling with doubts and fears; and by dissuading from the use of means, as attending at the throne of grace, and on the word and ordinances: but the apostle here speaks of human temptations, such as come from men; meaning reproaches and persecutions, for the sake of Christ and his Gospel; and which are temptations or trials of grace, as of faith and patience, and under which there is great danger of falling away: now when the apostle says that none but such temptations had befallen them, he does not mean that they had been, or were, or would be entirely free from other temptations; but that those which they mostly dreaded, and were in danger by, were but human, such as came from men, and were, as our version suggests, common to Christian men, their brethren, who were in the flesh as they, and might be endured by men, strengthened by the grace of God; wherefore they had nothing to fear from hence, especially when they considered the faithfulness, care, and power of God next observed: *but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able*: no man can be tempted, afflicted, or persecuted by men, but by a divine permission, and that voluntary; nor more than, or above that measure which God hath determined; who proportions the affliction to the strength he determines and promises to give, and does give, and the strength of his people to the temptation or affliction he suffers to befall them; for which his faithfulness is engaged, having promised that as their day is, their strength shall be: that he will never leave them nor forsake them, and that he will bear, and carry, and save them unto the uttermost, and that they shall hold on and out unto the end: *but will with the temptation make a way to escape*; for as he by his permission makes way for the temptation or affliction, which otherwise could not come; and as he knows how, in what manner, and at the best time, to deliver his people out of temptations; so he does and will, in his providence, open a way that they may escape out of them, at least so as not to be overpressed and destroyed by them: *that ye may be able to bear it*: for God does not always think fit to remove at once an affliction or temptation, though at the earnest request of his people, as in the case of Paul, 2 Cor. xii. 7, 8. yet he gives them grace sufficient to endure and stand up under it, yea, to get the victory of it, to be more than conquerors, and triumph over it.

Ver. 14. *Wherefore, my dearly beloved*, &c.] Some copies add, *brethren*; as do the Complutensian edition, and Ethiopic version; all which endearing epithets are used to persuade to attend to the exhortation enforced upon the foregoing considerations; since the Jewish fathers, who were idolaters, fell so much under the divine displeasure; and since such who thought they stood were so liable to fall, and the temptation to which they exposed themselves was of such a dangerous consequence; therefore, *flee from*

idolatry: as what is most dishonourable, pernicious, and abominable: the apostle's meaning is, not only that they would not worship idols, or commit plain downright acts of idolatry; but that they would stand at the greatest distance from idols, not so much as go into an idol's temple, and there sit down and eat; which if not a real act of idolatry, had at least the shew of one; and his sense is, that they would abstain from all appearance of idolatry, from every occasion of it, and whatsoever led unto it; particularly he means, that they would not eat of things sacrificed to idols as such, and in an idol's temple; which he considers as a species of idolatrous worship, and by a similar instance he after proves it to be so, even a partaking of the table of devils.

Ver. 15. *I speak as to wise men*, &c.] That is, what he was now going to say concerning the Lord's supper, and the communion which believers have with Christ in it, which they as Christians must have knowledge of; and concerning the participation of the altar the Israelites had, who ate of the sacrifices of it, which many of them, being Jews, as such must know; and therefore being fully persuaded of the propriety and pertinency of the instances he was about to produce, and of the justness of his reasoning upon them, he appeals to the Corinthians, as men of wisdom and understanding in these things, and makes them themselves judges thereof: *judge what I say*: consider and weigh the matter well, and you will discern and judge that what I say is proper and pertinent, just and right.

Ver. 16. *The cup of blessing, which we bless*, &c.] Meaning the cup of wine used in the Lord's supper, which being set apart for that service, is taken up, and the name of the Lord called upon over it; and he is blessed and praised for his wondrous love and grace, in the gift and mission of his son, to shed his precious blood for us, for the remission of our sins; the whole church joining with the administrator, both in the act of blessing and praise over the cup, and in the participation of it. This cup is so called in allusion to the cup of wine used at common meals, or at the passover among the Jews, which they used to take and bless God with, and give him thanks for their mercies, and was commonly called כוס של ברכה, *the cup of blessing*[c]. "Three things "(says R. Judah[d]) shorten a man's days and years; "when they give him the book of the law to read, and "he does not read, כוס של ברכה לברך, *the cup of "blessing to bless with*, and he does not bless, and when "he accustoms himself to government." Again, so they comment on Gen. xxi. 8.[e] "what's the meaning "*of the day that Isaac was weaned?* the holy blessed "God will make a feast for the righteous, in the day "that he weans the people of the seed of Isaac, and "after they eat and drink, they give to Abraham "כוס של ברכה לברך, *the cup of blessing to bless with*; "he says to them, I will not bless, because Ishmael "sprung from me; they give it to Isaac, he says to "them, I am not fit to bless, for Esau came from me; "they give it to Jacob, he says unto them I will not "bless, for I married two sisters in their life-time, "which the law forbids me; they say to Moses, take "it and bless, he says to them I will not bless, for I "was not worthy to enter into the land of Israel, nei"ther in life nor in death; they say to Joshua, take it "and bless, he says I cannot bless, for I am not wor"thy of a son, as it is written, Nun his son, Joshua "his son; they say to David, take thou it and bless, "he saith unto them I will bless, and it is comely for "me to bless; as it is said, *I will take the cup of sal"vation, and call upon the name of the Lord*." Once more they ask[f], "what is a beautiful cup? כוס של "ברכה, *the cup of blessing*:" and which, they[g] observe, ought to hold the fourth part of a log of wine. These instances clearly shew from whence the apostle borrowed this expression, and which he chooses to make use of because well known to the Jews, and as being very apposite to the cup in the Lord's supper, he is speaking of: *is it not the communion of the blood of Christ?* it is; that is, it is a sign, symbol, and token of fellowship with Christ in his death; it is a means of having communion with him, and of enjoying the blessings of grace which come through his blood; such as righteousness, peace, pardon, and atonement; all which true believers are made partakers of; and this part of the Lord's supper, the cup being drank of, is a testimony and an indication of the same: *the bread which we break*; which is the other part of the ordinance, which, though performed first, is mentioned last, because of the argument the apostle pursues upon it. The act of breaking the bread does not only design the distribution and eating of it, but the manner also in which it is prepared for distribution and eating, namely by breaking it into pieces; and which is aptly expressive of the body of Christ, which was wounded, bruised, and broken for us: *is it not the communion of the body of Christ?* it is; for not only believers by this act have communion with his mystical body, the church, but with his natural body, which was broken for them; they in a spiritual sense and by faith eat his flesh, as well as drink his blood, and partake of him, of his sufferings and death, endured in his body, and of all the blessings of grace consequent thereon. The apostle's view in this instance, and his argument upon it, is this, that if believers, by eating the bread and drinking the wine in the Lord's supper, spiritually partake of Christ, of his body and of his blood, and have communion with him; then such who eat of things sacrificed unto idols, have in so doing communion with them, and partake of the table of devils, and so are guilty of idolatry, which he would have them avoid.

Ver. 17. *For we being many, are one bread and one body*, &c.] The several members of the church of Christ; particular believers are indeed many, considered in themselves, in their own persons; yet by virtue of their union to Christ, which is manifested by their communion with him, they are one bread with him, the bread of life, and one body with his, signified by the bread; they are of one and the same mass and lump, they are incorporated together, they are flesh of

[c] T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 11. 2, 4. T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 51. 1, 2. & 52. 1. Pesachim, fol. 103. 2. 106. 1. 109. 2.
[d] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 55. 1.
[e] Cepthor, fol. 47. 1.

[f] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 76. 2. & Erubin, fol. 29. 2.
[g] Piske Tosephot in Sabbat, art. 287. & Erubin, art. 46. 157. Vid. Zohar in Exod. fol. 57. 3. & 59. 2, 2. & 65. 1.

his flesh, and one spirit with him: or they are one bread and body among themselves; as bread consists of many grains of corn which have been ground and kneaded together, and make up one loaf; and as the members of an human body are many, and make up one body; so believers, though they are many, yet are one body, of which Christ is the head; one in union with him and one another, and one in their communion together at the Lord's table; and so the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read, *as therefore the bread is one, so we all are one body;* having communion with Christ and one another: *for we are all partakers of that one bread:* in the supper, which is all of the same nature and kind, and is a symbol of the body of Christ, and our fellowship with him and each other. The application designed is this, that as believers, by partaking of the same bread, appear to be the same body, and of the same mass and lump with one another: so such as eat things sacrificed unto idols, appear to be of the same mass and lump with Heathen idolaters: Dr. Lightfoot has very pertinently produced some passages out of Maimonides, concerning mixing, associating, or communion of neighbours in courts on sabbath-eves, that so they may enter into each other's houses on the sabbath-day, for the illustration of this passage; of which mixing the Jews have a whole treatise in their Misna and Talmud, which they call Erubin; and of which they say [h], "but how is this mixture or association? it is thus, they mix together, "בםאכל אחד, *in one food*, which they prepare on the "eve of the sabbath; and it is as if they should say, "for we are all mixed together, and have all one food; "nor does any one of us divide the right from his "neighbour—they don't mix in courts, but בפת שלימה, "*with a whole loaf* only; though the mass or lump "baked may be the quantity of a *seah*, yet if it is "broken, they don't associate with it; but if it is "whole, though it be but the value of a farthing, they "mix with it—how do they mix or associate together "in the courts? they collect חלה אחת שלימה, *one* "*whole cake*, out of every house, and put all in one "vessel, in one of the houses of the court—and the "whole association being gathered together, blesses "the Lord—and eats:" upon which the above learned writer observes, that if it were customary among the Israelites, to join together in one political or economical body, by the eating of many loaves collected from this, and that, and the other man; we are much more associated together into one body, by eating one and the same bread, appointed us by our Saviour.

Ver. 18. *Behold Israel after the flesh*, &c.] So the apostle calls them, to distinguish them from the Israel of God, the spiritual Israel, whether Jews or Gentiles; who are born again, believe in the true Messiah, worship God in a spiritual manner, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in fleshly things; but these were the descendants of Jacob or Israel by carnal generation, were carnal men, in the flesh, in a state of unregeneracy, and were employed in a carnal worship, in the observance of carnal commandments and ordinances; these the apostle directs to, to see, consider, and take notice of what they were doing; from whence some instruction might be taken, for the further clearing of the present point: *are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar?* yes, they are. The priests and Levites who waited at the altar, and ministered about holy things there, who brought the sacrifices and laid them upon the altar of the burnt offerings, where the altar consumed and devoured one part by fire, and that which was left they ate among themselves; and so as they had communion with one another in eating, they partook of the altar, of the things, or sacrifices of the altar, and shewed themselves to be of the Jewish religion, and professed and declared that they worshipped the God of Israel, and would be thought to have communion with him in so doing; in like manner, such who eat of things sacrificed to idols, declared themselves to be idolaters, to be of the Pagan religion, to be worshippers of idols, and to have fellowship with them.

Ver. 19. *What say I then?* &c.] Or may be objected to, or inferred from, what I say; *that an idol is any thing, or that which is sacrificed to idols is any thing?* to which must be answered, as the Syriac version reads, לא, *no*, by no means; by running the parallel between Christians having communion with the body and blood of Christ, in the Lord's supper, through eating the bread and drinking the wine, the Israelites partaking of the altar, by eating of the sacrifices of it, and men's joining with idols and idolaters, by eating things sacrificed to idols; it follows not that an idol has any thing of deity in it, and is to be set upon a level with God, when, as he had said before, an idol was nothing, and what he now said did not at all contradict that; or that things offered to idols are to be had in the same account, or to be equalled to, or be thought to have any thing in them, as the elements of the bread and wine in the Lord's supper, or the sacrifices that were offered by the Israelites on the altar, according to the divine command; he meant no such thing, but only argued from the greater to the lesser, and his sense is more fully declared in the next words.

Ver. 20. *But I say*, &c.] This is my sense and meaning, *that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice unto devils, and not to God:* reference is had to Deut. xxxii. 17. for what the Gentiles sacrificed, though they did not sacrifice intentionally to the idols of gold, silver, wood, and stone, but to God in them, as they pretended; yet inasmuch as in such worship and sacrifices they were directed, instigated, influenced, and assisted by devils, who took up their residence in these idols, and gave forth their oracles from them, they sacrificed to them; and which some have done, as in India and China, professedly and openly, and all other idolaters, eventually, virtually, and covertly: *and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils:* as all wicked men have, in the commission of any lust, sin, or immorality; and as all idolaters have in their superstitious practices, and idolatrous worship; and if grace prevent not, will have to all eternity in everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels; wherefore the apostle would have the Corinthians flee from idolatry, and all appearance of it, and abstain from eating things offered to idols, of which they could

[h] Maimon. Hilch. Erubin, c. 1. sect. 6, 8, 16.

not eat without having fellowship with devils; this he says, to deter them from such practices, which must be very horrible and shocking, and bespeaks in him great care of them, and affection for them.

Ver. 21. *Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils, &c.*] Not only they ought not, but they could not rightly, truly, and really drink the cup of wine in the Lord's supper, in the true faith of Christ's bloodshed, and his sacrifice offered up for them, in remembrance of his love, and to the honour of his name; and also the cup of wine of libations, poured out and drank to the honour of the Heathen deities; these things are utterly inconsistent; no man can serve two masters, God and mammon, or God and Baal; nor is there any concord between Christ and Belial, or agreement between the temple of God and idols: *ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils;* no man can spiritually, however he may externally partake of the entertainment provided, on the table of the Lord, at his supper instituted and kept in commemoration of him; and also with gust and pleasure, and without any concern for the peace of weak minds, and the honour of God, eat things set upon a table in an idol's temple, and before the idol, and as sacrificed unto it.

Ver. 22. *Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? &c.*] As they do who are guilty of idolatry in any shape: nothing is more highly resented by God, or stirs him up more to wrath and fury, and to inflict punishment; he cannot bear, nor will he admit of a rival in religious worship; he is a God jealous of his own honour; nor will he give, or suffer to be given by others, his praise and glory to graven images: *are we stronger than he?* to give into idolatrous practices, is to proclaim and enter into a war against God; and what madness must this be? who can be so sottish and stupid as to think of succeeding? when God is omnipotent, and man a poor feeble impotent creature, a worm, and but dust and ashes: thus the apostle dissuades from idolatry, and every species and branch of it; partly from its ill effect, in bringing men into fellowship with devils; and partly from the impossibility of practising it, in consistence with a true and real participation of the cup and table of the Lord; and from the absurdity and stupidity of it, and its dangerous consequence, in exposing men to the vengeance of an almighty incensed Being.

Ver. 23. *All things are lawful for me, &c.*] All sorts of food are lawful to be eaten, every creature of God is good, there is nothing common or unclean in itself, polluted or polluting; and so things offered to idols may be lawfully eaten, but not as such, or in an idol's temple, or before a weak brother; to do which is contrary to the honour of God, and the edification of the saints: and therefore *all things are not expedient;* to be done always, and in all places, and before all persons. The apostle suggests, that though they might be lawful to him, and he might make use of his liberty in eating them; yet they might not be expedient, or of service, but on the contrary hurtful to others; and which therefore ought to be judged a sufficient reason for the omission of them: *all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not;* though things of an indifferent nature may be lawfully used, yet they don't always tend to the edification of others, which should be consulted; and when this is the case, they ought to be disused. This is observed in answer to an objection taken from the doctrine of Christian liberty, allowing the free use of all the creatures, and disengaging men from an observance of the distinction of meats and drinks which the apostle grants; and yet argues from his own example, and the edification of the saints, that this is not always to be closely pursued; but believers should forego what they have a right to use, when the peace and welfare of their fellow-Christians require it.

Ver. 24. *Let no man seek his own, &c.*] His carnal pleasure and private advantage in eating things sacrificed to *idols*, to the hurt and disadvantage of his brethren; otherwise it is lawful for a man to seek his own good, temporal, spiritual, and eternal, to seek for the necessaries of life, his spiritual peace and comfort, and his everlasting welfare and happiness; but then he should not only seek his own, *but every man another's wealth*, or *that which is another's;* for the word *wealth* is not in the original text. The apostle's meaning is, that a man, in the use of things indifferent, should not seek the gratifying of his sensual appetite or other passions, what may be pleasing or profitable to himself; but should consult the profit and edification of others.

Ver. 25. *Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, &c.*] the word μάκελλον, rendered *shambles*, here used, is a Latin word, and is made use of by Latin writers in the same sense as here, for a place where food was sold[i]. The original of the name is said[k] to be this; one Macellus, a very wicked and profane man, being for his robberies and filthy life condemned to die, a place was built in his house by Æmylius and Fulvius, censors, for selling of provisions, and which from his name was called *Macellum*. The Syriac version retains the word here, and so do the Talmudists, and Rabbins[l] frequently; who say[m], "מקולין, the *shambles*, and the butchers of Israel, though flesh of "them is found in the hand of a stranger, it is free:" into these places the priests sent to be sold what was offered to their idols, which they could not dispense with themselves, or thought not lawful to make use of; for the Egyptians, as Herodotus says[n], used to cut off the heads of their beasts that were sacrificed, and carry them into the market and sell them to the Greeks, and if there were no buyers they cast them into the river. Now the apostle allows, that such meat that was sold in the shambles might be bought and eat of, but not in an idol's temple; there was a difference between an idol's temple, and eating things sacrificed to idols there, and buying them in shambles, and eating them at home: *that eat*, buy, carry home, dress and eat, in your own houses: *asking no question:* whether it was sacrificed to idols, or no: *for conscience-sake;* either a man's own, which may be hurt,

[i] Vid. Suet. Vita Jul. Cæsar, c. 43. & Tiber. Nero, c. 34.
[k] Alex. ab Alex. Genial Dier. l. 3. c. 23.
[l] T. Hieros. Chagiga, fol. 76. 2. T. Bab. Menachot, fol. 29. 2. Bereshit Rabba, fol. 74. 3.
[m] T. Bab. Cholin, fol. 95. 1.
[n] L. 2. c. 39.

wounded, and defiled, by eating contrary to it, should he know that what he eats had been offered to an idol; whereas if he asks no questions, and knows nothing of the matter, his conscience will not be afflicted: or else another man's that may stand by whilst the meat is bought, and sold; and who hearing questions asked and answered, and yet observes the meat, though sacrificed to idols, dressed and ate by the buyer, his conscience being weak, may be offended and grieved.

Ver. 26. *For the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof,* &c.] Which words are taken out of Psal. xxiv. 1. and to be understood of Christ, who by creation and preservation is Lord of the whole earth, and as Mediator has all in his possession; and having broken down the middle wall of partition, gives his people the free use of all creatures, of the beasts of the field, the fowls of the air, the fishes of the sea, and the trees, fruits, and plants of the earth, which are the fulness thereof; and therefore as the saints have a full right from Christ, to make use of all the creatures in a moderate way, and with thankfulness, they need not fear being defiled by any of them; provided they do not act contrary to the honour of God, and in favour of an idol, or against their own conscience, and the peace of weak believers.

Ver. 27. *If any of them that believe not,* &c.] In Christ, and make no profession of faith in him; but are infidels to his person, office, grace, righteousness, Gospel, and ordinances, as there were many such at Corinth: *bid you* to a feast; invite you to dine or sup with them in their own houses: *and ye be disposed to go;* the apostle does not lay any commands upon them to go, or not go, but leaves them to their own will, inclination, and discretion: for as circumstances might be, it might be either proper or improper to listen to an invitation from such a quarter; but if they were inclined, and did think fit to go, which they might without sin; for as it is lawful to trade, so to eat and drink with unbelievers; then his advice is, *whatsoever is set before you, eat, asking no questions for conscience-sake;* that is, as before, as whether it is offered to idols or no; lest either their own, or another's conscience should be hurt thereby.

Ver. 28. *But if any man say unto you,* &c.] Either a weak believer, to prevent the doing of what he thought to be sinful; or the unbeliever, that invites to try the integrity of his Christian guest, and to draw him into a snare: *this is offered in sacrifice unto idols:* the meat that is in that dish, or that portion of food which stands in such a part of the table, came out of an idol's temple, and was sacrificed to idols; which with the Jews were forbidden[*]: for "every thing that came "out of an idol's temple was forbidden, and was "reckoned as the sacrifices of the dead; for it was not "thought possible it could be there, and not offered "to idols:" now when any at the feast, either believer or unbeliever, should thus point at any particular dish, and affirm this of it; then the apostle's advice is, *eat not for his sake that shewed it;* who, if a weak believer, will be grieved and wounded; and if an infidel, will be hardened in his impiety, and be furnished with an opportunity of reproaching the Christians, as variable, insincere, and unfaithful in their religion: *and for conscience-sake;* which is explained in the following verse: *the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof;* which words are neither in the Syriac version, nor in the Vulgate Latin, nor in the Alexandrian copy, and some others, and are thought by some to be added, from ver. 26. though the repetition of them is far from being impertinent; since they contain a very good reason why such a man should abstain from things sacrificed to idols, seeing there is such a plenty and variety of creatures for his use, which he has a right to eat of: and therefore is under no necessity to eat of such sacrifices, nor is it any hardship upon him to forbear the use of them.

Ver. 29. *Conscience I say, not thine own,* &c.] Which is well informed about these things, and is fully persuaded that an idol is nothing, and that things sacrificed to idols are nothing; and as they cannot profit a man, or help forward his comfort, peace, and happiness, so they can't hinder them: *but of the others;* either the weak brother, or the unbelieving master of the feast; 'tis for the sake of their consciences such food must not be eaten, lest either the one should be grieved, or the other reproach: *for why is my liberty judged of another man's conscience?* this is not an objection of the Corinthians, setting forth the unreasonableness of being condemned, for the use of their Christian liberty by another's conscience, be he who he will, believer or unbeliever, when they had an undoubted right to such an use, and their own consciences did not condemn them: but they are the words of the apostle, expressing his own sense, that it was not right and fitting that he should make use of his liberty, and eat under such a circumstance as here pointed out, and so his liberty should be condemned as sinful by another man's conscience; since the weak believer would be apt to censure, judge, and condemn him as a libertine, and the unbeliever as an atheist, or one that had no regard to any religion at all; and therefore he reasons, that it was best to abstain from eating, rather than expose his liberty to such a censure and condemnation.

Ver. 30. *For if I by grace be a partaker,* &c.] Either of Christian liberty, through the grace of God; or of the creatures God has given men to eat of through his goodness, and which are enjoyed by the saints with thankfulness: *why am I evil-spoken of for that for which I give thanks?* that is, why should I expose myself to evil tongues, the blasphemies and reproaches of men, by eating things of this kind, under this circumstance, when there are so many creatures I can use without offence, and be thankful for? or why should my liberty be reproached through an imprudent use of it, for which I have the utmost reason to be thankful? wherefore upon the whole 'tis best to deny one's self in such a case, rather than risk one's character, the glory of God, and the honour of religion.

Ver. 31. *Whether therefore ye eat or drink,* &c.] Which may principally refer to eating things sacrificed to idols, and drinking the libations of wine offered to them, since this is the subject of the apostle's discourse; in doing of which he directs them to have

[*] T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 32. 2.

the glory of God in view, and so to conduct, that that end may be answered: and it may also be applied to common eating and drinking, or to ordinary meals upon food, about which there is no dispute: and which common actions of life are done to the glory of God, when every mercy is considered and owned as coming from him; and when we confess ourselves unworthy of any; and when we ascribe all we have to the free and unmerited goodness of God; and enjoy every mercy of this kind, as a fruit of our father's love to us, as a blessing of the covenant, and as coming to us through the blood of Christ; when we are contented and satisfied with what we have, and act faith continually on God for future fresh supplies, and give thanks for all we receive: and if this, then much more eating and drinking in an ordinance-way should be directed to the glory of God and Christ, as eating the bread, and drinking the wine in the Lord's supper; and which is so done, when it is done in a decent and reverend manner, in the exercise of faith, discerning the Lord's body, eating his flesh, and drinking his blood in a spiritual manner, without dependence on the actions done, and in remembrance of the love of God and Christ. *Or whatsoever ye do;* in a natural, civil, or religious respect, in preaching, hearing, praying, fasting, giving of alms, *&c.* whatever in the closet, in the family, in the church, or in the world, in private, or in public: *do all to the glory of God;* God's glory is the end of all his works and actions: in creation, providence, and grace; in election, in the covenant, in the blessings and promises of it, in redemption, in effectual vocation, and in bringing many sons to glory. The same is the end of all Christ's actions, as man and Mediator, of his doctrines and miracles, of his obedience, sufferings, and death in this world, and of his interceding life in the other; who, as he lives to make intercession for us, lives unto God, to the glory of God; and therefore the glory of God should be the end of all our actions: besides, without this no action can be truly called a good one; if a man seeks himself, his own glory, and popular applause, or has any sinister and selfish end in view in what he does, it cannot be said, nor will it be accounted by God to be a good action. The Jews have a saying much like this, כל מעשיך יהיו לשם שמים, *let all thy works be done to the glory of God* [p]; which one of their commentators [q] explains thus: "even when thou art employed in eating "and drinking, and in the business of life, thou shalt "not design thy bodily profit, but that thou mayest "be strong to do the will of thy Creator."

Ver. 32. *Give none offence, &c.*] Avoid every thing that may be the occasion of offence, of the stumbling and falling of others; whether things indifferent, when they are offensive to weak minds, and grieve, and wound, and stumble them; especially things sinful, which as they offend God, and are therefore called *offences,* so they are offensive to the churches of Christ, and are cognizable by them; they are staggering and stumbling to weak believers, when committed by professors of religion; are the means of inducing others to sin, and of hardening profane sinners in their iniquities, and give occasion to the enemy to blaspheme: but things that are good, and are made our incumbent duty, are not to be avoided, though persons may be offended thereat; such as the pure preaching of the Gospel, the profession of it, and submission to the ordinances thereof; for an offence is either taken or given; to give offence is one thing, which we should carefully avoid; and to take it, when there is no just reason for it, is another, and not to be regarded: *neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God;* which may be considered as having a peculiar respect to the people of God; the two first of these, namely, Jews and Gentiles, being what constituted the first churches, and this at Corinth, so that they may be thought to be the parts, and the church the whole; and the apostle first mentions the one, and then the other, signifying, that they were not to give offence neither to single persons, nor to the whole church; and particularly in the case of eating things offered to idols, care was to be taken that neither Jews nor Gentiles were offended, being both members of the church. Or these may be considered as including all sorts of persons; for Jews and Gentiles include the whole world, and may here mean all that are without, that have no true faith in Christ, nor any spiritual knowledge of him; and *the church,* all such as know him, believe in him, and profess his name: so that the apostle's sense is, that care should be taken that no offence be given to any sort of men, neither to the men of the world, of whatsoever character, nor to professors of religion, and more especially the latter; since offending one of the least of them that believe in Christ, is displeasing to him; and since he was so careful to guard against the offence of them, and will, by his angels, at the last day, gather out of his kingdom all such as offend; and has ordered his churches to mark them which cause offences and divisions; and since it is so hard a thing to reconcile an offended brother, who is harder to be won than a strong castle; though that is not his excellency, yet as it makes the case so difficult, it should be guarded against.

Ver. 33. *Even as I please all men in all things, &c.*] The apostle sets himself as an example, though he was far from being a man-pleaser, in the bad sense of that phrase; nor must these all things, in which he is said to please all men, be taken in the largest sense; but are to be understood of things indifferent, which might be lawfully done or avoided, without breaking the law of God, or contradicting the Gospel of Christ, or any of its rules and ordinances, to all which the apostle was inviolably attached; nor did he in these things seek to please men, but in all to act the part of a faithful servant of Christ, and steward of the mysteries of grace; see ch. ix. 19, 20, 21, 22. Moreover, it is not to be thought that in fact he pleased all men; it is certain he did not; but he studied to please them; he did all that in him lay; he took the most proper methods to do it, though they were sometimes ineffectual. *Not seeking my own profit;* worldly profit and advantage, riches, wealth, the emoluments of life, ease, rest, and pleasure; and chiefly he means the use of liberty in things indifferent; he was willing to forego all for the good of others: *but the profit of many, that they may be saved;* he neglected his own private advantage, and the

[p] Pirke Abot, c. 2. sect. 12.

[q] Bartenora in ib.

gratifying of himself in any thing which was otherwise lawful, when he saw that would be an offence to others, be an hinderance of the Gospel, and deter any from embracing the Christian doctrine; that so he might be the means of promoting the spiritual profit and edification of many souls, that they might be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation. He does not say *all*, but *many*, knowing that all will not be saved, only the elect of God; and whereas he knew not who these were, nor where they lay, he behaved in this manner to all men, that he might be the instrument of the spiritual good and salvation of the chosen ones among them, by preaching the Gospel to them without offence.

CHAP. XI.

In this chapter the apostle blames both men and women for their indecent appearance in public worship, and admonishes them how they should behave, with the reasons of it; and also corrects some abuses and irregularities among them, at, or before, the Lord's supper; which leads him to give a particular account of that ordinance, of the nature, use, and design of it, and some directions about the performance of it, and attendance on it. He begins with an exhortation suitable to what he had said in the latter part of the preceding chapter, to follow him, as he followed Christ, ver. 1. and praises them for their remembrance of him, and for the keeping the ordinances as they were delivered to them; that is, as many of them, and as far as they did so, ver. 2. And in order to make way for what he had on his mind to reprove them for, and admonish them about, he observes, that as God is the head of Christ, and Christ the head of every man, so the man is the head of the woman, ver. 3. wherefore for him to appear, and join in public worship, with his head covered, is to dishonour his head, ver. 4. as, on the other hand, for a woman to have her head uncovered in divine service, is to dishonour her head, it being all one as if her head was shaved, ver. 5. wherefore it is concluded, that if it is a shame for her to be shaved or shorn, she ought to be covered when attending the worship of God, ver. 6. The reason why a man should be uncovered at such a time is, because he is the image and glory of God; and the reason why the woman should be covered is, because she is the glory of the man, is made for his glory, and to be in subjection to him, of which the covering is a token, ver. 7. and that she is so, is argued from the order of the creation, man being not of the woman, but the woman of the man, ver. 8. and from the end of the creation, man being not for the woman, but the woman for the man, ver. 9. Another reason why the woman should be covered at the time of public worship is, because of the angels then present, ver. 10. but lest on this account the woman should be treated with contempt by the man, the apostle observes, that they are not, and cannot be without one another; and that they are from each other in different senses, and both from the Lord, ver. 11, 12. and then proceeds to other arguments, shewing that women should not appear uncovered in the house of God: one is taken from the uncomeliness of it, which must be so judged by every one, ver. 13. and another is taken from nature and custom, and the contrary in men, which is disagreeable and shameful; for, if, by the dictates of nature, it is shameful in men to wear long hair, it must be comely and decent in women, and what is for their glory, to wear such hair, since it is their covering, ver. 14, 15. But if, after all the apostle had said on this subject, there should be any contentious persons disposed to wrangle about it, he observes, that they were not proper persons to be continued in the church, ver. 16. and then proceeds to take notice of some ill conduct of many in the Corinthian church, at, or before, the eating of the Lord's supper; partly through schisms and factions, they meeting in parties for that purpose; which he had heard of, and had reason to believe, and could not praise them for; their coming together in such a manner, being for the worse, and not the better, ver. 18, 19. and the rather he gave credit to this report, since there were heresies among them, which issue in schisms and divisions, and which must be expected, that hereby Christ's faithful ones might be distinguished from others, ver. 19. when he goes on to shew how they abused the ordinance of the supper, not only by meeting together in parties, but by indulging their sensual appetites in eating and drinking, which was the principal end in coming together, and not the Lord's supper, ver. 20. for they stayed not one for another, but one took his supper before the other, and so the one was full, and the other hungry, ver. 21. the evil of which the apostle exposes by observing the indecency of such a conduct, when they had houses of their own to feast in; the contempt which they cast upon the church of God, and the shame they exposed the poor and hungry unto, all which was far from being praiseworthy, ver. 22. upon which he gives a particular account of the Lord's supper, as he had it from Christ himself, the time when, the manner in which it was instituted and celebrated by him, the significancy of its several parts, its use, and end, and the continuance of it until the second coming of Christ, ver. 23, 24, 25, 26. and then he proceeds to shew the evil of an unworthy partaking of this ordinance, how that such are guilty of, and vilify and reproach the body and blood of Christ, ver. 27. wherefore previous to a participation of it a man should examine himself as to his repentance towards God, and faith in Christ, ver. 28. seeing such that are unworthy communicants bring condemnation on themselves, not having spiritual judgment to discern the Lord's body in the ordinance, ver. 29. and so become liable to diseases and death itself, which was the case of several in the Corinthian church, ver. 30. whereas, if persons would but examine and judge of themselves before-hand, they would not be exposed to such judgments, ver. 31. though the people of God, when they are afflicted, should look upon their afflictions, not as punishments, but as chastisements inflicted on them, for this end, that they might not be condemned with the world of the ungodly hereafter, ver. 32. Wherefore the apostle's advice is, that when they came to the Lord's table they would not form

themselves into factions and parties, and one part of them eat before, and separate from the rest, but that they would tarry till they all come together, and then join as one body and one bread, ver. 33. and that if any man was an hungry, he should eat at home, and not have an ante-supper in the house of God, indulging his appetite there to his condemnation, and those that joined with him, ver. 34. and the chapter is concluded with an intimation, that besides these irregularities, there were others in this church which the apostle signifies he would correct, when he should be in person with them.

Ver. 1. *Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.*] These words more properly close the preceding chapter, than begin a new one, and refer to the rules therein laid down, and which the apostle would have the Corinthians follow him in, as he did Christ: that as he sought, both in private and public, and more especially in his ministerial service, to do all things to the glory of God, and not for his own popular applause, in which he imitated Christ, who sought not his own glory, but the glory of him that sent him; so he would have them do all they did in the name of Christ, and to the glory of God by him: and that as he studied to exercise a conscience void of offence to God and man, in doing which he was a follower of Christ, who was holy in his nature, and harmless and inoffensive in his conversation; so he was desirous that they should likewise be blameless, harmless, and without offence until the day of Christ: and that whereas he endeavoured to please men in all things lawful and indifferent, wherein he copied after Christ, who by his affable and courteous behaviour, and humble deportment, sought to please and gratify all with whom he conversed; so he would have them not to mind high things, but condescend to men of low estates, and become all things to all, that they might gain some as he did: and once more, that as he sought not his own pleasure and advantage, but the salvation of others, in imitation of Christ, who pleased not himself, but took upon him, and bore cheerfully, the reproaches of men, that he might procure good for them; so the apostle suggests, that it would be right in them not to seek to have their own wills in every thing, but rather to please their neighbour for good to edification.

Ver. 2. *Now I praise you, brethren,* &c.] The apostle prefaces what he had to say by way of commendation of them; though some think that this is said in an ironical way, because there are many things both in this chapter, and in the following part of this epistle, delivered in a way of reproof; but whoever considers the change of style in ver. 17. will easily see, that this must be spoken seriously here, and is designed to raise the attention to what he was about to say, and to prepare their minds to receive, and take in good part, what he should say by way of rebuke; who could not well be angry when he praised them for what was praiseworthy in them, and reproved them for that which was blamable. The things he commends them for are as follow, *that ye remember me in all things*; that is, either that they were mindful of him, though at a distance from them, and had such a veneration for him, and paid such respect to him, and to his judgment, as to write to him to have his sense about any point of doctrine, or case of conscience which had any difficulty in them; or that they bore in memory the doctrines of the Gospel which he had delivered among them; see ch. xv. 2. The Arabic version reads, *that ye remember my sayings and deeds*; the doctrines he preached among them, and the examples he set them: *and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you*; meaning, among the rest, if not principally, baptism and the Lord's supper, which he received from Christ, and delivered unto them; see ver. 23. and which they, at least many of them, kept and observed in the faith of Christ, from a principle of love to him, and with a view to his glory, and that as to the form and manner in which they were delivered to them by the apostle, agreeably to the mind of Christ; but was the apostle alive now, would, or could he praise the generality of those that are called Christians on this account? no; neither of these ordinances in common are kept as they were delivered: as to baptism, it is not attended to either as to subject or mode, both are altered, and are different from the original institution; and the Lord's supper is prostituted to the vilest of men; and, what is *monstrum horrendum*, is made a test and qualification for employment in civil and military offices under the government.

Ver. 3. *But I would have you to know*, &c.] Though they were mindful of him, and retained in memory many things he had declared among them, and kept the ordinances as delivered to them; yet there were some things in which they were either ignorant, or at least did not so well advert to, and needed to be put in mind of, and better informed about: and as the apostle was very communicative of his knowledge in every point, he fails not to acquaint them with whatsoever might be instructive to their faith, and a direction to their practice: *that the head of every man is Christ*: Christ is the head of every individual human nature, as he is the Creator and Preserver of all men, and the donor of all the gifts of nature to them; of the light of nature, of reason, and of all the rational powers and faculties; he is the head of nature to all men, as he is of grace to his own people: and so he is as the Governor of all the nations of the earth, who whether they will or no are subject to him; and one day every knee shall bow to him, and every tongue confess that he is the Lord of all. Moreover, Christ is the head of every believing man; he is generally said to be the head of the church, and so of every man that is a member of it: he is a common public head, a representative one to all his elect; so he was in election, and in the covenant of grace; so he was in time, in his death, burial, resurrection, and ascension to, and entrance into, heaven; and so he is now as an advocate and intercessor there: he is the political head of his people, or an head in such sense, as a king is the head of his nation: he is also an economical head, or in such sense an head as an husband is the head of his wife, and as a parent is the head of his family, and as a master is the head of his servants; for all these relations Christ sustains: yea, he is a natural head, or is that to his church, as an human head is to an human body: he is a true and proper head, is of the same nature with his body, is in union to it, communicates life to it, is superior to it, and more excellent than it. He is a perfect head, nothing is wanting in him; he knows all his people, and is sen-

sible of their wants, and does supply them; his eye of love is always on them: his ears are open to their cries; he has a tongue to speak to them, and for them, which he uses; and he smells a sweet savour in them, in their graces and garments, though they are all his own, and perfumed by himself: there are no vicious humours in this head, flowing from thence to the body to its detriment, as from Adam to his posterity, whose head he was; but in Christ is no sin, nothing but grace, righteousness, and holiness, spring from him. There's no deformity nor deficiency in him: all fulness of grace dwells in him to supply the members of his body; he is an one, and only head, and an ever-living and everlasting one. *And the head of the woman is the man*. The man is first in order in being, was first formed, and the woman out of him, who was made for him, and not he for the woman, and therefore must be head and chief; as he is also with respect to his superior gifts and excellencies, as strength of body, and endowments of mind, whence the woman is called the weaker vessel; likewise with regard to pre-eminence or government, the man is the head; and as Christ is the head of the church, and the church is subject to him, so the husband is the head of the wife, and she is to be subject to him in every thing natural, civil, and religious. Moreover, the man is the head of the woman to provide and care for her, to nourish and cherish her, and to protect and defend her against all insults and injuries. *And the head of Christ is God*; that is, the father, not as to his divine nature, for in respect to that they are one: Christ, as God, is equal to his father, and is possessed of the same divine perfections with him; nor is his father the head of him, in that sense; but as to his human nature, which he formed, prepared, anointed, upheld, and glorified; and in which nature Christ exercised grace on him, he hoped in him, he believed and trusted in him, and loved him, and yielded obedience to him; he always did the things that pleased him in life; he prayed to him; he was obedient to him, even unto death, and committed his soul or spirit into his hands: and all this he did as to his superior, considered in the human nature, and also in his office-capacity as Mediator, who as such was his servant; and whose service he diligently and faithfully performed, and had the character from him of a righteous one; so that God is the head of Christ, as he is man and Mediator, and as such only.

Ver. 4. *Every man praying or prophesying*, &c.] This is to be understood of praying and prophesying in public, and not in private; and not to be restrained to the person that is the mouth of the congregation to God in prayer, or who preaches to the people in the name of God; but to be applied to every individual person that attends public worship, that joins in prayer with the minister, and hears the word preached by him, which is meant by prophesying; for not foretelling future events is here meant, but explaining the word of God, the prophecies of the Old Testament, or any part of Scripture, unless singing of psalms should rather be designed, since that is sometimes expressed by prophesying: so in 1 Sam. x. 5. *thou shalt meet a company of prophets coming down from the high place, with a psaltery, and a tabret, and a pipe, and a harp before them, and they shall prophesy*. The Targum renders it thus, ויאנן משבחין, *and they shall sing praise*: upon which Kimchi observes, that it is as if it was said, their prophecy shall be שירות, *songs* and praises to God, spoken by the Holy Ghost. So in 1 Sam. xix. 23, 24. it is said of Saul, that he *went on and prophesied*. The Targum is, *he went on*, ומשבח, *and praised*. And again, *he stripped off his clothes also, and prophesied*. Targum, ושבח, *and praised*, or sung praise. Once more, in 1 Chron. xxv. 1, 2, 3. it is said of Asaph, and others, that they *should prophesy with harps, with psalteries, and with cymbals*: which Kimchi explains of Asaph's singing vocally, and of his sons playing upon musical instruments. *Having his head covered*: which, it seems, was the custom of some of them so to do in attendance on public worship: this they either did in imitation of the Heathens[r], who worshipped their deities with their heads covered, excepting Saturn and Hercules, whose solemnities were celebrated with heads unveiled, contrary to the prevailing customs and usages in the worship of others; or rather in imitation of the Jews, who used to veil themselves in public worship, through a spirit of bondage unto fear, under which they were, and do to this day; and with whom it is a rule[s], that "a man might not stand and pray, neither with his "girdle on, ולא בראש מגולה, *nor with his head uncovered*; nor with his feet uncovered." Accordingly 'tis said[t] of Nicodemus ben Gorion, "that he went into "the school grieved, and נתעטף, *veiled himself*, and "stood in prayer;" and a little after that "that he "went into the sanctuary and *veiled* himself, and stood "and prayed;" though the Targum on Jud. v. 2. suggests, "that the wise men sit in the synagogues, "ברישׁ גלי, *with the head uncovered*, to teach the "people the words of the law;" and on ver. 9. has these words, "Deborah in prophecy said, "I am sent "to praise the Scribes of Israel, who when they were "in tribulation did not cease from expounding the "law; and so it was beautiful for them to sit in the "synagogues, *with the head uncovered*, and teach the "people the words of the law, and bless and confess "before the Lord;" but it seems that a different custom had now prevailed; now from this Gentile or judaizing practice, the apostle would dissuade them by observing, that such an one that uses it, *dishonoureth his head*; meaning either in a figurative, spiritual, and mystical sense, his head Christ, in token of the liberty received from him, and because he is above in heaven, and clear of all sin, the head must be uncovered in public worship; or otherwise the reverse is suggested of him, which is highly to dishonour him, and is the sense many interpreters give into: rather the reason should be, because Christ, the believer's head, appears for him in heaven, opens a way of access for him, gives him audience and acceptance in his person, and through his blood and righteousness; and therefore should appear with open face and head uncovered, as a token of freedom and boldness; otherwise he dishonours his head as if his blood and sacrifice were not effectual, and his intercession not prevalent: but the natural head, taken in a literal sense, is rather meant; and the sense is,

[r] Macrob. Saturnal. l. 3. c. 6. Alex. ab. Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 2. c. 14. & 19. & 22.

[s] Maimon. Hilch. Tephilla, c. 5. sect. 5.

[t] T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 20. 1.

that by covering it, it looks as if he was guilty and ashamed, and in subjection; whereas to appear uncovered expresses freedom, boldness, and superiority, like himself, who is the head of the woman: whereas to be covered, as with a woman's veil or hood, is effeminate, unmanly, and dishonourable.

Ver. 5. *But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth,* &c.] Not that a woman was allowed to pray publicly in the congregation, and much less to preach or explain the word, for these things were not permitted them: see 1 Cor. xiv. 34, 35. 1 Tim. ii. 12. but it designs any woman that joins in public worship with the minister in prayer, and attends on the hearing of the word preached, or sings the praises of God with the congregation, as we have seen, the word prophesying signifies, *with her head uncovered.* It may seem strange from whom the Corinthian women should take up this custom, since the Jewish women were not allowed to go into the streets, or into any open and public place, unveiled[c]. It was a Jewish law, that they should go out no where bare-headed[d]: yea, it was reckoned scandalous and ignominious to do so. Hence 'tis said[e], שגלוי הראש גנאי להם, *that uncovering of the head is a reproach to* the daughters of Israel: and concerning the adulterous woman, it is represented as said by the priest[f], "thou hast separated from the way of the "daughters of Israel; for the way or custom of the "daughters of Israel is להיות מכוסות ראשיהן, *to have* "*their heads covered;* but thou hast gone in the *ways of* "*the Gentiles,* who walk with head bare." So that then it should seem that these Corinthians followed the examples of the Heathens: but then, though it might be the custom of some nations for women to go abroad bare-headed; yet at their solemnities, where and when they were admitted, for they were not everywhere, and always, they used to attend with their heads veiled and covered[g]. Mr. Mede takes notice indeed of some Heathen priestesses, who used to perform their religious rites and sacrifices with open face, and their hair hanging down, and locks spreading, in imitation of whom these women at Corinth are thought to act. However, whoever behaved in this uncomely manner, whose example soever she followed, the apostle says, *dishonoureth her head:* not her husband, who is her head in a figurative sense, and is dishonoured by her not being covered; as if she was not subject to him, or because more beautiful than he, and therefore shews herself; but her natural head, as appears from the reason given: *for that is even all one as if she were shaven;* to be without a veil, or some sort of covering on her head, according to the custom of the country, is the same thing as if her head was shaved; and every one knows how dishonourable and scandalous it is for a woman to have her head shaved; and if this is the same, then it is dishonourable and scandalous to her to be without covering in public worship. And this shews, that the natural head of the man is meant in the preceding verse, since the natural head of the woman is meant in this.

Ver. 6. *For if the woman be not covered,* &c.] That is, if her head is not covered with some sort of covering, as is the custom of the place where she lives, *let her also be shorn:* let her hair be cut short; let her wear it as men do theirs; and let her see how she will look, and how she will like that, and how she will be looked upon, and liked by others: every body will laugh at her, and she'll be ashamed of herself: *but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven;* as it is accounted in all civilized nations: the very Heathens[h] speak of it as a thing abominable, and of which there should not be one single dreadful example: then *let her be covered;* with a veil, or any sort of covering in common use.

Ver. 7. *For a man indeed ought not to cover his head,* &c.] The Ethiopic version adds, *whilst he prays;* which is a proper interpretation of the words, though a wrong version; for the apostle's meaning is not, that a man should not have his head covered at any time, but whilst he is in public worship, praying, prophesying, or singing of psalms: the reason is, *forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God.* The apostle speaks of man here as in his first creation, in his state of innocence before his fall; but now he has sinned and defaced this image, and come short of this glory; which lay partly in his body being made after the exemplar of the body of Christ, the idea of which God had in his eternal mind, and according to which he shaped the body of Adam; and partly in his soul, in that righteousness and holiness, wisdom and knowledge, and all other excellent gifts in which it was formed. So the Jews[h] say, the understanding is כבוד השם, *the glory of God.* And it chiefly lay in the power and dominion he had over all the creatures, and even over the woman when made; at least this is principally respected here, in which there is such a shine and representation of the glory and majesty, power and dominion of God; and therefore man ought to worship him with his head uncovered, where this image and glory of God is most illustriously displayed: not but that the woman is the image and glory of God also, and was made as man, after his image and likeness, with respect to internal qualities, as righteousness, holiness, knowledge, &c. and with regard to her power over the other creatures, though in subjection to man; but yet man was first originally and immediately the image and glory of God; the woman only secondarily and mediately through man. The man is more perfectly and conspicuously the image and glory of God, on account of his more extensive dominion and authority: *but the woman is the glory of the man;* being made out of him, and for his help and assistance, and to be a crown of honour and glory to him. The apostle speaks the sense, and in the language of the Jews. The words in Isa. xliv. 13. *After the figure of a man, according to the beauty of a man,* are by the Targum rendered, *after the likeness of a man, after the glory of a woman;* and the note of a famous[i] interpreter of theirs upon the last clause is, *this is the woman,* שהיא תפארת בעלה, *who is the glory of her husband;* but why is she

[c] Maimon. Hilch. Ishot, c. 24. sect. 12.
[d] T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 72. 1.
[e] R. Sol. Jarchi in Numb. v. 19.
[f] Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 9. fol. 193. 2.

[g] Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 4. c. 17.
[g] Vid. Apul. Metamorph. l. 2. p. 21.
[h] Maimon. in Misn. Chagiga, c. 2. sect. 1. 1.
[i] R. Sol. Jarchi in Isa. xliv. 13.

to be covered for this reason, when the man is to be uncovered? it is to be observed, that it is in the presence and worship of God that the one is to be uncovered, and the other covered; the one being the glory of God, and therefore to be uncovered before him; and the other the glory of man, and therefore to be covered before God; and especially, since being first in the transgression, she who is man's glory has been the means of his shame and disgrace. The Jews seem to make this the reason of the difference; they ask[d], "why does a man go out with his head uncovered, and a woman with her head covered? it is answered, it is like to one that has committed a sin, and he is ashamed of the children of men, therefore she goes וראשה מכוסה, *with her head covered.*"

Ver. 8. *For the man is not of the woman,* &c.] In the present state of things, and according to the ordinary course of generation and propagation of mankind, man is of the woman, though not without the means of man; he is conceived in her, bore by her, and born of her: but the apostle respects the original formation of man, as he was immediately made by God out of the dust of the earth, before the woman was in being, and so not of her: *but the woman of the man:* she was made out of his rib, and took both her name and nature from him; God was the author, and man the matter of her being; her original under God, is owing to him; and therefore as he was first in being, he must be superior to her: this serves to prove all that has been as yet said; as that man is the head of the woman, the woman is the glory of man, what he may glory in as being from him; and therefore there should be this difference in their appearance at public worship.

Ver. 9. *Neither was the man created for the woman,* &c.] To be subservient to her; for she was not in being when he was created; and though it is the proper business of man to provide for, take care of, and defend the woman, as the weaker vessel, yet these were not the original ends of his creation; he was made for God, for his service and glory: *but the woman for the man:* to be an help-meet for him, who was already created; to be a companion and associate of his, both in religious worship and in civil life; and for the procreation and education of children.

Ver. 10. *For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head,* &c.] The generality of interpreters, by *power*, understand the veil, or covering on the woman's head, as a sign of the man's power over her, and her subjection to him; which Dr. Hammond endeavours to confirm, by observing that the Hebrew word רדיד, which signifies a woman's veil, or hood, comes from a root which signifies power and dominion; but in that he's mistaken, for the word is derived not from רדה, to rule, govern, or exercise power and authority, but from רדד, to expand, stretch out, or draw over, as a woman's veil is drawn over her head and face. The Greek word ἐξουσία more properly signifies the power she had of putting on and off her covering as she pleased, according as times, places, and persons, made it necessary: *because of the angels;* various are the senses given of these words, some taking them in a proper, others in a figurative sense: some in a proper sense of angels, and these either good or bad. Tertullian[e] understands them of evil angels, and that a woman should cover her head in time of worship, lest they should lust after her; though much rather the reason should be, lest they should irritate and provoke lust in others: but it is better to understand them of good angels, who attend the assemblies of the saints, and observe the air and behaviour of the worshippers; wherefore women should cover their heads with respect to them, and not give offence to those pure spirits, by an indecent appearance: it is agreeable to the notions of the Jews, that angels attend public prayers, and at the expounding of the word; they often speak[f] of an angel, הממונה על התפלות, *that is appointed over prayers:* hence[g] Tertullian seems to have took his notion of an angel of prayer: and of angels being present at expounding of the Scriptures, take the following story[h]; "it happened to Rabban Jochanan ben Zaccai, that he was riding upon an ass, and as he was journeying, R. Eleazar ben Arach was leading an ass after him; he said to him, Rabbi, teach me one chapter in the work of Mercavah (Ezekiel's vision); he replied to him, not so have I taught you, nor in the Mercavah a single man, unless he was a wise man by his own industry: he answered him, Rabbi, give me leave to say one thing before thee, which thou hast taught me; immediately Rabban Jochanan ben Zaccai alighted from his ass and *veiled himself*, and sat upon a stone under an olive-tree; he said to him, Rabbi, why dost thou alight off from the ass? he replied, is it possible that thou shouldst expound in the work of Mercavah, and the Shekinah be with us, ומלאכי השרת מלוין אותנו, *and the ministering angels join us,* and I ride upon an ass?" And a little after, "R. Joshua and R. Jose the priest were walking on the road, they said, yea, let us expound in the work of Mercavah; R. Joshua opened and expounded, and that day was the solstice of Tammuz, and the heavens were thickened with clouds, and there appeared the form of a bow in the cloud, *and the ministering angels gathered together,* ובאין לשמוע, *and came to hear:* as the children of men gather together, and come to see the rejoicings of the bridegroom and bride." Moreover, this veiling of the woman in public worship because of angels, may be an imitation of the good angels, who when they sung the praises of God, and adored and glorified his perfections, covered their faces and their feet with their wings, Isa. vi. 1, 2, 3. Many understanding these words in a figurative sense, and in this also they are not agreed; some by angels think young men are meant, who, for their gracefulness and comeliness, are compared to angels; others good men in general, that attend religious worship; others ministers of the word, called angels often in the book of the *Revelations:* which last seems to be most agreeable of any of these senses; and the women were to cover their

[d] Bereshit Rabba, sect. 17. fol. 15. 1.
[e] De Veland. Virg. c. 7.
[f] Shemot Rabba, sect. 21. fol. 106. 2. Zohar. in Gen. fol. 97. 2.

[g] De Oratione, c. 12.
[h] T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 14. 2.

heads, that they might not offend either of these, or stir up any impure desires in them; see Eccles. v. 6. but as these words follow the account given of the creation of the woman from the man, and for his sake; this may have no reference to her conduct in public worship, but to the power she had of using her covering, or taking it off, or putting it on, at the time of her espousals to a man; which was sometimes done by proxy, or messengers, whom the Jews call שלוחים, *angels*[1]; their canon is, "a man may espouse (a wife) by himself, ובשלוחו, *or by his angel*, "or messenger; and a woman may be espoused by "herself, or by her angel, or messenger:" wherefore because of these angels, or messengers, that came to espouse her to such, she had power over her head to take off her veil, and shew herself, if she thought fit; or to keep it on, as expressing her modesty; or just as she pleased, when she by them was espoused to a man, for whose sake she was made; which sense, after Dr. Lightfoot, many learned men have given into, and seems probable.

Ver. 11. *Nevertheless, neither is the man without the woman*, &c.] This is said, partly to repress the pride and insolence of man, that he might not be too much elated with himself, and his superiority over the woman, and look with any degree of disdain and contempt upon her, and treat her with indifference and neglect; and partly to comfort the woman, that she might not be dejected with the condition and circumstances in which she was, since the one is not without the other; nor can they be so truly comfortable and happy, as not the man without the woman, who was made for an help-meet for him, *so neither the woman without the man in the Lord*. The phrase *in the Lord* is added, to shew that it is the will of God, and according to his ordination and appointment, that the one should not be without the other; or it may design that lawful conjunction and copulation, of one man and one woman together, according to the will of the Lord, which distinguishes it from all other impure mixtures and copulations. The Arabic version reads it, *in the religion of the Lord*; and the sense is, that the one is not without the other in religious worship, and in the enjoyment of religious privileges: that though the woman may not pray publicly and expound the Scriptures, yet she may join in prayer, and hear the word preached, sing the praises of God, and enjoy all ordinances; for in Christ no distinction of sex is regarded, men and women are all one in him, and equally regenerated, justified, and pardoned, and will be glorified together.

Ver. 12. *For as the woman is of the man*, &c.] Originally; so Eve was of Adam, made out of one of his ribs: *even so is the man also by the woman*; now man is born of a woman, he is conceived of one, and brought into the world by one. This is the way in which mankind is propagated, the species preserved, continued, and increased; and therefore there is no reason why the woman should be despised, or the man should be lifted up with himself above her, since they are so dependent upon, and so useful to each other; *but all things of God*. The Arabic version reads it, *all creatures are of God*; which is true, but not the truth of these words, which are to be restrained to the subject of the discourse; as that both the man and the woman are of God; they are made by him, and after his image and likeness; that the man is the glory of God, and the woman the glory of the man; the authority of the man over the woman, and the subjection of the woman to the man, are of God, and according to his constitution and appointment; as also that the woman should be of the man, and for his sake, and that the man should be by the woman, and neither should be without the other: these are not things of human constitution, but are settled by the wise counsel of God, and therefore to be cheerfully submitted to, as the best order of things.

Ver. 13. *Judge in yourselves*, &c.] The apostle having gone through a variety of reasoning and arguments, shewing the superiority of the man to the woman, by which he would prove, that the one should be covered, and the other uncovered, returns to his subject again, and appeals to the common sense and understanding of the Corinthians, and makes them themselves judges of the matter; suggesting that the thing was so clear, and he so certain of what he had advanced being right, that he leaves it with them, not doubting but that they would, upon a little reflection within themselves, join with him in this point: *is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered?* in your judgment you can never think so, however pleasing and gratifying such a sight may be, to the lust of the flesh, and to the lust of the eye; he does not mention prophesying, only instances in praying; but it is to be understood of one, as of another; and his meaning is, that it is an uncomely thing in a woman to appear in public service with her head uncovered, whether it be in joining in the public prayers, or in singing of psalms, or in hearing the word expounded; and though the apostle does not put the case of the man's praying to God, or prophesying in his name with his head covered, yet his sense is the same of that, as of the woman's.

Ver. 14. *Doth not even nature itself teach you*, &c.] By *nature* is either meant, the law and light of nature, reason in man, common sense, or rather custom, which is second nature; and which, in this case, must be restrained to the Greeks and Jews; for though among the Grecians the men cut their hair, and did not suffer it to grow long, as also did the Jews, yet there were many nations[k] who did not, even at that time, observe such a rule or custom; but as the Jews and Greeks were the persons chiefly, if not solely, known to the Corinthians, the apostle signifies, that the usages of these people might direct and inform them in this matter: *that if a man have long hair it is a shame unto him*: he looks unmanly and womanish, and exposes himself to ridicule and contempt.

Ver. 15. *But if a woman have long hair*, &c.] And wears it, without cutting it, as men do: *it is a glory to her*: it is comely and beautiful; it is agreeable to her sex, she looks like herself; it becomes and adorns

[1] Misn. Kiddushin, c. 2. sect. 1.

[k] Alex. ab. Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 5. c. 18. Servius in Virgil. Æneid. l. 10. prope finem.

her: *for her hair is given her for a covering;* not instead of a covering for her head, or any other part of her body, so that she needs no other: we read indeed of the daughter of Nicodemus ben Gorion, that she was obliged to make use of her hair for a covering in such a sense[l]; "it happened to R. Jochanan ben Zaccai that he rode upon an ass, and "went out of Jerusalem, and his disciples went "after him; he saw a young woman gathering bar-"ley-corns out of the dung of the Arabian cattle; "when she saw him, נתעטפה בשערה, *she covered "herself with her hair,* and stood before him:" but this covering was made use of, not of choice, but by force, through her poverty, she having no other; this was not the custom of the nation, nor was the hair given to women for a covering in this sense, nor used by them as such, unless by Eve before the fall; but is rather an indication that they want another covering for their head, it not being so decent that their long hair should be seen. The Jewish women used to esteem it an immodest thing for their hair to be seen, and therefore they took care, as much as possible, to hide it under another covering; "one "woman, whose name was Kimchith, had seven sons, "and they all ministered in the high-priesthood; the "wise men said unto her, what hast thou done, that "thou art so worthy? she replied to them, all my "days the beams of my house never saw קלעי שערי, "*the plaits of my hair*[m];" that is, they were never seen by any person, even within her house.

Ver. 16. *But if any man seem to be contentious,* &c.] That is, if any one will not be satisfied with the reasons given, for men's praying and prophesying with their heads uncovered, and women's praying and prophesying with their heads covered; but will go on to raise objections, and continue carping and cavilling, shewing that they contend not for truth, but victory, can they but obtain it any way; for my part, as if the apostle should say, I shall not think it worth my while to continue the dispute any longer; enough has been said to satisfy any wise and good man, any one that is serious, thoughtful, and modest; and shall only add, *we have no such custom, nor the churches of God;* meaning, either that men should appear covered, and women uncovered in public service, and which should have some weight with all those that have any regard to churches and their examples; or that men should be indulged in a captious and contentious spirit; a man that is always contending for contention-sake, and is continually cavilling and carping at every thing that is said and done in churches, and is always quarrelling with one person or another, or on account of one thing or another, and is constantly giving uneasiness, is not fit to be a church-member; nor ought he to be suffered to continue in the communion of the church, to the disturbance of the peace of it. This puts me in mind of a passage in the Talmud[n]. "The Rab-"bins teach, that after the departure of R. Meir, "R. Judah said to his disciples, don't let the disciples "of R. Meir enter here, מפני שקנתרנין הן, *because "they are contentious.*"

Ver. 17. *Now in this that I declare unto you,* &c.] The Syriac version reads, *this is what I command;* which some refer to what he had been discoursing of, adding to his arguments, and the examples of the church, his own orders and command, that men should worship God publicly, uncovered, and women covered; though it seems rather to respect what follows, what the apostle was about to declare unto them; concerning which he says, *I praise you not;* as he did in ver. 2. that they were mindful of him, remembered his doctrines, and kept the ordinances in the manner he had delivered them to them: and it should seem by this, that the greater part of them were not to be blamed, though some few were, for their irregular and indecent appearance in public worship, men with a covering on their heads, and women without one; but in what he was about to say, he could not praise them at all: *that you come together:* to the house of God, to pray unto him, to sing his praises, to hear his word, and attend his ordinances, particularly the Lord's supper: *not for the better;* for edification and instruction, for the quickening and comforting of your souls; that you may grow in grace and knowledge, become more holy, zealous, fruitful, and useful: *but for the worse;* to indulge luxury and intemperance, to encourage heresies, schisms, and divisions, and so grow more carnal, scandalous, and useless.

Ver. 18. *For first of all, when ye come together in the church,* &c.] The place where the church met together to perform divine service, called *one place,* ver. 20. and is distinguished from their own *houses,* ver. 22. and the first thing he took notice of as worthy of dispraise and reproof, in their religious assemblies, were their animosities and factions: *I hear that there be divisions among you;* schisms and parties, either about their ministers, one being for Paul, another for Apollos, and another for Cephas; or in the celebration of the Lord's supper, and that which went before it, they going into separate bodies, and partook by themselves, and each took his own supper before another, one ate, and another did not. This the apostle had heard from the house of Chloe: *and I partly believe it;* meaning, either that this was the practice of a part of the church to do so, though not of them all; or that part of the report that had been made to him was true; though he hoped in that charity which hopeth all things, that it was not quite so bad as was feared or represented, since things are generally heightened and increased by fame; but yet he had it from such good hands, that he could not but believe there was something in it. So the Syriac version renders it, ומדם מדם, *and something, something I believe.*

Ver. 19. *For there must be also heresies among you,* &c.] This is a reason why he was ready to believe there might be something of truth in the report he had received of the divisions among them; for if there were heresies, false doctrines, and bad principles among them, such as were subversive of the fundamentals of Christianity, as the denial of the resurrection of the dead, *&c.* it was no wonder that there were

[l] T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 66. 2.
[m] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 47. 1.

[n] T. Bab. Nazir, fol. 49. 2. & Kiddushin, fol. 52. 2.

schisms and factions among them, since heresies generally issue in them. These, the apostle says, *must be*; because God has decreed they shall, whose counsel is immutable, and his purpose unalterable: and since this always was the case, that there were false prophets under the former dispensation, it must be expected that false teachers will arise in the churches now, bringing in damnable heresies; and since Satan is always busy to sow the tares of false doctrine; and human nature, being both weak and wicked, is so susceptible thereof, and so easily imposed upon and deceived, it cannot be thought that it should be otherwise; which, by the goodness and wisdom of God, are overruled to a very good purpose: *that they which are approved*; who sincerely believe in Christ, are sound in the faith, and have a well-grounded experience of it; who have themselves tried things that differ, and approve of them that are excellent; and have been tried by others, and found to be sincere, upright, and faithful, and are approved of God and good men: *may be made manifest among you*; by their steadfastness in the faith, their zealous attachment to it, earnest contention for it, and warm and honest vindication of it; and by the departure of those from them who oppose it, and go on the side of error and heresy; by which means it is known who are the sincere followers of the Lamb, in doctrine, discipline, and conversation, and who not.

Ver. 20. *When ye come together therefore into one place*, &c.] Though ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ does not signify so much the unity of the place, as of the persons meeting together, and their conjunction; so the phrase is used by the Septuagint, in Deut. xxv. 11. Josh. xi. 5. yet it supposes a place where the church were wont to assemble for divine worship; *this is not to eat the Lord's supper*: their view in coming together was not so much to celebrate the supper of the Lord, as to partake of their own supper, which was either the paschal supper, or something like it; which many of them *judaizing* observed before the Lord's supper, in imitation of Christ, as they pretended, who first ate the passover, and then instituted the supper. Now there being a great deal of good eating and drinking in this ante-supper, many of them came together for no other end but to partake of that, at least this was their chief view, and not the Lord's supper; or when they did meet together on this account, it was in such an irregular and disorderly manner, and they confounded these suppers together, and behaved so ill at them, and ate the Lord's supper so unworthily, that it could not be rightly called eating of it; or when they had eaten their ante-supper in such an indecent way, neither staying for one another, nor keeping within the bounds of temperance and sobriety; at least having indulged their carnal appetites to such a degree, and raised themselves to such a pitch of gaiety and cheerfulness; it was not fit for them to eat the Lord's supper, to go from such a full meal to the table of the Lord. This was called the Lord's supper, because he was the author of it; and he is the subject of it; and for him, the remembrance of him, it is appointed, kept up, and continued. The Syriac version understands it of the Lord's day, and reads it thus, *when therefore ye meet together, not as is fit for*, or becomes, ליומא דמרן, *the day of our Lord, do ye eat and drink.*

Ver. 21. *For in eating*, &c.] Not at the Lord's table, but at tables spread for them in the place of divine worship, where every one brought his own food, under a pretence that others, particularly the poor, should eat with him; but instead of that, he sat down and ate it himself, and would not stay till the rest came, to eat together: *but every one taketh before other his own supper*: that is, without tarrying till all came together, in order to eat a friendly meal with each other, to encourage and increase brotherly love, one would sit down and fill himself before another came; so that some went without, whilst others had too much; and thus the designed end was not answered, and the whole was a piece of confusion and disorder: *and one is hungry, and another drunken*; he that came late had nothing to eat, and so was hungry; when he that was first either eat and drank to excess, or at least very plentifully, so that he was very cheerful, and more disposed to carnal mirth, than in a serious and solemn manner to partake of the Lord's supper; and who is thought to be the rich man, who brought his own provisions, and ate them himself when he had done; as the poor may be meant by the hungry, who having no food to bring with them, and none being communicated to them by the rich, were in want, and starving; so that here were many abuses justly chargeable on them. Dr. Lightfoot is of opinion, that by him that was *drunken* is meant the Jew that ate the paschal supper, of which he ate and drank freely; and by him that was *hungry*, the Gentile, who was so not out of poverty and necessity, but because he refused and avoided eating of the ante-supper, as savouring of Judaism; and so here was a schism and division among them.

Ver. 22. *What? have ye not houses to eat and drink in?* &c.] This shews that one taking his supper before another, was not in their own houses, before they came to the place of divine worship, but in the house of God; and the apostle suggests, that if they must have their ante-suppers, and were disposed to eat and drink freely, before they partook of the Lord's supper, it was more decent and orderly, and less reflected upon the honour of religion and the ordinances of Christ, to eat and drink in their own houses; in which they were not only more private and retired, but which they had for such purposes; whereas the house of God was not for any such use, nor should they meet together there on such an account; at least, such disorderly, unequal, and intemperate feasts there, were very scandalous and reproachful: and it was contrary to a Jewish canon to eat and drink in the synagogues, which runs thus*, "in the synagogues they don't use "a light behaviour, nor do they eat and drink in "them;" though they sometimes speak of travellers eating and drinking and lodging in the synagogues†, yet they interpret these of places adjoining to them: *or despise ye the church of God*: that is, expose it to

* T. Hieros. Megilla, fol. 74. 1. & T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 28. 1.

† Gloss. in T. Bab. Bava Bathra, & Pesachim, fol. 101. 1. & Gloss. in ib. Maimon. Hilch. Sabbat, c. 29. sect. 6. & Maggid Mishna in ib.

contempt and scorn; meaning either the community, the people of God gathered together in a Gospel church-state; or the place where they met for public worship, which the Ethiopic version calls, *the house of God*: which was rendered very contemptible by such disorderly practices; *and shame them that have not*: no houses to eat in, or supper to eat, or any of this world's goods, or money to purchase food for themselves; who must be confounded and put to shame, when, coming in expectation of being fed, the provisions were eaten up by the rich before they came, or, however, were not allowed to partake when they did come; this was such a respecting of persons, as was justly culpable in them by the apostle.

Ver. 23. *For I have received of the Lord*, &c.] The apostle observes unto them the rule, use, and end of the Lord's supper; his view in it is, to correct the disorders among them, and to bring them to a strict regard to the rule which had such a divine authority instamped upon it; and to observe to them, that in that supper all equally ate and drank; and that the end of it was not a paschal commemoration, but a remembrance of Christ, and a declaration of his sufferings and death. The divine authority of the Lord's supper is here expressed; it was not only instituted by him as Lord, having all power and authority in and over his churches, to appoint what ordinances he pleases; but the plan and form of administration of it were received from him by the apostle. This was not a device of his, nor an invention of any man's, nor did he receive the account from men, no not from the apostles; but he had it by revelation from Christ, either when he appeared to him at his first conversion, and made him a minister of the Gospel; or when he was caught up into the third heaven, and heard things unspeakable and unutterable: *that which also I delivered unto you*; for whatever he received from Christ, whether a doctrine or an ordinance, he faithfully delivered to the churches, from whom he kept back nothing that was profitable, but declared the whole counsel of God unto them: now this he refers the Corinthians to, as a sure rule to go by, and from which they should never swerve; and whatever stands on divine record as received from Christ, and delivered by his apostles, should be the rule of our faith and practice, and such only; *that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed*; or *delivered*; as he was by the determinate counsel and fore-knowledge of God the father, and as he was by himself, who voluntarily gave himself up into the hands of men, justice and death, for our offences; and so the Arabic version reads it here, *in the night in which he delivered up himself*; as he did in the garden to Judas and his company: it was in the night when he came in search of him with officers, and a band of soldiers, and when he betrayed him and delivered him into their hands; and that same night, a little before, our Lord instituted and celebrated the ordinance of the supper with his disciples. The time is mentioned partly with regard to the passover it followed, which was killed in the evening and ate the same night in commemoration of God's sparing the first-born of Israel, when at midnight he destroyed all the first-born of Egypt, and so was a night to be observed in all generations; and because this feast was to be a supper, and therefore it is best to observe it in the evening, or decline of the day. The circumstance of Judas's betraying him is mentioned, not only because it was in the night, and a work of darkness; but being in the same night he instituted the supper, shews the knowledge he had of his death by the means of the betrayer, and his great love to his disciples, his church and people, in appointing such an ordinance in remembrance of him, and his death, when he was just about to leave them: *took bread*; from off the table, out of the dish, or from the hands of the master of the house; an emblem of his body, and of his assumption of human nature; of his taking upon him the nature of the seed of Abraham, of that body which his father prepared for him, in order to its being broken; or that he might in it endure sufferings and death for his people.

Ver. 24. *And when he had given thanks*, &c.] So Luke, ch. xxii. 19. but Matthew, ch. xxvi. 26. and Mark, ch. xiv. 22. say *he blessed*, not the bread, but his father; for to bless and give thanks is one and the same thing with the Jews; so we often read of their blessing for the fruits of the earth, for wine and bread; concerning which they have these rules [f], "he that "*blesseth for the wine*, before food, frees the wine "that is after food; he that blesseth for the dessert "before food, frees the dessert after food; ברך על "הפת, *he that blesseth for the bread*, frees the dessert, "for the dessert does not free the bread;" or excuse from a blessing for that again; "if they sit at eating, "every one blesses for himself; if they lie (upon "couches) אחד מברך לכלם, *one blesses for them all*; "when wine is brought to them whilst they are eat-"ing, every one blesses for himself: if after food, *one* "*blesses for them all*;" our Lord conformed to these rules, he blessed and gave thanks for the bread separately, and he afterwards blessed, or gave thanks for the wine; and as he and his disciples lay at table, he blessed and gave thanks for them all; for this is not to be understood of any consecration of the bread by a certain form of words, changing its nature and property, and converting it into the body of Christ; but either of asking a blessing of his father upon it, that whilst his disciples were eating of it, their faith might be led to him, the bread of life, and to his broken body, and spiritually feed and live on him, and receive spiritual nourishment from him; or else of giving thanks to his father for what was signified by it, for the true bread he gave unto his people, meaning himself; and for that great love he shewed in the gift and mission of him; and for the great work of redemption, and all the benefits of it he had sent him to procure, and which were just on finishing; and for all the might, strength, and assistance, he gave to him as man and Mediator, in completing the business of salvation for his people; which was the joy set before him, and which filled his heart with pleasure and thankfulness; both these senses may be joined together, and may direct us as to the matter of blessing and giving thanks at

[f] Misn. Beracot, c. 6. sect. 5, 6.

the supper; for no form of words is pointed out to us; what were the express words our Lord used we know not: *he brake it;* as a symbol of his body being wounded, bruised, and broken, through buffetings, scourgings, platting of a crown of thorns, which was put upon his head, and piercing his hands and feet with nails, and his side with a spear; for which reason the right of breaking the bread in this ordinance ought literally and strictly to be observed: Christ himself took the bread and brake it, denoting his willingness to lay down his life, to suffer and die in the room of his people; and this action of breaking the bread was used in order to be distributed, and that every one might partake, as all the Israelites did at the passover, and not as these Corinthians at their ante-suppers, when one was full and another hungry; but Christ broke the bread, that every one might have a part, as every believer may and ought, who may eat of this bread, and drink of the wine, and feed by faith on Christ, and take every blessing procured by him to themselves: *and said, take, eat:* that is, to his disciples, to whom he gave the bread, when he had took and given thanks and brake it, bidding them take it; receive it into their hands, as an emblem of their receiving him, and the blessings of his grace in a spiritual sense, by the hand of faith; and *eat* the bread put into their hands, as a symbol of their eating and living by faith on Christ as crucified, as having loved them, and given himself for them: *this is my body:* in opposition to, and distinction from, גופו של פסח, *the body of the passover*, as the lamb was called [*]; meaning not his mystical body the church, of which he is head, though this is one bread, and one body, ch. x. 17. but his natural body, and that not properly, as if the bread was really changed into it; for the bread in the supper, after the blessing over it, and thanks given for it, retains its same nature, properties, form, and figure, only is set apart for the use of commemorating the broken body of Christ; and therefore this phrase is to be understood in a figurative sense, that it was a sign and seal of his body; it being broken into pieces represented his wounds, bruises, sufferings, and death; just in such sense as the rock is said to be Christ, in ch. x. 4. not that that was really Christ, but was a type and sign of him: which is *broken for you:* for though a bone of him was not broken, but inasmuch as his skin and flesh were torn and broke by blows with rods and fists, by whippings and scourgings, by thorns, nails, and spear; and body and soul were torn asunder, or divided from each other by death; and death in Scripture is expresed by שבר, *breaking:* see Jer. xix. 11. his body might be truly said to be broken, and that for his people; not merely to confirm his doctrine, or set an example of patience, or only for their good; but in their room and stead, as their surety and substitute: *this do in remembrance of me;* signifying that it was not a passover-commemoration, or a remembrance of the Israelites going out of Egypt; which because done in the night, as that was, and following upon the passover, the judaizing Christians among the Corinthians took it to be in remembrance of that; having imbibed that notion which the Jews then had, and still retain, that their deliverance from Egypt will be remembered in the days of the Messiah [1]; "מזכירין, *they commemorate* the going out of Egypt in the nights; says R. "Eleazer ben Azariah, lo, I am about seventy years "of age, and I never was worthy to say, that the going "out of Egypt was recited in nights, till Ben Zoma "expounded what is said, Deut. xvi. 3. *that thou "mayest remember the day when thou camest forth out of "the land of Egypt; all the days of thy life; days of "thy life*, mean days; *all the days of thy life*, nights; "but the wise men say, *the days of thy life;* mean "this world, and *all the days of thy life* include the days of the Messiah:" now the apostle mentions these words of our Lord, to shew that the design of the institution of this ordinance of the supper was not in commemoration of the deliverance of the Jews out of Egypt; but it was in remembrance of himself, of what he did and suffered on the behalf of his people: particularly the eating of the bread was intended to bring to remembrance how the body of Christ was wounded, bruised, and broken for them; how he bore their sins in his own body on the tree, and suffered, and made satisfaction for them; and which was spiritual food for their faith when they reflected on it, and could not fail of bringing to their remembrance the love of Christ in all, when this was the case.

Ver. 25. *After the same manner also he took the cup,* &c.] That is, off from the table, or out of the hands of the master of the house, and blessed or gave thanks, as he did before when he took the bread; see Matt. xxvi. 27. Mark xiv. 23. *when he had supped:* the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, read, *when they had supped;* which give a true sense, though not a literal translation; for both Christ and his disciples had supped, having both eaten the passover-supper, and the bread, the principal part in the Lord's supper, when he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them: *saying, this cup is the New Testament,* or *covenant, in my blood;* alluding to the old covenant, which was ratified and confirmed by the blood of bulls, and which was called *the blood of the covenant*, Exod. xxiv. 8. but the new covenant was established with Christ's own blood, of which the wine in the cup was a sign and symbol; for neither the cup, nor the wine in it, can be thought to be the covenant or testament itself, by which is meant the covenant of grace, as administered under the Gospel dispensation; called *new*, not because newly made, for it was made from everlasting; or lately revealed, for it was made known to our first parents immediately after the fall, and to other saints in succeeding ages, though more clearly exhibited by Christ under the present dispensation; but it is so called in distinction from the old covenant, or former mode of administration of it, under the Mosaic economy; and it is always new, and will be succeeded by no other; and it provides for and promises new things, and which are famous and excellent, and preferable to all others. Now this is said to be *in the blood* of Christ; that is, it is ratified, and all its blessings and promises are con-

[*] Misn. Pesachim, c. 10. sect. 3.

[1] Misn. Beracot, c. 1. sect. 5.

firmed by his blood: hence his blood is called *the blood of the everlasting covenant*, Heb. xiii. 20. pardon and righteousness, peace and reconciliation, and entrance into the holiest of all, all come through this blood, and are secured by the same; and to which the faith of the saints is directed in this ordinance, to observe, receive, and enjoy for themselves: *this do ye as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me*: of his soul's being poured out unto death; of his blood being shed for the remission of sins; and of his great love in giving himself an atoning sacrifice to divine justice, and laying such a foundation for solid peace and joy in the hearts of his people.

Ver. 26. *For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup*, &c.] Not any bread, or any cup: but what is ate and drank in an ordinance-way, and according to the institution and appointment of Christ, and with a view to the end proposed by him; and though there is no set fixed time for the administration of this ordinance, yet this phrase seems to suggest that it should be often: and very plainly signifies, that the bread and wine, after the blessing or thanksgiving, remain such, and are not converted into the real body and blood of Christ; but are only outward elements representing these to faith; *ye do shew the Lord's death till he come*: or rather, as it may be rendered in the imperative mood, as an exhortation, direction or command, *shew ye the Lord's death till he come*; since every one that eats and drinks at the Lord's table does not shew forth his death, which is the great end to be answered by it: for the design of the institution of it is to declare that Christ died for the sins of his people: to represent him as crucified; to set forth the manner of his sufferings and death, by having his body wounded, bruised, and broken, and his blood shed; to express the blessings and benefits which come by his death, and his people's faith of interest in them; and to shew their sense of gratitude, and declare their thankfulness for them; and all this, *till he come*: which shews the continuance of this ordinance, which is to last till Christ's second coming, when the carnal ordinances of the former dispensation were shaken and removed; and also the continuance of Gospel ministers to the end of the world, to administer it, and of churches to whom it is to be administered: this assures of the certainty of Christ's second coming; as it leads back to his coming in the flesh, suffering and dying in our stead, and thereby obtaining redemption for us; it leads forward to expect and believe he will come again, to put us into the full possession of the salvation he is the author of; when there will be no more occasion for this ordinance, nor any other, but all will cease, and God will be all in all. The apostle here refers to a custom used by the Jews in the night of the passover, to shew forth the reason of their practice, and that institution to their children; when either [u] "the son asked the father, or if the son "had not understanding (enough to ask), then the father taught him, saying, how different is this night "from all other nights? for in all other nights we "eat leavened and unleavened bread, but in this "night only unleavened; in all other nights we eat the "rest of herbs, but in this night bitter herbs; in all other "nights we eat flesh roasted, broiled, and boiled, "in this night only roasted; in all other nights we "wash once, in this night twice; and as elsewhere [w] "'tis added, in all other nights we eat sitting or lying, "in this night all of us lie; and according to the capacity of the child, the father teaches him:" particularly, he was to inform him what these several things shewed forth, or declared [x]; as that "the passover "מגיד, *declared*, or *shewed forth*, that the Lord passed "over the houses of our fathers in Egypt; the bitter "herbs *shewed forth*, that the Egyptians made the lives "of our fathers bitter in Egypt; and the unleavened "bread *declared* that they were redeemed: and all "these things are called הגדה, *the declaration*, or *shewing forth*:" and there is a treatise called הגדה של פסח, *the shewing forth of the passover*; in which, besides the things mentioned, and many others, 'tis observed [y], that it was commanded the Jews לספר, *to declare* the going out of Egypt, and that every one that diligently declares the going out of Egypt, is praiseworthy: now the apostle observes this end of the Lord's supper, to shew forth his death, in opposition to the notion of the *judaizing* Christians at Corinth, who thought of nothing else but the shewing forth of the passover, and the declaration of that deliverance and redemption wrought for the people of Israel; whereas the true and only intent of it was to shew forth the death of Christ, redemption by him, and the greatness of his love expressed therein, and which is to be continued till his second coming; whereas the time was come when it should *be no more said, the Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt*, Jer. xvi. 14.

Ver. 27. *Wherefore*, &c.] Since this is the plain institution of the Lord's supper, the form and manner of administering of it; and since the bread and wine in it are representations of the body and blood of Christ, and the design of the whole is to remember Christ, and shew forth his death; it follows, that *whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord*. The bread and cup are called *the bread* and *cup of the Lord*; because ate and drank in remembrance of him, being symbols of his body and of his blood, though not they themselves; these may be eaten and drank *unworthily*, when they are eaten and drank by unworthy persons, in an unworthy manner, and to unworthy ends and purposes. The Lord's supper may be taken unworthily, when it is partook of by unworthy persons. This sense is confirmed by the Syriac version, which renders it ולא שוא לה, *and is not fit for it*, or is unworthy of it, and so the Ethiopic version; now such are all unregenerate persons, for they have no spiritual life in them, and therefore can't eat and drink in a spiritual sense; they have no spiritual light, and therefore can't discern the Lord's body; they have no spiritual taste and relish, no spiritual hungerings and thirstings, nor any spiritual appetite, and can receive no spiritual nourishment, or have any spiritual communion with Christ; and so are all such persons, who, though they may profess to be penitent ones, and be-

[u] Misn. Pesach. c. 10. sect. 4. Haggadah Shel. Pesach. p. 5.
[w] Maimon. Chametz Umetzah, c. 8. sect. 2.

[x] Moses Kotsensis Mitzvot Tora prec. aff. 41.
[y] P. 5, 6. Ed. Rittangel. & Seder. Tephillot. Ed Basil. fol. 242. 1.

lievers in Christ, and to have knowledge of him, and love to him; and yet they have not true repentance, neither do they bring forth fruits meet for it, and so as they are improper subjects of baptism, they are unworthy of the Lord's table; nor have they faith in Christ, at least only an historical one, and so cannot by faith eat the flesh, and drink the blood of the son of God, nor perform the ordinance in a way well-pleasing to God; nor have they any spiritual knowledge of Christ, only what is speculative and notional, and so cannot discern the Lord's body; nor any real love to him, and therefore very improper persons to feed on a feast of love; nor can they affectionately remember Christ, or do what they do from a principle of love to him, and therefore must be unworthy receivers: as likewise are all such professors, whose lives and conversations are not as become the Gospel of Christ; such crucify Christ afresh, and put him to open shame, and are therefore unfit to shew forth his crucifixion and death; they bring a reproach on the Gospel and ordinances of Christ, and cause his name, and ways, and truths to be blasphemed, and grieve the members of the churches of Christ, and therefore ought not to be admitted to the table of the Lord: indeed, no man is in himself worthy of such an ordinance, none but those whom Christ has made so by the implantation of his grace, and the imputation of his righteousness; and whom he, though unworthy in themselves, invites and encourages to come to this ordinance, and to eat and drink abundantly. Moreover, this ordinance may be attended upon in an unworthy manner; as when it is partook of ignorantly, persons not knowing the nature, use, and design of it; or irreverently, as it was by many of the Corinthians, and it is to be feared by many others, who have not that reverence of the majesty of Christ, in whose presence they are, and who is both the author and subject of the ordinance; or without faith, and the exercise of it on Christ, the bread of life, and water of life; or unthankfully, when there is no grateful sense of the love of God in the gift of his son, nor of the love of Christ, in giving himself an offering and sacrifice for sin; or when this feast is kept with the leaven of malice and wickedness, and with want of brotherly love, bearing an ill will to, or hatred of, any of the members of the church. To all which may be added, that this bread and cup are ate and drank unworthily, when they are partook of to unworthy ends and purposes; as to qualify for any secular employment, and to gain any worldly advantage; or to be seen of men, and to be thought to be devotional and religious persons; or to commemorate any thing besides Christ, as the *judaizing* Corinthians did the *paschal* lamb; or to procure eternal life and happiness thereby, fancying that the participation of this ordinance gives a meetness for, and a right to glory: now such unworthy eaters and drinkers are *guilty of the body and blood of the Lord*: not in such sense as Judas, Pontius Pilate, and the people of the Jews were, who were concerned in the crucifixion of his body, and shedding of his blood, the guilt of which lies upon them, and they must answer for another day; nor in such sense as apostates from the faith, who, after they have received the knowledge of the truth, deny it, and Christ the Saviour; and so crucify him afresh, and put him to open shame, count the blood of the covenant a common or unholy thing, and tread under foot the son of God; at least, not every unworthy receiver of the Lord's supper is guilty in this sense; though there might be some among the Corinthians, and is the reason of this awful expression, who looked upon the body and blood of Christ as common things, and made no more account of them than of the body and blood of the passover lamb; but in a lower sense, every unworthy communicant, or that eats and drinks unworthily, may be said to be guilty of the body and blood of Christ, inasmuch as he sins against, and treats in an injurious manner, an ordinance which is a symbol and representation of these things; for what reflects dishonour upon that, reflects dishonour on the body and blood of Christ, signified therein.

Ver. 28. *But let a man examine himself, &c.*] Whether he has a true sense of sin, sorrow and repentance for it; otherwise he will see no need of a Saviour, nor will he look to Christ for salvation, or be thankful to him for redemption by him; all which are necessary in a due observance of this ordinance; also, whether he is in the faith, whether he is a partaker of the true grace of faith, which is attended with good works, and shews itself by love to Christ, and to the saints; whereby a man goes out of himself to Christ for spiritual food and strength, peace and comfort, righteousness, life, and salvation; and by which he receives all from Christ, and gives him all the glory: this is absolutely necessary to his right and comfortable partaking of the Lord's supper, since without faith he cannot discern the Lord's body, nor, in a spiritual sense, eat his flesh, and drink his blood, nor attend on the ordinance in a manner acceptable unto God. Let him also examine and try whether he is sound in the doctrine of faith; or let him prove himself to be so, or shew that he is one that is approved thereby; to whom the word of faith has come with power, and who has received it in the love of it, and firmly believes it; since an heretic is to be rejected from the communion of the church, and to be debarred the ordinances of it: let him examine himself, whether Christ is in him, whether he is revealed to him, and in him, as God's way of salvation, and the hope of glory; whether he is formed in his soul, his spirit put, and his grace implanted there; since if Christ is not within, it will be of no avail to partake of the outward symbols of his body and blood. But if a man, upon reflection, under the influence and testimony of the spirit, can come to a satisfaction in these things, however mean and unworthy he may seem in his own sight, let him come to the table of the Lord, and welcome. *And so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup*: none should discourage or hinder him; nor should he deprive himself of such a privilege, to which he has an undoubted right. There seems to be an allusion in these words to what the master of the family used at the passover, when he said [*], "every one "that is hungry, ייתי ויכול, *let him come and eat*, and "every one that hath need or ought, let him keep the "passover."

Ver. 29. *For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily,*

[*] Haggadah Shel Pesach, p. 4.

&c.] As before explained, ver. 27. *eateth and drinketh damnation to himself;* or guilt, or judgment, or condemnation; for by either may the word be rendered; nor is eternal damnation here meant; but with respect to the Lord's own people, who may through unbelief, the weakness of grace, and strength of corruption, behave unworthily at this supper, temporal chastisement, which is distinguished from condemnation with the world, and is inflicted in order to prevent it, ver. 32. and with respect to others it intends temporal punishment, as afflictions and diseases of body, or corporeal death, as it is explained in ver. 30. This they may be said to eat and drink, because their unworthy eating and drinking are the cause and means of it. Just as Adam and Eve might be said to eat condemnation to themselves and posterity, because their eating of the forbidden fruit was the cause of it. So the phrase, *does not eat condemnation,* is used in the Persic version of John iii. 18. for *is not condemned.* And let it be observed, that such an one is said to eat and drink this judgment or condemnation *to himself,* and not another; he is injurious to nobody but himself: this may serve to make the minds of such easy, who are not so entirely satisfied with some persons who sit down with them at the Lord's table, when they consider that it is to their own injury, and not to the hurt of others they eat and drink: *not discerning the Lord's body.* This is an instance of their eating and drinking unworthily, and a reason why they eat and drink condemnation to themselves, or contract guilt, or expose themselves either to chastisement or punishment; because they distinguish not the Lord's supper from an ordinary and common meal, but confound them together, as did many of the Corinthians, who also did not distinguish the body of Christ in it from the body of the paschal lamb; or discern not the body of Christ, and distinguish it from the bread, the sign or symbol of it; or discern not the dignity, excellency, and usefulness of Christ's body, as broken and offered for us, in which he bore our sins on the tree, and made satisfaction for them; a commemoration of which is made in this ordinance.

Ver. 30. *For this cause many are weak and sickly,* &c.] Because of their unworthy participation of the Lord's supper, many in the Corinthian church were attended with bodily infirmities and diseases; either by way of fatherly chastisement and correction in such who were truly the Lord's people, though they had behaved unworthily; or by way of punishment to such who were not, and had sinned very grossly: *and many sleep:* that is, die a corporeal death, which is often in Scripture signified by sleep, and frequently used of the saints, and their death, and may intend and include some of them here; for though the Lord might resent so far their unworthy conduct and behaviour at his table, as to remove them out of this world by death, yet their souls may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

Ver. 31. *For if we would judge ourselves,* &c.] Examine, try, and prove ourselves as above directed, before we eat and drink; or condemn ourselves, by confessing, acknowledging, and mourning over sin, and by repentance for it; or separate ourselves from the company of profane sinners, come out from among them, and touch not their unclean things; or join with them in their unfruitful works of darkness: *we should not be judged;* by the Lord; he would not inflict these diseases, sicknesses, and death.

Ver. 32. *But when we are judged,* &c.] This is said by way of consolation to the saints, that when the hand of the Lord is upon them, and he is afflicting them, they should consider these things, not as the effects of his vindictive wrath and justice, as proper punishments for their sins, but as fatherly chastisements for their good: *we are chastened of the Lord;* as children by a father, in love and kindness, in order to bring to a sense of sin, repentance for it, and acknowledgment of it, and behave the better for the future: *that we should not be condemned with the world;* the world of ungodly men, the men of the world, carnal, worldly, and Christless sinners. There is a world, a multitude of them that will be condemned. So far has Christ been from dying for the redemption and salvation of every individual person in the world, that there is a world of men that will be righteously condemned at the last day. Now the present afflictions and chastisements of the saints are laid upon them, and blessed to them for their spiritual good, that they may not be adjudged to the second death, to everlasting fire, to endless damnation, or be punished with everlasting destruction along with them.

Ver. 33. *Wherefore, my brethren,* &c.] Though he had said some very awful and awakening things to bring them to themselves, to reclaim them, and rectify disorders among them; yet he hoped well of them in general, and softens the severe things he had said, by calling them *brethren;* and hereby prepares them to attend to, and receive the more kindly, what he had further to say: *when ye come together to eat;* that is, when ye come to the place of public worship at the usual stated time, in order to eat the Lord's supper, *tarry one for another;* don't begin to celebrate the ordinance until the church is met together in general, or at least till as many are got together as may be expected will come; for a church is not obliged to tarry for every individual person; nor can it be thought that every member can attend, there being various providences which may detain them: the apostle's view is to promote unity, Christian respect, and brotherly love in the ordinance; that they would sit down and join together, according to the rule of Christ, without respect to persons, or going into parties, factions, and divisions.

Ver. 34. *And if any man hunger let him eat at home,* &c.] Whereby the apostle shews his dislike of their ante-suppers in the place of public worship, at which they behaved in so indecent a manner, neglecting the poor, and too freely indulging themselves; and therefore if any one was hungry, and could not wait till the Lord's supper was over, let him eat at home before he come to the place of worship, and satisfy his appetite, that he might with more ease and decency attend the table of the Lord: *that ye come not together unto condemnation or judgment;* that is, that you may so behave when ye come together, that you may not bring upon you the judgment of the Lord, either by way of punishment or chastisement; that is to say, bodily diseases or death. *And the rest will I set in order when I come;* meaning, not doctrines of faith, but things respecting ecclesiastical order and polity, which were amiss among them.

CHAP. XII.

In this chapter the apostle discourses concerning spiritual gifts, shewing the author, nature, use, and excellency of them; compares the church to an human body, and in a beautiful manner sets forth the symmetry and subserviency of the members of it to one another, being set in different places, and having different gifts; and enumerates the several offices and gifts in the church, and yet suggests there is something more excellent than them. He intimates, that spiritual gifts are valuable things, and should be taken notice of; nor would he have the saints ignorant of them, and therefore gives the following account, ver. 1. and yet he would not have those that have them be proud of them, and lifted up with them; for which reason he puts them in mind of their former state in Heathenism, to make and keep them humble, ver. 2. and points out such who have the spirit of God, the author of all gifts and grace; not such who call Jesus accursed, but they that call him Lord, ver. 3. which Holy Ghost, who is called Spirit, Lord, and God, is the author of the different gifts bestowed upon men, ver. 4, 5, 6. the end of bestowing which gifts is the profit of others, ver. 7. of which gifts there is an enumeration in nine particulars, ver. 8, 9, 10. of each of which the spirit of God is the worker and giver, according to his sovereign will and pleasure, ver. 11. and which are all for the good of the whole community; which is illustrated by the simile of an human body, which as it consists of many members, and is but one, so Christ mystical, or the church, though it consists of divers persons, yet they are all one in Christ, and all their gifts are for the service of each other, ver. 12. which unity is proved and confirmed by the saints being baptized by one spirit into one body, the church, and by drinking of him, or partaking of the same grace, ver. 13. and in order to shew the usefulness and profit of every spiritual gift, even the meanest, to the churches of Christ, and that none might be despised, he enlarges upon the metaphor of the human body he had compared the church to, and by it illustrates the unity of the church, and the members of it, ver. 14. and shews that the inferior members should not envy the superior ones, or be dejected because they have not the same gifts: and conclude from hence, that they are not, or deserve not, to be of the same body, ver. 15, 16. seeing it is convenient and absolutely necessary that there should be many members, and these set in different places, and have different gifts and usefulness; and particularly what should make them easy is, that God has placed them according to his will and pleasure, ver, 17, 18, 19, 20. And, on the other hand, he shews, that the more noble, and excellent, and useful members, ought not to despise the lower, meaner, and more ignoble ones, partly because of the usefulness and necessity of them, they can't do without them, ver. 21, 22. and partly because of the honour put upon them, ver. 23, 24. and all this is so ordered, that there be no schism, but that there should be a mutual care of one member for another, and that they should sympathize with each other, ver. 25, 26. This simile the apostle more plainly and particularly accommodates and applies to the church, the body of Christ, and the members of it, and of one another, ver. 27. and gives an enumeration of the several officers and offices in the church, set there by God himself; and there are no less than eight of them, some greater than others, most of them proper and peculiar to the primitive church, though some perpetual, and which still continue, ver. 28. but in the times in which they were all of them in being and use, every member of the church was not possessed of them, only some, though all had more or less the advantage of them, ver. 29, 30. Wherefore, he concludes with an exhortation to the saints to covet the best of those gifts; and yet observes that there was something more excellent than them, and preferable to them, which he was about to shew them, ver. 31. and hereby he makes an easy transition to the next chapter, in which he recommends charity, and prefers it to gifts.

Ver. 1. *Now concerning spiritual gifts*, &c.] Though the word *gifts* is not in the original text, 'tis rightly supplied by our translators, as it is in the Arabic version: for the apostle does not mean spiritual graces, nor spiritual words, or doctrines, nor spiritual meats and drinks; nor spiritual men, each of which are mentioned before in this epistle; though the latter is thought by some to be here intended, and that the apostle's view is to shew the difference between those that are spiritual, and those that are not; but as spiritual gifts are the subject of the apostle's discourse throughout this chapter, and the two following, they seem very manifestly to be designed here. The apostle having gone through various heads of discourse, which he either of himself, or at the request of others, wrote upon, proceeds to a new subject, that of spiritual gifts, which he seems to have been desired to give his thoughts upon, and advice about; since there were some in this church who were discouraged, because they had not the gifts which some had; and others that had them were elated and puffed up with them, and treated those below them with neglect and contempt; and with a view to both these the apostle writes as follows, *brethren, I would not have you ignorant:* neither of the author of these gifts, who is the spirit of God, who dispenses them according to his sovereign will and pleasure, and not according to the deserts of men, and are not acquired by the industry, or through the merit of any, but are his free-grace gifts; nor of the nature of them, for there are differences and diversities of them, some have one, and some another, but no man all; nor of the design and use of them, which is the edification of the whole body; and every gift, though ever so mean, is of service; and therefore as, on the one hand, none ought to be discouraged, so, on the other hand, none should be lifted up with pride, or give way to a boasting spirit.

Ver. 2. *Ye know that ye were Gentiles*, &c.] That is, by religion; hence the Syriac version renders it [illegible], *profane* persons, given up to wickedness, bigotry, and superstition; for by nation they were Gentiles still;

and which must be understood of one part of this church only; for some of them were Jews, as is clear from many passages in the epistle to this church, and practices referred to. This the apostle observes to humble them, by putting them in mind of what they had been formerly; they were born and brought up in the Heathen religion, when they knew not the true God, much less had any knowledge of Christ, and still less of the spirit of God; and therefore if they were favoured with any of his gifts, these must be owing to his grace, and not to their deserts, and therefore they ought not to glory: he adds, with the same view, *carried away unto these dumb idols:* to idols that were nothing in the world, had no divinity in them, as he had before asserted; to dumb ones, that had mouths, but could not speak, the oracles that were delivered from them, being spoken not by them, but were either satanical delusions, or the jugglings of a priest; to these they were carried by the power of Satan, the influence of their priests, and the orders of their magistrates, to consult them as oracles, to pay their devotions to them, and do them service: *even as ye were led;* that is, to these dumb idols; the Syriac adds, דלא פורשן, *without any difference*, not being able to distinguish between these and the true God; and to whom they were led as brute beasts were, that were sacrificed unto them, or as blind men are led by the blind, as they were by their blind and ignorant priests; and therefore, if they had now received the spirit, and his gifts, they ought to ascribe the whole to the free grace of God, and be humble under a sense of their unworthiness.

Ver. 3. *Wherefore I give you to understand, &c.*] Or *I make known unto you:* what I am about to say are certain truths, and to be depended on, *that no man speaking by the spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed;* or *anathema*, as did the unconverted Gentiles, who knew nothing of Jesus but by report; which report they had from the Jews, his enemies; and by that report he appeared to them to be a very wicked and detestable person, who was put to death by the means of his own countrymen, was hanged upon a tree, and so to be counted and called accursed; the apostle seems to have reference to the sense these Corinthians had of Jesus, and what they called him before their conversion; whence it appeared that they spoke not by, nor were they possessed of the spirit of God then, and therefore their having of him now was an instance of pure grace; or else respect is had to the Jews, who not only, whilst Jesus was living, blasphemed him, but continued to call him accursed after his death, whilst they were in their own land; and after the destruction of their city and temple, they continued, as Justin Martyr observes[a] to Trypho the Jew, to *curse* Christ, and them that believed in him; and to this day privately call him by such names as will hardly bear to be mentioned, were it not for the explanation of such a passage: thus they[b] call him ישו—עית, *Jesus the perverse*, or he that perverteth the law of God; and *Jesu*, the name they commonly give him, they say is the abbreviation of ימח שמו וזכרו, *let his name and memory be blotted out;* and which they sometimes explain by שקר ותועבה, *Jesu is a lie, and an abomination:* they call him *a strange God*, and *vanity*[c], and often by the name of תלוי[d], *one that was hanged*, and so with them accursed; and which seems to be the name the Jews, in the apostle's time, gave him, and to which he here refers. Now, as in the former verse he may have regard to the Gentiles, so in this to the Jews in this church, who, before conversion, had so called Christ, when it was plain they had not the spirit of God then, or they could not have so called him; and therefore if they were partakers of him now, they ought to admire divine grace, and not glory in themselves, and over others. Dr. Lightfoot thinks, that Jewish exorcists who strolled about, and pretended to do miracles by the Holy Ghost, and yet called Jesus *anathema*, are meant, of whom the Corinthians might assure themselves that they did not speak, nor act, nor were acted by the spirit of God. The words may be applied to all such as detest and deny the doctrines of Christ, respecting his person and office; as that he is come in the flesh, is the true Messiah, the son of God, truly and properly God; that his death is a proper sacrifice, and full satisfaction for sin; and that justification is by his imputed righteousness: without any breach of charity it may be said, such persons do in effect call Jesus accursed, nullifying his person, sufferings, and death, as to the dignity and efficacy of them; and cannot be thought to have, and speak by, the spirit of God, who if they had him, would teach them otherwise. Moreover, as the word *anathema* here used answers to חרם, *Cherem*, a form of excommunication among the Jews; it may be truly said that such call Jesus accursed, or *anathema*, who, if I may be allowed the expression, excommunicate him out of their sermons and faith; these crucify him afresh, trample him under foot, count his blood as a common thing, and do despight to his spirit; and therefore can't be thought to have him, and speak by him. *And that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost;* or Jehovah; which, with the Jews, was a name ineffable, to which the apostle might have respect. Christ is Lord of all, of angels, good and bad; of men, righteous and wicked; of the chief among men, the kings, princes, and lords of the earth; as he is God by right of nature, and as Creator of them by virtue of that; and because of his providential power and influence in the government of the universe; he is Lord of his church and people, by the father's gift of them to him; by his espousal of them to himself; by the purchase of his blood; and by the conquests of his grace; and as appears by the various relations he stands in to them, as father, husband, head, King, and master. Now, though a man may historically say all this, as the devils may, and hypocritically, as formal professors and foolish virgins do now, and will at the last day; and as all men then will by force, whether they will or no, confess that Jesus is Lord, who have not the spirit of God; yet no man can call him his Lord, can appropriate him to himself truly and really, as his Lord, Saviour, and Redeemer, as David, Thomas, the Apostle Paul, and

[a] Dialog. cum Tryph. p. 335.
[b] Buxtorf. Abbrev. p. 10.
[c] Buxtorf. Abbrev. p. 101, 102, 103.
[d] Ib. Lex. Talmud. col. 2596.

others have done; but by the spirit; since such an appropriation includes spiritual knowledge of Christ, strong affection to him; faith of interest in him, an hearty profession of him, and sincere subjection to him; all which cannot be without the spirit of God: for he is the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him; and true love to Christ is a genuine fruit of his; faith in Christ, is entirely of his operation; and a subjection to the righteousness of Christ, and to his ordinances, is through the influence of his grace; and it is owing to his witnessings that any can truly, and in faith, claim their interest in him. Upon the whole, the apostle's sense is, let a man pretend to what he will, if he does not love Jesus Christ, and believe in him, he is destitute of his spirit; and whoever loves Christ, and believes in him, and can call him his Lord in faith and fear, however mean otherwise his gifts may be, he is a partaker of the spirit of God.

Ver. 4. *Now there are diversities of gifts*, &c.] Of spiritual ones, as in ver. 1. which spring from the free grace, and good will and pleasure, of God, and are not owing to the merits of men; and therefore such who have the largest share of them should not boast of them as acquired by themselves, or be puffed up on account of them; and those who have the smallest measure should be content and thankful; for though the gifts are different, some have greater, and others lesser, none have all, but all have some, yet not alike: *but the same spirit*; is the author and giver of all as he pleases; the lesser gifts, and the smallest degree of them, come from the spirit of God, as well as the greater. Gifts here seem to be the general name for all that follow; and *administrations* and *operations* are the two species of them; and of these a particular account is afterwards given.

Ver. 5. *And there are differences of administrations*, &c.] Or *ministries*; offices in the church, ministered in by different persons, as apostles, prophets, pastors, or teachers and deacons; who were employed in planting and forming of churches, ordaining elders, preaching the word, administering ordinances, and taking care of the poor; for which different gifts were bestowed on them, they not all having the same office. *But the same Lord*; meaning either Jesus Christ, whom the believer, by the Holy Ghost, says is Lord; who, as the ascended King of saints, and Lord and head of the church, appoints different offices and officers in it; and having received, gives gifts unto them, qualifying them for the same; all which comes through the same hand, and not another's; or rather the Lord, the Spirit, who calls men to these several ministrations, separates and fits them for them, and constitutes and installs them into them, and assists them in the discharge of them; since he only, and all along, is spoken of in the context as the efficient of these several things.

Ver. 6. *And there are diversities of operations*, &c.] There are some that are ordinary, as the good work of grace, and the several parts of it, the work of faith, the labour of love, and patience of hope, which the spirit of God begins, carries on, and finishes in all the elect of God, and members of Christ; and there are others which are extraordinary, and are here meant, and hereafter specified. *But it is the same God which worketh all in all.* Interpreters in general understand by *God* here, God the Father; as by the *Lord* in the preceding verse, the Lord Jesus Christ, as distinct from the Spirit in ver. 4. and apprehend that this furnishes out a considerable proof of a trinity of persons in the Godhead, which I will not deny; but I rather think that the Holy Ghost is designed in each verse, by Spirit, Lord, and God; since the various gifts, administrations, and operations, are particularly and peculiarly ascribed to him in the following verses; and the distribution of them is said to be the effect of his sovereign will; and so we have a most illustrious testimony of his proper deity and personality; who is the only true *Jehovah* with the Father and Son, to which the word *Lord* in the New Testament generally answers, and who is the omnipotent God, *which worketh all in all*; all the works of nature throughout the universe, and all the works of grace in the hearts of all his people, and all the extraordinary operations effected by any of them.

Ver. 7. *But the manifestation of the spirit*, &c.] Not that which the spirit manifests, as the grace and love of God, an interest in Christ, the doctrines of the Gospel, and the things of another world; for he is a spirit of revelation, more or less, in the knowledge of these things; but that which manifests that a man has the spirit of God; or rather the gifts of the spirit, as the fruits and graces of the spirit, the least measure of which, as being able to say that Jesus is Lord, shews that a man has the spirit of God; or rather the gifts of the spirit, ordinary or extraordinary, which are such as manifestly declare their author: *is given to every man*; not that the special grace of the spirit is given to every individual man in the world, nor to every member of a visible church, for some are sensual, not having the spirit; but as the same graces of the spirit are given to every regenerate man, for all receive the same spirit of faith, so the gifts of the spirit, more or less, either ordinary or extraordinary, are given to all such persons; *to profit withal*; not to make gain of, as Simon Magus intended, could he have been possessed of them; nor to encourage pride or envy, or to form and foment divisions and parties; but for profit and advantage, and that not merely private, or a man's own, but public, the good of the whole community or church, to which the least grace or gift, rightly used, may contribute.

Ver. 8. *For to one is given by the spirit*, &c.] Now follows a distinct and particular enumeration of the operations of the spirit, though not all of them, yet as many as the apostle thought necessary; and which are called the manifestation of him, and which most clearly shew him to be the author of them to different persons; *the word of wisdom*; by which is meant *the manifold wisdom of God*; the wonderful scheme of salvation through the incarnation, sufferings, and death of Christ, in which God has *abounded in all wisdom and prudence*; together with all other deep, mysterious, and sublime doctrines of the Gospel, the knowledge of which were peculiarly given to the apostles in the first place, who have the first office or ministry in the church, by *the spirit of wisdom*; and which they had a faculty, a gift of declaring, opening, and explaining unto others. *To another the word of knowledge by the*

same spirit; meaning either knowledge of future events; or an universal knowledge of the Scriptures of truth, and the doctrines contained in them, of the whole mind and will of God therein, which is a distinct thing from saving grace: see ch. xiii. 2, 8, 9. and is what was given to the prophets, the second office in the church, by him who is the spirit of prophecy, and by whom the prophetical writings were dictated; and therefore he is the best interpreter of them, and who only can lead into the true knowledge thereof.

Ver. 9. *To another faith by the same spirit*, &c.] Not the grace of faith, which is common to all believers, though given by the same spirit: but rather the doctrine of faith, and ability to preach it, and boldness and intrepidity of spirit to assert and defend it in the face of all opposition: all which are from the spirit of God, and are more or less given to pastors and teachers, the third office in the church. Though generally this is understood of a faith of working miracles, as in ch. xiii. 2. but the working of miracles is mentioned afterwards as distinct, unless it can be thought that this is the general name for miracles, and the rest that follow the particulars of them. *To another the gifts of healing by the same spirit*; of healing all manner of sicknesses and diseases: this power Christ gave his disciples, when he first sent them out to preach the Gospel, and which he repeated when he renewed and enlarged their commission after his resurrection; and which was exercised with effect, sometimes only by overshadowing the sick with their shadows, as by Peter, Acts v. 15, 16. sometimes by laying hands on them, as the father of Publius, and others, were healed by Paul, Acts xxviii. 8, 9, and sometimes by anointing with oil, Jam. v. 14. Now these gifts were bestowed in common, by the spirit, on apostles, prophets, and pastors, or elders of the church, in those early times: the Alexandrian copy, and the Vulgate Latin version, read, *by one spirit*.

Ver. 10. *To another the working of miracles*, &c.] Or *powers*: mighty deeds, wonderful works, such as are apparently above, and out of the reach of nature, and beyond the compass of human power and skill; such as raising the dead, causing the blind to see, the deaf to hear, the dumb to speak, the lame to walk, and the like; of which, see some instances in Acts iii. 6. and ix. 41. and xiv. 8. and xx. 9, 10. Though others understand by these the extraordinary powers the apostles had of punishing offenders; of which the striking Ananias and Sapphira dead, by Peter, the smiting Elymas the sorcerer with blindness, by Paul, and the delivering the incestuous person, and Hymeneus, and Alexander, to Satan, by the same apostle, are instances. *To another prophecy*; either foretelling of future events, as was given to Agabus, and the four daughters of Philip, and others, Acts xi. 27, 28. and xxi. 9, 10. or a gift of understanding the prophecies of the Old Testament, and of preaching the Gospel, which is in this epistle frequently called *prophesying*, particularly in the two following chapters; and those endowed with it are called *prophets*, Acts xiii. 1. Eph. iv. 11. 1 Cor. xiv. 29, 32, 37. *To another discerning of spirits*; by which gift such that were possessed of it could, in some measure, discern the hearts of men, their thoughts, purposes, and designs, their secret dissimulation and hypocrisy; as Peter, by this gift, discerned the dissimulation and lying of Ananias and Sapphira; and by it they could also tell whether a man that made a profession of religion had the truth of grace in him, or not; so Peter knew hereby that Simon Magus was in the gall of bitterness, and bond of iniquity, notwithstanding his specious pretences to faith and holiness, whereby he imposed upon Philip the evangelist, who might not have this gift of discerning spirits; by which also they could distinguish the spirit of God from the lying spirits in men; of which there is an instance, Acts xvi. 17, 18. *To another divers kinds of tongues*; whereby such could speak all manner of languages, which they had never learned, understood, and been used to: this Christ promised his disciples, when he sent them into all the world to preach the Gospel, Mark xvi. 16, 17. and so anticipates an objection they otherwise might have made, how they should be able to preach it to all, so as to be understood, when they were not acquainted with the languages of all nations; an instance of which we have in the apostles on the day of Pentecost, Acts ii. 4. and which continued many years after with them, and other persons in the churches; see 1 Cor. xiii. 2. and xiv. 5, 22. *To another the interpretation of tongues*; one that had this gift, when a discourse was delivered in an unknown tongue, used to stand up and interpret it to the people, without which it could be of no use to them; and sometimes a person was gifted to speak in an unknown tongue, and yet was not capable of interpreting his discourse truly and distinctly in that the people understood: see 1 Cor. xiv. 13. The rules to be observed in such cases, and by such persons, see in 1 Cor. xiv. 27, 28.

Ver. 11. *But all these worketh that one and the selfsame spirit*, &c.] Though these gifts, ministrations, and operations, are so different in themselves, and are bestowed upon different persons, yet they are all wrought by one and the same spirit of God, who is the true Jehovah, and properly God, as these his works declare; for who, but the most high God, could ever communicate such gifts to men? *Dividing to every man severally as he will*; giving one man this gift, and another that; imparting such a measure to one, and such a portion to another, just as seems good in his sight. For as his special grace in regeneration is dispensed when and where, and to whom he pleases, signified by the blowing of the wind where it listeth, John iii. 8. so his gifts, ordinary and extraordinary, are severally distributed, according to his sovereign will and pleasure. This is a clear and full proof of the personality of the spirit, who is not only distinguished from his gifts, and the distribution of them, which is a personal act described to him; but this is said to be done according to his will, which supposes him an intelligent agent, capable of choosing and willing; and whose will agrees with the father's, and with the son's.

Ver. 12. *For as the body is one*, &c.] That is, an human body; for of this the apostle speaks, and takes a simile, and forms a comparison from, shewing the union among saints, and their mutual participation of the various gifts of the spirit; for an human body is but one body, and not more. *And hath many mem-*

bers; as eyes, ears, hands, feet, &c. *And all the members of that one body being many are one body*; as numerous as they may be, they all belong to, and make up but one body; performing different offices, for which they are naturally fitted for the good of the whole: *so also is Christ*; not personal, but mystical; not the head alone, or the members by themselves, but head and members as constituting one body, the church. The church, in union with Christ, the head, is but one general assembly, and church of the first-born written in heaven, though consisting of the various persons of God's elect, who are closely united one to another, and their head Christ; and therefore are denominated from him, and called by his name; see Rom. ix. 3. Jer. xxxiii. 16.

Ver. 13. *For by one spirit are we all baptized*, &c.] This is to be understood not of water-baptism; for the apostle says not in one, and the same water, but *by*, or *in one spirit*, are we all baptized; the baptism of water, and of the spirit, are two different things; see Matt. iii. 11. Besides, all that are baptized in water, are not baptized in or by the spirit, as the case of Simon Magus, and that of others, shew; nor does water-baptism incorporate persons into the church of Christ; neither into the invisible church, which is the body of Christ, and here meant; nor into a visible Gospel church-state; they being indeed true believers, and baptized, are proper persons to be received into a church; but baptism itself does not put them into it, or make them members of it: persons may be baptized in water, and yet may never be joined to a church. There is indeed an allusion made to water-baptism, but it is the grace of the spirit in regeneration and sanctification which is here intended; which grace, both in the Old and in the New Testament, is frequently signified by water, and called a baptism, or a being baptized, because of the plenty, abundance, and superabundance of it, then bestowed; and is expressed by floods and rivers, and a well of living water; and is what qualifies and fits persons for the ordinance of water-baptism. Now this is wrought by the spirit of God, and is owing to his divine power and energy; not to water-baptism, which has no regenerating virtue in it; nor to carnal regeneration, or a being born of blood, or of the best of men; nor to the will of any man; nor to the will of the flesh, or the power of man's free will; but to God, to the Spirit, who is Lord and God, and the only sanctifier of the sons of men; by which spiritual baptism, or by whose grace in regeneration and conversion they are brought *into one body*; the mystical body of Christ, the universal and invisible church; that is, openly and manifestatively; for otherwise it is the grace of God in election, and in the everlasting covenant, choosing them in Christ, as members in their head, and constituting them such, that puts them among that number; but spiritual baptism, or the sanctifying grace of the spirit, makes them appear to belong to that body, and makes them meet for, and gives them a right unto, a particular Gospel church, and the privileges of it, which the spirit of God directs and brings them to. *Whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free*; it matters not of what nation, or of what state and condition of life persons be; if they are regenerated and sanctified, they appear equally to belong to Christ, to be of his body, and have an equal propriety in all immunities and blessings belonging to his people; see Col. iii. 11. Gal. iii. 28. *and have been all made to drink into one spirit*; are all partakers of the same graces of the spirit, as faith, hope, love, &c. and daily receive under his guidance, direction, and influence, out of the same fulness of grace in Christ, from whence they draw and drink this water with joy; and all drink the same spiritual drink, the blood of Christ, whose blood is drink indeed: and there may be in this clause an allusion to the ordinance of the supper, as in the former to the ordinance of baptism. Moreover, all new-born babes, as they desire the sincere milk of the word, so they drink of it, and are refreshed with it, and are nourished by the words of faith, and sound doctrine, under the application of the spirit; and being trees of righteousness, and the planting of the Lord, the spirit, they are watered by his grace, under the ministrations of the Gospel; and as they become one body under Christ, the head, so they are made to drink into one spirit, or to become of one heart and soul with one another, being knit together in love, the bond of perfectness.

Ver. 14. *For the body is not one member*, &c.] Not only one; nor is any one member the body, though ever so eminent, as the head or eye: thus the church of Christ is not one person only, or does not consist of one sort of persons; as only of Jews, or only of Gentiles, or only of rich and freemen, or only of men of extraordinary gifts and abilities, or greatly eminent for grace and spiritual knowledge: *but many*; members, as the Arabic version adds; as eyes, ears, hands, feet, &c. so in the mystical body of Christ, the church, there are many members, some in a higher station, others in a lower; some of greater gifts, grace, and usefulness, others of lesser; some Jews, other Gentiles; some bond, others free; yet all one in Christ the head, and all related to each other.

Ver. 15. *If the foot shall say*, &c.] The lowest member of the body, which is nearest the earth, treads upon it, sustains the whole weight of the body, and performs the more drudging and fatiguing exercises of standing and walking; and may represent one that is in the lowest station in the church, a doorkeeper in the house of God; one that is really the least of saints, as well as thinks himself so; and has the smallest degree of heavenly affection, and knowledge of spiritual light and understanding: *because I am not the hand*; the instrument of communication and of action; and may signify such an one, that liberally imparts to the necessities of others, who has it both in his hand and heart, and is ready to communicate; one that is full of good works, of charity towards men, and piety towards God; who does all things, Christ strengthening him, natural, civil, moral, and evangelical; yea, even miracles and mighty deeds are done by his hand: *I am not of the body*; have no part in it, am no member of it, don't belong to it: *is it therefore not of the body?* or *it is not therefore not of the body*, as the Syriac version renders it; that is, it is not *for this word*, as the Arabic, or *so saying*, as the Ethiopic, not of the body; it nevertheless belongs to it, and is a member of it, nor can it be otherwise: thus the meanest person in the

mystical body, the church, though he should say, that because he is not so handy and useful as another, can't give so largely, nor do so much as another, therefore he's no proper member of the church; it does not follow that so it is, for Christ, the head of the church, regards such as members; he admires the *beauty* of his church's *feet*, and has provided for the covering, ornament, and security of them, being himself clothed with a *garment down to the feet*, which equally covers and adorns that part of the body as the rest; he does not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax, or despise the day of small things; he regards their prayers, and takes notice and accepts of their meanest services; and they are, and should be considered as members of the body, by the rest and by themselves.

Ver. 16. *And if the ear shall say*, &c.] The organ that receives sounds, and can distinguish them, and in which member is placed the sense of hearing; and may design such as are hearers of the word of God, not merely externally, but internally; who hear so as to love, savour, and relish it; so as to understand and believe it, and to act in compliance with it; and distinguish it for themselves, though they may'nt be able to give a distinct account of it to others, or instruct others in it: *because I am not the eye*: the organ of seeing, in which is seated the visive faculty, and which receives light, and uses it for the good of the body, whose superintendent it is; and may be expressive of the ministers of the Gospel, who are that to the church, as eyes are to the body; they are the light of the world, have a clear insight into the doctrines of the Gospel, and communicate their light to others; they are set in the highest place in the church, and as watchmen and overseers there, to instruct, guide, and direct the members of it: *I am not of the body, is it therefore not of the body?* it certainly is; and so such as are only hearers of the Gospel, being affectionate, believing, understanding and fruitful hearers; though they have not such large knowledge and clear light, so as to be capable of overseeing and instructing others, yet are true and useful members of the church, are highly respected by Christ the head, and to be had in esteem by their fellow-members, who may be superior to them.

Ver. 17. *If the whole body were an eye*, &c.] And nothing else, *where were the hearing?* there would be no ear, and so no sense of hearing: *and if the whole were hearing*; or only consisted of a member capable of the sense of hearing, *where were the smelling?* there would be no nose, the organ of smelling, and that sense would be wanting: thus if the church only consisted of ministers of the Gospel, of men of eminent light and knowledge, qualified for the preaching of the word to others, there would be no hearers; and on the other hand, if it only consisted of hearers, of such who only could hear the word to their own advantage, there would be none of a quick understanding, or of a quick smell to discern perverse things, to distinguish truth from error, to discern spirits, and direct the rest of the members to wholesome and savoury food, and preserve them from what would be hurtful and pernicious to them.

Ver. 18. *But now hath God set the members*, &c.] The members of a natural body, as they are all made and fashioned by God in the form they be, so they are each of them set by him in the place they are: *every one of them in the body as it hath pleased him*: according to his sovereign will, without consulting any; and each stands in the best situation and position they could be put, and for the greatest service and usefulness to the whole: so God, and not man, hath set every member in the mystical body, the church, in such a place and part of it, as he himself thought fit; some in a higher, others in a lower station, but all for the good of the body; and therefore each member ought to be content with his place, gift, and usefulness, be they what they will; since it is the wise counsel and sovereign pleasure of God, who works all things after the counsel of his own will, that so it should be.

Ver. 19. *And if they were all one member*, &c.] As all eye, or all ear, or all hand, or all foot: *where were the body?* where would be the body? it would not be a body consisting of such proper and suitable members, as now it is: so if the community of the saints were either all ministers, or all hearers, &c. there would be no body, consisting of different persons, to receive any benefit or usefulness from either; the church of Christ would not be that uniform, useful, and consistent community it is.

Ver. 20. *But now are they many members*, &c.] Of different make and shape, in different parts and places, and of different use and service: *yet but one body*: all are united together, and make up one complete body, and which without each of them would not be perfect: so there are many members in the body of Christ, the church; some are teachers, others are hearers; some give, and others receive; but all make up but one church, of which Christ is the head; nor can any one of them be spared; was any one wanting, even the meanest, there would be a deficiency, and the church would not be the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

Ver. 21. *And the eye cannot say unto the hand*, &c.] Every member of the natural body is useful and necessary. The eye, the seat of the sense of seeing, cannot say to the communicating and working hand, *I have no need of thee*: I can do without thee: so the seers and overseers of the church, the ministers of the Gospel, cannot say to the liberal and munificent hands, we have no need of you; for as the one stand in need of the light, instruction, comfort, advice, and direction of the other, so the other stand in need of communication from them; and as God has made it a duty, that he that is taught in the word should communicate to him that teacheth in all good things; and as it is his ordinance that they which preach the Gospel should live of it; so he has generally ordered it in his providence, that they that teach should need such assistance: *nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you*. The head, which is the seat of the senses, and is superior to, and has the command and government of all the members of the body, cannot say to the lowest and most distant parts of it, the feet, you are needless and useless; so those that are set in the first place in the church, are over others in the Lord, and have the rule over them, cannot say to those that are under them, and submit unto them; even the lowest and meanest of them, that they are of no use and service to them; they can no more be without them, than the head can be without the feet, or than princes can do without sub-

jects, or magistrates without citizens, or generals without soldiers.

Ver. 22. *Nay, much more those members of the body, &c.*] The apostle, in a beautiful gradation, proceeds to take notice of such parts of the body as are more weak, dishonourable, and uncomely, shewing the necessity and usefulness of them: *which seem to be more feeble;* than others, do not consist of a strong bony substance, and are not fenced with sinews, as the belly and its intestines: yet these *are necessary;* nor could the body be sustained, nourished, and refreshed, without them: so the more weak and feeble saints, whose hearts and hands are to be strengthened, whose infirmities are to be bore, have their usefulness; and the effectual working in the measure of every part, even of the feeble and tender, maketh increase of the body, to the edifying of itself in love: and these God has seen fit, as necessary to call by his grace, and place in the body, that his strength may be made perfect in their weakness, and to confound the mighty; and out of the mouths even of babes and sucklings to ordain strength and praise.

Ver. 23. *And those members of the body, &c.*] As the back parts of it: *which we think to be less honourable;* though greatly useful, upon these we *bestow more abundant honour;* by clothing them, for a man's garments are his honour and glory; see the note on Matt. vi. 29. so the poor members of Christ's church, who are thought to be, though they really are not, the less honourable, have the more abundant honour conferred on them by God and Christ: God has chosen the poor of this world; Christ has sent his Gospel to them; these the Spirit calls and sanctifies, and makes them all glorious within; these Christ has given his churches a particular charge to take care of now, and will own them as his brethren at the great day, before angels and men; as he now greatly honours them with his presence, a large experience of his grace, and the supply of his spirit: *and our uncomely parts;* which distinguish sexes, and are appointed for generation; *have more abundant comeliness;* by an external covering and ornament, to preserve decency and modesty. I don't know who should be designed by these, unless backsliding believers, who have been suffered to fall into great sins; these are the uncomely parts of the church, who, when made sensible of their evils, are restored again, and received into the church: and a mantle of love is cast over all their failings; and all possible care taken that their faults may not be exposed to the world, that so the name of God, and ways of Christ, may not be blasphemed and evil spoken of.

Ver. 24. *For our comely parts have no need, &c.*] As the face, eyes, nose, lips, cheeks, &c. which stand in no need of an external covering, of any outward ornament: so such as are blessed with the bounties of nature and providence, with the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and are eminent for grace and holiness, and are enabled to walk worthy of their vocation, and to have their conversations as become the Gospel of Christ, holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience, these have no need of such a covering, as the former have, to hide and conceal them from the world: *but God hath tempered the body together;* he hath composed it in such a form, constituted it in such an order, mixed and united all its parts in such a manner, as that they are all beneficial to each other; and such is the harmonious contexture of the whole, that it is a most beautiful structure: *having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked;* or, as the Syriac version renders it, *which is the least;* and such is the temperament and constitution of the church, having mixed rich and poor persons, of greater and lesser gifts, together, for mutual good.

Ver. 25. *That there should be no schism in the body, &c.*] No complaint of one member against another, as useless and unnecessary; no murmuring on that account; no tumults and rioting; no rebellion and insurrection of one against another; no dissension, no division. The use Menenius [e] Agrippa made of this simile, applying it to the body politic, as the apostle here does to the spiritual body, for the appeasing of a sedition among the people, is well known, and usually mentioned by interpreters on this place: but that the *members should have the same care one for another;* that is, they are so tempered and mixed together, are in such close union with, and have such a dependence on each other, that they are necessarily obliged to take care of each other's good and welfare, because they cannot do one without another; and so God has ordered it in the church, that persons should be so placed in it, and gifts disposed of among them in such a manner, that every man is obliged, not only to look on, and be concerned for his own things, that he takes care of himself, and performs his office, but that he looks every man on the things of others, his good and safety being involved in theirs.

Ver. 26. *And whether one member suffer, &c.*] Pain; even the meanest, lowest, and most distant, as the foot or hand, toe or finger: *all the members suffer with it;* are more or less affected therewith, and bear part of the distress; as is easily discerned, by their different forms and motions on such an occasion: so when any one member of the mystical body is in affliction, whether inward or outward, of body or mind, the rest are, or should be, affected with it, condole, sympathize, help, and assist; and remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them, as if they themselves were in bonds, and them that suffer adversity, whether spiritual or temporal, as being in the body, not only in the flesh, but as being part of the body, the church: and therefore should weep with them that weep, and bear a part with them in their sorrows. The Jews have a saying [f], that "if one brother dies, all the brethren grieve; and "if one of a society dies, תדאג כל החבורה כולה, *the* "*whole society grieves;*" and also another [g], that "every one that *afflicts himself*, עם הצבור, *with the* "*congregation*, is worthy to see or enjoy the comfort "of the congregation or church;" *or one member be honoured;* by being set in the highest place, and employed to the greatest usefulness, or by being most richly and beautifully clothed and adorned: *all the members rejoice with it;* as sharing in the honour, or benefit of it: so if one member of the church of Christ is honoured with an high office, with great gifts, with a

[e] Liv. Hist. l. p. 49.

[f] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 105. 2. & 106. 1. Vid. Maimon. Hilch. Ebel, c. 10. sect. 12. & Seder Olam Rabba, p. 9.

[g] T. Bab. Taanith. fol. 11. 1.

large measure of grace, spiritual light, knowledge, and experience, with great discoveries of the love of God, with the presence of Christ, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, or with the good things of this life, and an heart to make use of them for the interest of religion, the other members rejoice at it; for so it becomes the saints to rejoice with them that rejoice, and be glad, both at the temporal and spiritual prosperity of each other: and upon the whole 'tis clear, that the meanest have no reason to be discouraged, nor the highest and greatest to be proud and elated.

Ver. 27. *Now ye are the body of Christ,* &c.] Not his natural body, which his father prepared for him, in which he bore our sins on the tree, and which was offered up once for all; nor his sacramental body, or the bread in the supper, which is a representation of his body; but his body mystical, the church; not that the Corinthians were the whole of the body, only a part of it, as every single congregational church is of the church universal. This is an accommodation of the simile the apostle had to so much advantage enlarged upon: *and members in particular;* or *in part:* meaning either that they as single members were part of the general body: or that only a part of them were so, there being some among them, as in all particular and visible churches, who had not the true grace of God; and so are neither members of Christ, nor of the general assembly and church of the first-born: or the sense is, that they were not only members of Christ, and of his body, but were particularly members one of another, in strict union and close communion, and of mutual use and service to each other.

Ver. 28. *And God hath set some in the church,* &c.] As before the apostle gives an account of the various different gifts of the spirit, qualifying men for service in the church of Christ, here he enumerates the several offices and officers: *first apostles;* as were the twelve disciples, and Paul the apostle; men that were immediately sent by Christ himself, and had their commission and doctrine directly from him; and a power of working miracles, to confirm the truth of their mission and ministry; they were sent into all the world to preach the Gospel, to plant churches everywhere, and to ordain officers in them; they were not confined to any particular church, but had power and authority in all the churches, to preach the word, administer ordinances, advise, counsel, direct, reprove, and censure: *secondarily, prophets;* who either had the gift of foretelling things to come, as Agabus and others; or who had a peculiar gift, by divine revelation, of explaining the prophecies of the sacred writings, and of preaching the Gospel: *thirdly, teachers;* the same with pastors, elders, and overseers; the ordinary ministers of the word, who have a gift of expounding the Scriptures; not by extraordinary revelation, but by the ordinary gift of the spirit, in the use of means, as reading, meditation, and prayer; and whose work is to preach the word, administer ordinances, feed and govern particular churches, over whom they are set: *after that miracles;* which is to be understood, not of some persons, as distinct from apostles, prophets, and teachers, who also had the power of working miracles; but from persons and officers in the church, the principal of which the apostle had mentioned, he passes to things, which belonged at least to some of them; unless it can be thought that there were in those times private Christians, who were neither apostles nor prophets, nor teachers, and yet had a power of doing miracles: *then gifts of healing;* the sick, by anointing them with oil, which was only one species of doing miracles; and which was sometimes performed, not only by apostles, and such-like extraordinary persons, but by the common elders and ordinary officers of the church: *helps;* meaning either the ministers of the word in common, who are helpers of the faith and joy of the saints, and are means of increasing their knowledge and spiritual experience, and of establishing them in the truth; see Acts xviii. 27. 2 Cor. i. 24. or else such evangelists and ministers of the word as were assistants to the apostles, such as Mark, and Timothy, and Titus; or rather the deacons of churches, whose business it is to take care of tables; the Lord's table, the minister's, and the poor's, and all the secular affairs of the church; and so are helps to the minister, relieve him, and free him from all worldly concerns, that he may the better attend to prayer, and the ministry of the word. These, whether one or the other, are so called, in allusion to the priests and Levites, who were מסעדיה, *helps,* or assistants to the high-priest, in the burning of the red heifer, and in other things[h]: *governments;* some by these understand the same with pastors and elders, who have the rule and government of the church; others lay elders, a sort of ruling elders in the church, as distinct from pastors. Dr. Lightfoot thinks such are intended, who had the gift of discerning spirits. I rather think with De Dieu, that the word designs counsellors; see the Septuagint in Prov. xi. 14. and xxiv. 6. and here intends such as are men of wisdom and prudence, who are very proper persons to be consulted and advised with, by the pastor, elder, or overseer, in matters of moment and importance in the church: *diversities of tongues;* such as have the gift of speaking with divers tongues; or of interpreting them, or both. The Vulgate Latin version and some copies add, *interpretations of tongues.*

Ver. 29. *Are all apostles?* &c.] No; some are prophets, as distinct from apostles; and some are teachers, as distinct from them both, and some are neither: *are all prophets?* no; some are apostles, above them, and some are teachers, inferior to them; and but very few there were who had that peculiar character and gift: *are all teachers?* no; the far greater part of the members of churches are hearers, or persons that are taught in the word; are neither in the office of teaching, nor have they the qualifications for it. *Are all workers of miracles?* no; in those early times, when the gift of doing miracles was bestowed, it was not given to all, only to some; and now there are none that are possessed of it.

Ver. 30. *Have all the gifts of healing?* &c.] No; when these gifts were in being, all had them not. When anointing with oil, in order to heal the sick, was in use, it was only performed by the elders of the church, not by the common members of it, who were

[h] Misn. Middot, c. 1. sect. 2. & Parah, c. 3. sect. 6.

to be sent for by the sick on this occasion: *do all speak with tongues?* no; it was not true in fact, as they well knew; though this was greatly coveted after, as a following chapter of this epistle shews; *do all interpret?* that is, unknown tongues, strange languages; or can they? no. This also was a peculiar gift bestowed on some persons only.

Ver. 31. *But covet earnestly the best gifts*, &c.] Which may be rendered either indicatively as an assertion, *ye do covet earnestly the best gifts:* of prophesying and teaching, of doing miracles, healing diseases, speaking with, and interpreting, different tongues and languages; but I can, and do shew you something that is better, and more excellent than these: or, by way of interrogation, *do ye covet earnestly the best gifts?* do you zealously affect them, fervently desire them, and emulate one another in your endeavours after them? I have something to observe to you which exceeds them all, and which you would do well to follow after, and eagerly pursue; or imperatively, as an exhortation, as it is rendered by our translators: and by the *best gifts* may be meant, the best of these external gifts before mentioned; and not those of the highest class, and the more extraordinary, but which are the most useful and beneficial to the church, as preaching or prophesying was: the Corinthians seemed most covetous and desirous of speaking with different tongues; but the apostle shews, in the xivth chapter, by divers reasons, that prophesying was preferable, being more serviceable and useful to the church, and so more eligible and to be desired by them, to which he may have regard here: or else by them are meant the internal graces of the spirit, as faith, hope, and love, which are all of them gifts of God's grace; all useful and valuable, and better than all external extraordinary gifts whatever, which a man might have, and be nothing, be lost and damned; whereas he that believes in Christ, has a good hope through grace, and love in his soul to God, Christ, and his people, though he is destitute of the other gifts, shall certainly be saved; wherefore these are the gifts which men should be solicitous for and covet after, and be greatly concerned to know that they have them, and to be content without the other: *and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way;* if by the best gifts are designed the above graces of the spirit, then by *the more excellent way*, Christ must be meant, the author and object of these graces; who is the way to the covenant, and to a participation of all the blessings of it, as justification, pardon, adoption, and eternal life; the way into a Gospel church, and to all the ordinances of the Gospel dispensation, as baptism, and the Lord's supper; for faith in him is the prerequisite, and proper qualification for the enjoyment of each of these: Christ is the way of salvation, and the way to the father, and to heaven and eternal happiness; and an excellent one he is, the more, yea, the most excellent; he is the only way to each of these; he is the new and living way, a plain and pleasant one; and so a safe and secure one, in which all that walk shall certainly be saved: now this way the apostle shewed, declared, pointed out in the ministry of the word; it was his chief and principal business, the sum of his doctrine, to make known Christ, and him crucified, as the way, the truth, and the life; to direct souls to him, and to shew them the way of salvation by him: but if by the best gifts are meant the more useful ones of those before mentioned, as prophesying, or preaching, then the more excellent way designs grace, special and internal grace; and that either grace in general, regenerating, sanctifying grace, including all sorts of grace; which is the way of a soul's passing from the death of sin to a life of faith and holiness; and is the way to eternal glory, and which gives a meetness for it, and is inseparably connected with it. This is a more excellent way than gifts; for gifts, be they ever so great, may be lost or taken away, through disuse or misimprovement; but grace always remains, can never be lost, nor will ever be taken away, but will issue in everlasting life: men may have the greatest gifts, and yet not be saved, as Judas and others; but he that has the least degree of faith in Christ, hope in him, and love to him, shall be saved by him with an everlasting salvation: or particularly the grace of charity, or love to the saints, may be intended by the more excellent way; which is the evidence of a man's passing from death and life; the new commandment of Christ, and the fulfilling of the law; without which, a man, though he has never such great gifts, he's nothing as a Christian, nor in the business of salvation; and is the greatest of all the graces of the spirit; and is of such a nature, that when prophecies, tongues, knowledge, and all external gifts shall fail, and even the internal graces of faith and hope shall cease, the one being changed for vision, and the other swallowed up in enjoyment, this will continue; and the rather this grace may be thought to be meant, since the apostle immediately passes to treat of it in the next chapter, and prefers it to all gifts, and even graces.

CHAP. XIII.

THIS chapter is taken up in the commendation of the grace of charity, or love, which is preferred to all gifts whatsoever; is described by its properties and effects, and particularly its duration; on which account it is represented as more excellent than other principal graces. The apostle prefers it to gifts, by which it appears to be the more excellent way, he speaks of in the latter part of the preceding chapter: he begins with the gift of tongues, which without charity makes a man noisy, but not spiritual, ver. 1. he next mentions the gifts of knowledge of the mysteries of the Gospel, and of preaching them; and also the gift of working miracles, on the account of which a man thinks himself something, and yet with all these, not having the grace of love, he is nothing, ver. 2. to which he adds alms-deeds and martyrdom, and observes, that a man may do the one in the most extensive manner, and suffer the other in the most dreadful

shape; and yet if love be wanting, from whence, as a principle, all actions and sufferings should flow, these will be of no avail, ver. 3. and then the apostle proceeds to describe and commend this grace, by its effects and properties, and that in *sixteen* particulars; by which it appears to be exceeding useful, and what adorns and recommends the person possessed of it, ver. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. and enlarges upon the last, namely, the duration and perpetuity of it; shewing that the gifts of knowledge, speaking with tongues, and preaching, shall fail, but this will not, ver. 8. the failure of these gifts he proves from the imperfection of them, which therefore must be removed in a perfect state of things, ver. 9, 10. this he illustrates, by comparing the present imperfect state to childhood, and the future one to manhood, which he exemplifies in himself, ver. 11. the imperfect knowledge of the one he compares to looking at objects through a glass, and to an enigma, riddle, or dark saying; and the perfect knowledge of the other, to seeing face to face, without any artificial help, ver. 12. and he concludes this excellent commendation of charity by observing, that it is not only preferable to gifts, but even to graces, and these the more eminent, and which are abiding graces too, as faith and hope; and yet charity exceeds these, both as to its duration and use, ver. 13.

Ver. 1. *Though I speak with the tongues of men*, &c.] That is, of all men, all languages that men anywhere speak, or have been spoken by them. The number of these is by some said [r] to be *seventy-five*; but the general opinion of the Jews is, that at the confusion of languages at Babel, they were *seventy*; for they say [s], that then "the holy blessed God descended, "and *seventy angels* surrounding the throne of his "glory, and confounded the languages of *seventy* "people, and every nation of the seventy had their "own language and writing, and an angel set over "each nation;" whether this may be the reason, why the tongues of angels are mentioned here with those of men, let it be considered. Mordecai, they say [t], was skilled in all these seventy languages, so that when he heard Bigthan and Teresh, who were Tarsians, talking together in the Tarsian language, he understood them. The same is said [u] of R. Akiba, R. Joshua, and R. Eliezer; yea, they say [w], that this was one of the qualifications of the sanhedrim, or of such that sat in that great council, that they should understand these seventy languages, because they were not to hear causes from the mouth of an interpreter. It is affirmed [x] of Mithridates, king of Pontus and Bithynia, that he had *twenty-five* nations under his government, and that he so well understood, and could speak the language of each nation, as to converse with men of any of them, without an interpreter. Apollonius Tyaneus [y] pretended to understand, and speak with the tongues of all men; such a case the apostle supposes here, whether attained to by learning, industry, and close application, or by an extraordinary gift of the spirit, which latter seems to be what he intends; and the rather he mentions this, and begins with it, because many of the Corinthians were greatly desirous of it; some that had it not, were dejected on that account; wherefore to comfort them, the apostle suggests, that the grace of love which they were possessed of, was abundantly preferable to it; and others that had it were lifted up with it, and used it either for ostentation or gain, or to make parties, and not to the edification of their brethren; which shewed want of love, and so were no better than what the apostle hereafter asserts; what he says here and in the following verses, is in an hypothetical way, supposing such a case, and in his own person, that it might be the better taken, and envy and ill will be removed: he adds, *and of angels*: not that angels have tongues in a proper sense, or speak any vocal language, in an audible voice, with articulate sounds; for they are spirits immaterial and incorporeal; though they have an intellectual speech, by which they celebrate the perfections and praises of God, and can discourse with one another, and communicate their minds to each other; see Isa. vi. 3. Dan. viii. 13. and which is what the Jews [z] call, "דיבור הלב, *the speech of the* "*heart*; and is the speech (they say) שהמלאכים "מדברים, *which the angels speak* in their heart; and "is the *pure language*, and more excellent than other "tongues; is pleasant discourse, the secret of the "holy seraphim—and is שיח המלאכים, *the talk of* "*angels*; who do the will of their Creator in their "hearts, and in their thoughts:" this is not what the apostle refers to; but rather the speech of angels, when they have assumed human bodies, and have in them spoke with an audible voice, in articulate sounds; of which we have many instances, both in the Old Testament and the New, wherein they have conversed with divers persons, as Hagar, Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Manoah and his wife, the Virgin Mary, Zechariah, and others; unless by the tongues of angels should be meant the most eloquent speech, and most excellent of languages; or if there can be thought to be any tongue that exceeds that of men, which, if angels spoke, they would make use of. Just as the face of angels is used, to express the greatest glory and beauty of the face, or countenance, Acts vi. 15. and angels' bread is used for the most excellent food, Psal. lxxviii. 25. Dr. Lightfoot thinks, and that not without reason, that the apostle speaks according to the sense and conceptions of the Jews, who attribute speech and language to angels. They tell us [a] that R. Jochanan ben Zaccai, who was cotemporary with the apostle, and lived to the destruction of Jerusalem, among other things, he was well versed in, understood שיחת שדים ושיחת מלאכי שרת, *the speech of demons*, and *the speech of the ministering angels*; and which they take to be the holy tongue, or the Hebrew language; they observe [b], that "the children of men (by "whom I suppose they mean the Israelites) are in

[r] Eupherus & alii in Clement. Alex. Stromat. l. 1. p. 338.
[s] Pirke Eliezer, c. 24.
[t] Targum in Esther ii. 22. Misn. Shekalim, c. 5. sect. 1. T. Hieros. Shekalim, fol. 48. 4. T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 13. 2.
[u] Juchasin, fol. 36. 2.
[w] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 17. 1. & Menachot, fol. 65. 1.
[x] A. Gellii Noct. Attic. l. 17. c. 17.
[y] Philostrat. Vita Apollon. l. 1. c. 13.
[z] Tzeror Hammor, fol. 2. 3. & 13. 4.
[a] T. Bab. Succa, fol. 28. 1. & Bava Bathra, fol. 134. 1. Vid. Zohar in Numb. fol. 92. 1.
[b] T. Bab. Chagiga, fol. 16. 1. & Sabbat. fol. 12. 2. Vid. Bereshit Rabba, sect. 74. fol. 65. 2. & Vajikra Rabba, sect. 1. fol. 147. 1.

"three things like to the ministering angels; they have "knowledge as the ministering angels, and they walk "in an erect stature as the ministering angels, ומספרים "בלשון הקדש כמלאכי השרת, *and they speak in the* "*holy tongue, as the ministering angels.*" They pretend that the angels don't understand the Syriac language; hence they[t] advise a man, "never to ask for "what he wants in the Syriac language; for (says "R. Jochanan) whoever asks for what he wants in "the Syriac language, the ministering angels don't "join with him, for they don't know the Syriac language;" and yet, in the same page, they say that Gabriel came and taught one the seventy languages: but let the tongues of angels be what they will, and a man be able to speak with them ever so well, *and have not charity:* by which is meant not giving of alms to the poor, for in ver. 3. this is supposed in the highest degree it can be performed, and yet a man be destitute of charity; nor a charitable opinion of men as good men, let their principles and practices be what they will; for this is not true charity, but rather uncharitableness, and acting the most unkind part to their souls, to consider and caress them as such, when destruction and ruin are in all their ways; but the grace of love is here meant, even love to God, and love to Christ, and love to the saints, which is a grace implanted in regeneration by the spirit of God; and which, if a person is destitute of, as he may, who has never so great a share of learning, or knowledge of the languages, or even the extraordinary gift of speaking with divers tongues; all his learning is but an empty sound, his eloquence, his diversity of speech, is but like the man's nightingale, *vox & præterea nihil*, a voice and nothing else; or as the apostle here says, supposing it was his own case, *I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal;* or rather, *the loud*, or *high-sounding cymbal*, as in Psal. cl. 5. which the Septuagint there render by κυμβάλοις ἀλαλαγμοῦ, a phrase of the same signification with this: for not that little tinkling instrument used by the Heathens is here meant; though what is here said of the cymbal agrees with that; which made a tinkling noise when shaken, or struck with any thing, or with one against another; and was an hollow vessel of brass, in form of the herb called *navel-wort*[u]; but rather that musical instrument which bore this name, used in the Jewish worship under the Old Testament; and which, the Jews[w] say, was an instrument that gave a very great sound; and that the sound of it was heard as far as Jericho[x], which was some miles from Jerusalem; they say[y], that the cymbals were two brazen instruments or pieces of brass, which they struck one against another, and so made a sound. The cymbal was also used in the worship of Heathen deities, and the allusion here in both the things mentioned, is either to the tinkling of brass, and the sounding of cymbals in the worship of idols[z]; which were mere empty sounds, and of no avail, as is a man's speaking with divers tongues, destitute of the grace of love; or to the confused clamours and noises made upon going to battle, just upon the onset, by drums and cymbals, and ἠχεῖα χαλκεῖα, hollow sounding pieces of brass; as appears from Polyænus, Plutarch, Appianus and others[a]; to which confused noises the apostle compares the most eloquent speech without love. The Greeks had a play they used at feasts, I will not say the allusion is to it here, but leave it to be thought of, which they call *Cottabisis:* when, the liquor that was left, they cast into cups of brass, and such whose liquor made the greatest sound in the cup, fancied himself to be loved again, by the person he loved[b]; sounding brass and tinkling cymbals are inanimate things, things without life, as all such persons are destitute of spiritual life, who are devoid of the grace of love; and though they, by an extraordinary gift, and under a divine impulse, speak with divers tongues, they are but like hollow vessels of brass, and sounding cymbals, which only make a noise when they are stricken, and what they give is a mere empty sound, which is of no profit to themselves; they can't hear, nor be delighted with it, but are rather hurt, being worn out thereby; nor of no great advantage to others, unless they give a musical sound, and that only delights the ear, but neither feeds nor clothes the body; of such little use and profit are men, speaking with tongues destitute of the grace of love, either to themselves or others.

Ver. 2. *And though I have the gift of prophecy, &c.*] Either of foretelling future events, as Balaam, who foretold many things concerning the Messiah and the people of Israel, and yet had no true love for either; and Caiaphas, who was high-priest the year Christ suffered, and prophesied of his death, and was himself concerned in it, being a bitter enemy to him; or of explaining the prophecies of the Old Testament, by virtue of an extraordinary gift which some persons had; or of the ordinary preaching of the word, which is sometimes expressed by prophesying, which gift some have had, and yet not the grace of God; see Phil. i. 15, 16. Matt. vii. 22. *and understand all mysteries;* either the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, the mysterious doctrines of the Gospel; such as the trinity of persons in the Godhead, the incarnation of Christ, the unity of the two natures, human and divine, in him, eternal predestination, the doctrines of regeneration, justification, satisfaction, and the resurrection of the dead; all which a man may have a speculative understanding of, and be without love to God or Christ, or to his people: or else the mystical sense of the types, figures, and shadows of the old law; as the meaning of the passover, brazen serpent, and the rock in the wilderness, the tabernacle, temple, sacrifices, and all things appertaining thereunto. The Jews give us an instance[c] of one who was no lover of Christ, and lived in the times of the apostle; R. Jochanan ben Zaccai, of whom they boast, and who they say was the least of the disciples of Hillell, and yet "perfectly understood the Scripture, the Misna, the "Gemara, the traditions, the allegorical interpre-

[t] T. Bab. Sota, fol. 33. 1.
[u] Vid. Pignorium de Servis, p. 163. 165.
[w] Bartenora in Misn. Shekalim, c. 5. sect. 1. & Kimchi in Psal. cl. 5.
[x] Misn. Tamid. c. 3. sect. 8.
[y] Bartenora in Misn. Eracin, c. 2. sect. 5. R. David Kimchi & R. Samuel Laniado in 2 Sam. vi. 5.

[z] Vid. Arnob. adv. Gentes, l. 7. p. 290. Ed. Elmenhorst, & Ovid. Metamorph. l. 3. fab. 7.
[a] Vid. Van Till. not. in Lydium de re militare, p. 88.
[b] Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 2. c. 10.
[c] T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 134. 1. & Succa, fol. 28. 1.

"tations, the niceties of the law, and the subtleties of the Scribes, the lighter and weightier matters of the law (or the arguments from the greater to the lesser, and *vice versa*), the arguments taken from a parity of reason, the revolution of the sun and moon, rules of interpretation by gematry, parables, &c." The apostle proceeds, *and all knowledge*: of things natural, as Solomon had; of the heavens, and the stars thereof, of the earth and sea, and all things therein, and appertaining thereunto; of all languages, arts, and sciences; of things divine, as a speculative knowledge of God, and the perfections of his nature, of Christ, his person and offices, of the Gospel, and the doctrines of it: *and though I have all faith*; not true, special, saving faith, or that faith in Christ, which has salvation connected with it; for a man can't have that, and be nothing; such an one shall be certainly saved; and besides, this can't be without love, and therefore not to be supposed: but all historical faith, an assent to every thing that is true, to all that is contained in the Scriptures, whether natural, civil, moral, or evangelical; to all that is contained in the law, or in the Gospel; that faith which believes every thing: so the Jews [d] say, what is faith? that in which is found כל מהימנותא, *all faith*; or rather the faith of miracles is meant, both of believing and doing all sorts of miracles, one of which is mentioned; *so that I could remove mountains*; meaning either literally, a power of removing mountains from one place to another, referring to Matt. xvii. 20. so Gregory of Neocæsarea, called *Thaumaturgus*, the wonder-worker, from the miracles done by him, is said [e] to remove a mountain, to make more room for building a church; but whether fact, is a question; or this may be understood figuratively, see Rev. viii. 8. for doing things very difficult and wonderful, and almost incredible. The Jews used to call their learned and profound doctors, such as could solve difficulties, and do wondrous things, by the name of mountains, or removers of mountains; thus [f] "they called Rab Joseph, *Sinai*, "because he was very expert in the Talmudic doctrines, "and Rabbah bar Nachmani, עוקר הרים, *a rooter-up of mountains*; because he was exceeding acute in subtle "disputations." Says Rabba [g] to his disciples, "lo, "I am ready to return an answer smartly to every one "that shall ask me, as Ben Azzai, who expounded "in the streets of Tiberias; and there was not in his "days such a עוקר הרים, *rooter-up of mountains*, as "he." Again [h], "Ula saw Resh Lekish in the school, "as if עוקר הרים, *he was rooting up the mountains*, "and grinding them together; says Rabenu, does not "every body see R. Meir in the school, as if he was "*rooting up the mountains of mountains*, and grinding them together?" They [i] elsewhere dispute which is the most honourable to be called, *Sinai* or a remover of mountains; "one says *Sinai* is the more "excellent name; another says *the rooter-up of mountains* is the more excellent: Rab Joseph is Sinai, "and Rabbah the remover of mountains:" the gloss says the former is so called, "because the Misnic "laws and their explications were ordered by him, "as if they had been given on Mount Sinai," though he was not so acute as Rabbah; and the latter was called the rooter up of mountains, because "he was "sharp and subtle in the law;" once more on those words relating to Issachar, Gen. xlix. 15. *and bowed his shoulder to bear*, 'tis observed [k]; that "this intimates that he was wise in wisdom, מפרק הרים, *a breaker of the mountains*, a shatterer in pieces of "the rocks of dissensions and division various ways; "as it is said, Jer. xxiii. 29. *is not my word like as a fire, saith the Lord, and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?* So a wise man, by the sharpness "of his wit, breaks the mountains of difficulties, and "divides them by the words of his mouth: hence "they used to call the wise men by the names of Sinai, "and a rooter of mountains; because they beat and "brake the rocks in pieces, the traditions that are difficult and deep." The phrase is also used of removing difficulties in a civil and political sense, as well as in a theological one [l]: but let a man be able to do ever such great things, yet if he has not *charity*, love to God, to Christ and to his people, he is nothing at all; as the apostle says of himself, supposing it was his own case, *I am nothing*; not nothing as a man, nor nothing as a gifted man, still he would be a man, and a man of gifts; nor does the apostle say, that his gifts were nothing, that the gift of prophecy was nothing, or the gift of understanding mysteries nothing, or the gift of knowledge nothing, or the gift of doing miracles nothing, for these are all something, and very great things too, and yet a man in whom the grace of love is wanting, is nothing himself with all these; he is nothing in the account of God, of no esteem with him; he is nothing as a believer in Christ, nor nothing as a Christian. This is also a Jewish way of speaking; for they say [m], "as a bride that is to be adorned with "four-and-twenty ornaments, if she wants any one of "them, אינה כלום, *she is nothing*; so a disciple of a "wise man ought to be used to the twenty-four books "(of the Scripture), and if he is wanting in one of them, "אינו כלום, *he is nothing*."

Ver. 3. *And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor*, &c.] Of which the Jews give us instances; they say [n], that R. Ishcab stood, החליק כל נכסיו לעניים, *and distributed all his goods to the poor*; and a little after they say the same of King Monbaz, that he stood and gave away, or dispersed, *all his goods to the poor*; and elsewhere [o] they say of R. Eliezer ben Judah, that the collectors of alms ran away from him, because he would have given them כל מה שיש לו, *all that he had*; and of another, they say [p], that he took all that he had in his house, and went out to divide it among the poor; but of what avail was all this, when what

[d] Zohar in Numb. fol. 60. 1.
[e] Gregor. Pap. Dialog. l. 1. c. 7.
[f] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 64. 1. Shalsheleth Hakabala, fol. 25. 2. Juchasin, fol. 95. 2. & 160. 2. Ganz Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 32. 2. Halichot Olam, p. 23, 207.
[g] Gloss. in T. Bab. Erubin, fol. 29. 1. Juchasin, fol. 44. 2.
[h] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 24. 1.
[i] T. Bab. Horayot, fol. 14. 1. Juchasin, fol. 112. 1.
[k] Tzeror Hammor, fol. 39. 3. & 126. 4.
[l] Vid. T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 3. 2.
[m] Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 18. 2.
[n] T. Hieros. Peah, fol. 15. 2.
[o] Juchasin, fol. 51. 2. Vid. T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 148. 2.
[p] Vajikra Rabba, sect. 24. fol. 174. 4. & Mattanot Cehunah in ib.

these men did, they did not from a principle of love to God, nor to Christ, nor even to the poor, to whom they gave their substance; but to have honour and applause from men, and have and obtain eternal life hereafter? for they thought by so doing, that they deserved to behold the face of God, enjoy his favour, and be partakers of the happiness of the world to come[t]: *and though I give my body to be burned*; which may be done by a man that has no principle of grace in him; the very Heathens have done it; as the Indian queens upon the decease and funeral of their husbands; and Calenus, an Indian philosopher, who followed Alexander the great, and erected a funeral pile, and went into it of his own accord; and Peregrinus, another philosopher, did the like in the times of Trajan. The apostle here respects martyrdom, and by a prophetic spirit has respect to future times, when burning men's bodies for religion would be in use, which then was not; and suggests that there might be some, as according to *ecclesiastical* history there seems to have been some, who, from a forward and misguided zeal, and to get themselves a name, and leave one behind them, have exposed themselves to the flames, and yet *have not had charity*, true love to God, a real affection for Christ, or to his saints: wherefore the apostle hypothetically says, supposing himself to be the person that had done all this, *it profiteth me nothing*: such things may profit others, but not a man's self; giving all his goods to the poor may be of advantage to them, and giving his body to be burned in the cause of religion may be of service to others, to confirm their faith, and encourage them to like sufferings when called to them; but can be of no avail to themselves in the business of salvation; which is not procured by works of righteousness, even the best, and much less by such which proceed from wrong principles, and are directed to wrong ends; the grace of God being wanting, and particularly that of love.

Ver. 4. *Charity suffereth long*, &c.] The apostle, in this and some following verses, enumerates the several properties and characters of the grace of love; and all along represents it as if it was a person, and no doubt designs one who is possessed of it, and in whose heart it is implanted and reigns; such an one is said to *suffer long*, or be *patient*, as the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions read; not only under afflictions by the hand of God, which such an one considers as arising from love; but under the reproaches and persecutions of men, for the sake of Christ and his Gospel, and in imitation of him; such a person is slow to anger when abused, not quick of resentment, nor hasty to revenge when affronted; but exercises forbearance, suffers long, and bears much, and is ready to forgive: *and is kind*: liberal, and bountiful, does good to all men, even to enemies, and especially to the household of faith; he is gentle to all men, affable and courteous to his brethren, and not morose, churlish, and ill-natured; he is easy and yielding to the tempers and humours of men; accommodates himself to their infirmities, capacities, manners, and circumstances, in every thing he can, that is not contrary to the glory of God, the interest of Christ, the honour of religion, his own conscience, and the good of men; *charity envieth not*; or he that has the grace of love to God, Christ, and the saints, does not envy the temporal happiness of others, though it is what he has not, or is greater than he enjoys; as Rachel envied her sister, because she had children when she herself had none; as Joseph's brethren envied him because he had a greater share in his father's affections than they had; or as good men may be tempted to envy the prosperity of the wicked, when they themselves are in adversity; but this grace, when in exercise, will not suffer a person so to do: nor will such an one envy the superior measures of grace, the more excellent spiritual gifts, or the greater degree of usefulness, and of success in any spiritual undertaking, and so of greater honour and respect, in any of the saints and servants of Christ to themselves, of which Moses and John the Baptist are remarkable instances, Numb. xi. 28, 29. John iii. 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31. *charity vaunteth not itself*; is not ostentatious, a proud boaster; either of what he has, the things of nature, as wisdom, riches, honour, strength, &c. or spiritual gifts; or of what he does, since what such an one does, he does from a principle of love, and with a view to the glory of God, and not to be seen of men, or to gain their esteem and applause: or *is not rash*, and precipitant; does not run headlong into measures, to promote his own honour and interest, without considering what will be the consequence of things; nor is he rash with his mouth, or hasty with his lips, to utter any thing unbecoming before God or men. The Arabic version renders it, *does not speak deceitfully*; or hypocritically, for nothing is more contrary to true genuine love than this; the Syriac version renders it, *is not tumultuous*; noisy and seditious; such an one is not troublesome in a commonwealth, nor does he go into parties and factions in churches, but is all the reverse: *is not puffed up*; swelled with pride, and elated with a vain conceit of himself, of his parts and abilities, of his learning, eloquence, wisdom, and knowledge, as the false teachers in this church were; knowledge without grace, unsanctified knowledge, mere notional speculative knowledge, puffeth up; but charity, or the grace of love, does not; that edifies and preserves persons from being puffed up with themselves, or one against another.

Ver. 5. *Doth not behave itself unseemly*, &c.] By using either unbecoming words, or doing indecent actions; for a man imprincipled with this grace will be careful that no filthy and corrupt communication proceed out of his mouth, which may offend pious ears; and that he uses no ridiculous and ludicrous gestures, which may expose himself and grieve the saints; accordingly the Syriac version renders it, *neither does it commit that which is shameful*: such an one will not do a little mean despicable action, in reproaching one, or flattering another, in order to gain a point, to procure some worldly advantage, or an interest in the friendship and affection of another. Some understand it in this sense, that one endued with this grace thinks nothing unseemly and unbecoming him, however mean it may appear, in which he can be serviceable to men, and promote the honour of religion and interest of

[t] T. Pesach. fol. 8. 1, 2. Roshhashanah, fol. 4. 1. Bava Bathra, fol. 10. 1, 2.

Christ: though it be by making coats and garments for the poor, as Dorcas did; or by washing the feet of the saints, in imitation of his Lord and master: or *is not ambitious*, as the Vulgate Latin version reads; of honour and applause, and of being in the highest form, but is lowly, meek and humble: *seeketh not her own things*: even those which are *lawful*, as the Arabic version renders it; but seeks the things of God, and what will make most for his honour and glory; and the things of Christ, and what relate to the spread of his Gospel, and the enlargement of his kingdom; and also the things of other men, the temporal and spiritual welfare of the saints: such look not only on their own things, and are concerned for them, but also upon the things of others, which they likewise care for: *is not easily provoked*: to wrath, but gives place to it: such an one is provoked at sin, at immorality and idolatry, as Paul's spirit was stirred up or provoked, when he saw the superstition of the city of Athens; and is easily provoked to love and good works, which are entirely agreeable to the nature of charity: *thinketh no evil*: not but that evil thoughts are in such a man's heart, for none are without them; though they are hateful, abominable, and grieving to such as are partakers of the grace of God, who long to be delivered from them: but the meaning is, either that one possessed of this grace of love does not think of the evil that is done him by another; he forgives, as God has forgiven him, so as to forget the injury done him, and remembers it no more; and so the Arabic version reads it, *and remembers not evil*: having once forgiven it, he thinks of it no more; or he does not meditate revenge, or devise mischief, and contrive evil against a man that has done evil to him, as Esau did against his brother Jacob; so the Ethiopic version, by way of explanation, adds, *neither thinks evil, nor consults evil*; or as the word here used will bear to be rendered, *does not impute evil*: reckon or place it to the account of him that has committed it against him, but freely and fully forgives, as God, when he forgives sin, is said not to impute it; or such an one is not suspicious of evil in others, he does not indulge evil surmises, and groundless jealousies; which to do is very contrary to this grace of love.

Ver. 6. *Rejoiceth not in iniquity*, &c.] Neither in his own, nor in others; but on the contrary is grieved for it; he mourns over his own iniquities, the corruption of his heart, the infirmities of his life, his secret sins, which none know but God and his own soul; he is greatly troubled at the profaneness and immorality of the men of the world, and the sins of professors cut him to the heart: nor does he rejoice in injustice, as the word used here may be rendered, in any unjust action or injury, that may be done to any, yea, even to an enemy; even as Christ, when Peter, in great zeal for him, drew his sword and cut off the ear of one of the high-priest's servants, who was more busy than the rest in apprehending Christ, and shewed more malignancy than others, was so far from rejoicing at it, that he was displeased with Peter for doing it, and was moved with so much compassion to that man, though his enemy, as to heal him: *but rejoiceth in the truth*; in the truth of the Gospel, and the success of it; such an one can do nothing against it, but for it, will buy it at any rate, but sell it upon no account whatever; and he rejoices greatly when he sees any walking in it, and agreeably to it; for *truth*, as it stands opposed to iniquity or unrighteousness, may signify an upright, holy, and righteous conversation, a conversation becoming the Gospel of Christ, which that teaches, and by which it is adorned; now a gracious soul desires this in itself, and delights to see it in others.

Ver. 7. *Beareth all things*, &c.] The burdens of fellow-Christians, and so fulfils the law of Christ, which is the law of love; the infirmities of weak believers, and the reproaches and persecutions of the world: or *covers all things*, as it may be rendered, even a multitude of sins, as charity is said to do, 1 Pet. iv. 8. not by conniving at them, or suffering them to be upon a brother; but having privately and faithfully reproved for them, and the offender being brought to a sense and acknowledgment of them, he freely forgives them as trespasses against him, covers them with the mantle of love, and industriously hides and conceals them from others; *believeth all things*; that are to be believed, all that God says in his word, all his truths, and all his promises; and even sometimes in hope against hope, as Abraham did, relying upon the power, faithfulness, and other perfections of God; though such a man will not believe every spirit, every preacher and teacher, nor any but such as agree with the Scriptures of truth, the standard of faith and practice; nor will he believe every word of man, which is the character of a weak and foolish man; indeed, a man of charity or love is willing to believe all the good things reported of men; he is very credulous of such things, and is unwilling to believe ill reports of persons, or any ill of men; unless it is open and glaring, and is well supported, and there is full evidence of it; he is very incredulous in this respect: *hopes all things*; that are to be hoped for; hopes for the accomplishment of all the promises of God; hopes for the enjoyment of him in his house and ordinances; hopes for things that are not seen, that are future, difficult, though possible to be enjoyed: hopes for heaven and eternal happiness, for more grace here and glory hereafter; hopes the best of all men, of all professors of religion, even of wicked men, that they may be better and brought to repentance, and of fallen professors, who declare their repentance, and make their acknowledgments; he hopes well of them, that they are sincere, and all is right and will appear so: *endureth all things*; that are disagreeable to the flesh; all afflictions, tribulations, temptations, persecutions, and death itself, for the elect's sake, for the sake of the Gospel, and especially for the sake of Christ Jesus.

Ver. 8. *Charity never faileth*, &c.] It may fail as to the exercise of it, as other graces do; it may be left, but not lost; the fervour of it may be remitted and abated; it may wax cold through the prevalency of sin; it may be greatly damped by the growth of error and heresy, which eat as do a canker; and may be much obstructed by an anxious and immoderate care and concern for worldly things; which are very pernicious to all the branches of vital religion and powerful godliness, and particularly love to God, Christ, and the brethren: but this grace never fails as to its principle; it is an immortal and an incorruptible seed; it lives

throughout the most violent temptations, as in Peter; and under the greatest desertions and sorest afflictions, still there is an affection for God; Christ is he whom such a soul loves; and the saints are the excellent in the earth, in whom is all his delight: and it also continues as to its use, and will do so, when faith and hope will loose theirs, even in the other world; for faith will be changed into vision, and hope into enjoyment; but love will be the same, only act in a higher sphere, and to a greater degree, and in a perfect manner: *but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail:* by which are meant, either the predictions of future events, not that they shall fail in their accomplishment, but they shall be no more, because they will all be accomplished; or else the gifts of explaining the prophecies of the Old Testament, and of preaching the doctrines of the Gospel, will be no more, because there will be no need of them in a state of perfection: *whether there be tongues they shall cease:* not but that, in the resurrection, that member of the body, the tongue, will be restored as the rest, and be everlastingly employed in celebrating the perfections of God, in singing the hallelujahs of the Lamb, and in joining with angels and other saints in songs of praise to the eternal Three; but the gift of speaking with divers tongues will cease, indeed it has already; nor will there be any use for such an extraordinary gift in the other world; when probably, and as it is thought by some, there will be but one language, and that the Hebrew language; as the whole earth was of one language and speech before the confusion at Babel: *whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away:* that is, the word of knowledge, peculiarly given by the spirit to some persons only; or that peculiar gift of knowledge of divine things, by which some are qualified to be instructors of others; the present means both of communicating, and of obtaining and increasing knowledge by the preaching and hearing of the word, will be no more used: and besides, imperfect knowledge of every sort will disappear, it will become perfect: that knowledge which is in part will be done away, when perfect knowledge takes place; for so we are taught to explain it by the following words.

Ver. 9. *For we know in part,* &c.] Not that the Scriptures, the rule and measure of knowledge, and from whence spiritual knowledge is derived, are imperfect; so that there is need of unwritten traditions, and of enthusiastic revelations and inspirations, to inform of things otherwise unknown; for though they were at sundry times, and in divers manners delivered, yet now they contain a complete system of divine truths, to which nothing is to be added, and from which nothing is to be taken away; or that only a part of the saints know the things of God; for though there is a difference between them, some have more knowledge than others, yet all have some, all are taught of God, and know him, and have that anointing which teacheth all things; wherefore the sense also is not, that only a part of truth, and not the whole, is known; for the spirit of God leads into all truth; the whole counsel of God is made known in the Scriptures, and by the ministers of the word; though to this sense the Arabic version inclines, rendering it, *some part of doctrine we know;* and so in ver. 12. *some part of knowledge I know;* as also the Syriac version, which renders it קליל מן סגי, *a little from much we know;* but the true meaning is, that though the rule of knowledge is perfect, and all the saints have knowledge, and every truth of the Gospel is known; yet by those that know most, it is known but imperfectly: the truth itself may be most clearly discerned, as it is revealed in the word; yet the manner of it, how it is, may not be known; and many difficulties may attend it, and objections be raised to it, which are not easily solved; as in the doctrines of the Trinity, predestination, the union of the two natures in Christ, the resurrection of the dead, &c. *and we prophesy in part:* the word of prophecy, as it is sure, it is also perfect, to which we do well to take heed; and though all do not prophesy, yet all that do, and that prophesy aright, that is, explain the word of God aright, these preach the Gospel fully, declare the whole counsel of God, and keep back nothing profitable to the saints; yet still their prophesying or explaining the prophecies of the Old Testament, or the mysteries of the Gospel, is but imperfect at best in the present state of things.

Ver. 10. *But when that which is perfect is come,* &c.] When perfect knowledge of God, of Christ, and of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven shall take place; which will not in this life, but in that which is to come. So the Jews say[t], that at the resurrection, upon the reunion of the soul and body, "the children of men shall attain to דעה שלימה, *perfect* "*knowledge:*" which is what the apostle refers to here: *and then that which is in part, shall be done away:* the imperfection of knowledge shall be removed; the imperfect manner of communicating knowledge, and of receiving and acquiring it, will cease: thus the apostle explains what he means by the cessation and failing of knowledge, and prophecy; not that knowledge itself will be no more, and a state of ignorance and darkness succeed; but imperfect knowledge will vanish away, or rather will be perfected, or be swallowed up in perfect knowledge; the imperfection of it will disappear; and it will be no more taught and received in part; the whole of truth will be clearly known.

Ver. 11. *When I was a child I spake as a child,* &c.] That cannot speak plain, aims at words rather than expresses them, delivers them in a lisping or stammering manner: hereby the apostle illustrates the then present gift of speaking with divers tongues, which was an extraordinary gift of the spirit, was peculiar to some persons, and what many were very fond of; and yet this, in its highest degree and exercise, was but like the lisping of a child, in comparison of what will be known and expressed by saints, when they come to be perfect men in heaven: *I understood as a child;* and so does he that understands all mysteries, in comparison of the enlightened and enlarged understandings of glorified saints; the people of God, who are in the highest form and class of understanding, in the present state of things, are but children in understanding; 'tis in the other world, when they are arrived to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, that they will in understanding be men: *I*

[t] Midrash Haneelam in Zohar in Gen. fol. 69. 1.

thought, or *reasoned, as a child*: whose thoughts are low and mean, and reasonings very weak; and so are the thoughts and reasonings of such as have all knowledge here below, in comparison of that perfect knowledge, those clear ideas, and strong reasonings of the spirits of just men above: *but when I became a man, I put away childish things*: childish talk, childish affections, and childish thoughts and reasonings; so when the saints shall be grown to the full age of Christ, and are become perfect men in him, tongues shall cease, prophecies shall fail, and knowledge vanish away; and in the room thereof, such conversation, understanding, and knowledge take place, as will be entirely suited to the manly state in glory.

Ver. 12. *For now we see through a glass*, &c.] In this present life, they that are enlightened by the spirit of God, *see* God, the perfections and glory of his nature, the riches of his grace and goodness, as displayed in Christ; they behold the glory of Christ, as full of grace and truth, and are filled with love to him; the desires of their souls are after him, and they are changed into the same image by his spirit; they discern the things of the spirit of God; the veil being removed from them, they behold wondrous things, out of the law of God and Gospel of Christ, even such things as are unseen unto, and unknown by the natural man: but then it is all *through a glass*: not of the creatures; for though the invisible things of God may in some sort be seen and understood by the things that are made; and God, as the God of nature, may be seen in the works of creation and providence, yet not as the God of grace; 'tis only in his son, and through the glass of the Gospel, he is to be beheld in this light: and so it is through the glass of the word and ordinances, that the glory of the person of Christ, of his offices, fulness of grace and righteousness, is only to be seen; in these he is evidently set forth to the eye of faith, as the surety, Saviour, and Redeemer of his people, and through these the knowledge of divine truths is communicated; and through all these but *darkly*: *in an enigma*, or *riddle*, or *dark saying*, as the word here used may be rendered; that is, in this present state, in comparison of the future one; for though the sight of things under the Gospel dispensation is clear, and with open face, in comparison of the legal one, yet even this is very obscure, and attended with great darkness and imperfection, when compared with the beatific vision in heaven, which will have no manner of interruption and obscurity in it: *but then face to face*: there will be no intervening mediums of vision; not the glass of the word and ordinances; there will be no need of them, God and Christ will be seen as they are; the judgments of God, his providential dispensations, will be all made manifest, and will be legible without the help of a glass; the doctrines of grace and truth will lie open and clear, free of all dark speeches, obscure hints, or enigmatical expressions; and as there will be nothing to intervene by way of assistance, there being no need of any, there will be nothing to intercept the sight; the objects will be nigh, even face to face; the view will be full and clear, the sight will be perfect, as well as the converse with the objects will be familiar; and which, without the least obstruction, will always so continue: there seems to be here a double reference, partly to what the Lord says of Moses, in Numb. xii. 8. *with him will I speak, mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches*; and partly to what the Jews say of him, with a view to the same passage: "all the prophets (say they [s]) looked through a glass, which did "not give light: (or, as they sometimes say, which "was spotted, and was not clear;) Moses our master "looked באיספקלריא המאירה, *through a glass that* "*gave light*:" or, as elsewhere, was bright and clear, and without any spot. Again, they say [t], "all the "prophets prophesied by the means of an angel; "hence they saw what they saw במשל וחידה, *by way* "*of parable and riddle*, or dark saying; Moses our "master did not prophesy by the means of an angel; "as it is said, *with him will I speak mouth to mouth*; "and it is said, *the Lord spake to Moses, face to face*; "and it is also said, *the similitude of the Lord shall he* "*behold*: as if it was said, that there should be no "parable, but he should see the thing clearly without "a parable; of which likewise the law testifies, say"ing, *apparently, and not in dark speeches*; for he "did not prophesy בחידה, *by way of riddle*; (in an "enigmatical way, darkly;) but apparently, for he "saw the matter clearly." The two glasses, clear and not clear, the Cabalistic doctors call *tiphereth* and *malchuth* [u]. "*Tiphereth* (they say) is a clear and "well-polished glass, by which Moses prophesied and "had visions, *and saw all things most exactly*, in a "very singular manner; *malchuth* is the glass that "is not clear; so that he that prophesies by that, "prophesies *by riddle*, and parable." Now the apostle suggests, that as there was such a difference between Moses and the rest of the prophets, the one saw clearly, the other through a glass darkly; a like, yea, a much greater difference there is between the clearest views saints have of divine things now, and those they shall be blessed with hereafter, and which he exemplifies in himself: *now I know in part*: though not a whit behind the chief of the apostles; though his knowledge in the mystery of Christ was such, as had not been given to any in ages and generations past; and though he had been caught up into the third heaven, and had heard words not lawful to be uttered, yet owns his knowledge in the present state to be but imperfect; which may be instructive to such, who are apt to entertain an high opinion of themselves, and dream of perfection in this life: *but then shall I know, even as I am known*: in the other world and state, he signifies that he should know God, Christ, angels, and glorified saints, and all truths in a perfect manner, even as he was known of God and Christ perfectly, allowing for the difference between the Creator and the creature; his sense is, that he should have as full and complete a knowledge of persons and things as he was capable of; it would be like, though not equal to, the knowledge which God had of him; and which would be attended with the strongest love and affec-

[s] T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 49. 2. Vajikra Rabba, sect. 1. fol. 147. 2. Zohar in Gen. fol. 30. 2. & 98. 3. & 103. 3. & in Exod. x. 3. & xi. 3. & xiv. 1. & 94. 2. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 46. 4. & 170. 2. Shaare ora, fol. 26. 2.

[t] Maimon. Jesode Hatora, c. 7. sect. 6.

[u] Lex. Cabal. p. 139. R. Moses in Sepher Hashem in ib.

tion to the objects known, even as he was known and loved of God.

Ver 13. *And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three, &c.*] Which are the principal graces of the spirit of God: *faith* is to be understood, not of a faith of miracles, for that does not abide; nor of an historical one, or mere assent to truth; persons may have this faith, and believe but for a while; but of that faith, which is peculiar to God's elect; is a fruit and effect of electing grace, and for that reason abides; is the gift of God, and one of those which are without repentance; is the work of God, and the operation of his spirit, and therefore will be performed with power; it is the grace by which a soul sees Christ, goes unto him, lays hold on him, receives him, relies on him, and lives upon him: *hope* is also a gift of God's grace, implanted in regeneration; has God and Christ, and not any worldly thing, or outward performance, for its object, ground, and foundation, to build upon; it is of things unseen, future, difficult, yet possible to be enjoyed; it is supported by the love of God, is encouraged by promises, and is sure, being fixed on Christ and his righteousness; it is that grace by which saints wait for things promised, and rejoice in the believing views of glory and happiness; *charity* designs love to God, Christ, and the saints, as has been explained, and a large account is given of it in this chapter: these are the three chief and leading graces in God's people, and they abide and continue with them; they may fail sometimes, as to their lively exercise, but never as to their being and principle; faith may droop and hang its wing, hope may not be lively, and love may wax cold, but neither of them can be lost; Christ prays that faith fail not, hope on him is an anchor sure and steadfast, and nothing can separate from the love of Christ; as not from the love of Christ to his people, so not from theirs to him: these graces abide *now*, during the present life: he that has true faith in Christ, shall die in it; and he that has a good hope through *grace*, shall have it in his death; and love will outlive death, and be in its height and glory in the other world: for which reason 'tis added, *but the greatest of these is charity*; and is said to be so, not that it is on every account the greatest; faith in many things exceeds that, as what is ascribed to it in Scripture shews; but because of the peculiar properties and effects of it before mentioned, it including faith and hope, as in ver. 7. and besides many other things, and because, without this, faith and hope are nothing: and besides, its usefulness is more extensive than either of the other two; a man's faith is only for himself; a just man lives by his own faith, and not another's; one man's faith will be of no service to another, and the same is true of hope; but by love saints serve one another, both in things temporal and spiritual, and chiefly 'tis said to be the greatest, because most durable; in the other world, faith will be changed for vision, and hope for enjoyment, but love will abide, and be in its full perfection and constant exercise, to all eternity. The Jews * say much the same of humility the apostle does here of charity; "wisdom, fear, humility, they are alike, אך ענוה גדולה מכולן, *but humility is greater than them all.*"

CHAP. XIV.

In this chapter the apostle discourses concerning the use of spiritual gifts, and prefers prophesying, or preaching, to every other gift; and directs to the order and manner of using it, and also points at the persons who should exercise it; and whereas there was much confusion and disorder in this church, in the management of the affairs of it, the chapter is concluded with a general exhortation to do every thing in a decent and orderly manner. The apostle begins with an exhortation to follow after charity, which he had commended in the preceding chapter, and had preferred to gifts, and yet he would not have gifts slighted, but represents them as desirable; particularly prophesying or preaching, which he prefers above all, ver. 1. and especially above the gift of tongues, and for which he gives his reasons; he that speaks with tongues, speaks to God and not to men; at least not to their understanding, though he may by his gift deliver the most excellent truths, ver. 2. whereas he that preaches speaks to men, to their edification, exhortation, and comfort, ver. 3. the one edifies himself, and the other the church, ver. 4. wherefore since he had a sincere affection for this church, though he could wish they all had the gift of speaking with tongues, yet he rather desired they might have the gift of preaching, because that was most for edification, ver. 5. and exemplifies this in himself, that should he come to them speaking with divers tongues, this would be of no use to them, unless he came revealing, making known, and preaching the doctrines of the Gospel to them, ver. 6. and illustrates this by a simile taken from musical instruments, in which unless there is a distinction of sounds, the music will not be understood, and there can be nothing grateful and pleasant: and such is speaking with divers tongues, without an interpretation, ver. 7. and particularly by a simile taken from the trumpet, as used in war; which if it gives a sound that is unknown, it will be no direction to prepare for the battle, ver. 8. which similes are accommodated to the case in hand; shewing that words easy to be understood by the hearer should be made use of by the speaker, or speaking is in vain, ver. 9. each word in every language indeed has its signification, some idea or another annexed to it; but if this is not understood by the hearer as well as the speaker, they become barbarians to one another, ver. 10, 11. wherefore such as were eagerly desirous of spiritual gifts, should covet those that were most for edification; and if speaking with tongues were what they were most set upon, they should pray for the gift of interpretation also, ver. 12, 13. because, for instance, if prayer is made in an unknown tongue, the extraordinary gift indeed

* Pishe Tosaph. in T. Bab. Yebamot, art. 196.

may be exercised, but not to the understanding, and so not to the profit of others, ver. 14. hence the apostle determines for himself, that though he should make use of his spiritual gifts, both in praying and singing, it should be in such a manner as to be understood by others, as well as himself, ver. 15. and it was right for every one to do so likewise, otherwise persons not knowing what is prayed for, or thanks given for, would be so far from being able to join in the exercise, that they could not so much as say *Amen* at the conclusion of it, ver. 16. and though thanks might be returned for a mercy received in ever so agreeable a manner, yet it could be no ways edifying to a man that did not understand the language in which it was expressed, ver. 17. not that the apostle said all this, because he had not such a gift himself, for he had it to a greater degree than any in this church had arrived to, ver. 18. yet after all it was more eligible to him to speak five words in a public manner, so as to be understood, than ten thousand in a language the people were ignorant of, ver. 19. wherefore he exhorts the Corinthians not to act the childish part, to covet speaking with tongues, but rather the more manly one, to prophesy, or preach, to the understanding of others, ver. 20. moreover, the apostle deters them from seeking to speak with divers tongues, by citing a passage out of Isaiah, ch. xxviii. 11. by which it appears, that speaking with divers tongues and strange languages was sometimes threatened as a punishment, and not given as a blessing, ver. 21. besides, speaking with tongues was a sign of unbelief, and used for the conviction of unbelievers; whereas prophesying, or preaching, was a sign of faith, and was for the profit of believers, and therefore the most desirable, ver. 22. to which he adds another reason, dissuading from the use of speaking with divers tongues in public, where they are not understood, taken from the opinion that ignorant and unbelieving persons coming into their assemblies would entertain of them, as though they were madmen, ver. 23. whereas should they preach in a language understood, on the contrary it might be of use for the conviction of such persons, who having the secrets of their hearts laid open to them, will fall down and worship God, whose word they hear; and when they depart, report that the divine presence is with such a people, ver. 24, 25. hence the apostle proceeds to direct to the proper and orderly manner of using gifts; that whereas there were different ones among them, one had one gift, and another had another, they might all be used, provided they were used in such a manner as to tend to edification, ver. 26. so for instance, if speaking in an unknown tongue was used, it should be only by two or three at most, one after another; and there should be an interpreter to make known the meaning of what was said to the people, ver. 27. but if there were none that had the gift of interpreting, then it was most advisable for the speaker to be silent in public, and only in private speak to God and himself, ver. 28. and then as for those that had the gift of prophesying, or preaching, these should exercise their gift two or three at a time, one after another, and the rest should sit and judge what they delivered, whether agreeable to the word of God or no, ver. 29. and should any thing be more clearly revealed to one that sat and heard, the speaker should be silent, and give way to him, that he might have the opportunity of declaring it to the edification of the church, ver. 30. for all that had the gift of preaching might use it one after another, by turns, for general instruction and comfort, ver. 31. seeing spiritual gifts are subject to and at the dispose of those that are possessed of them: or the doctrines preached by the one are subject to the examination and judgment of the other, ver. 32. for God, the donor of all gifts, is the author of order and peace, and not of confusion in all the churches, ver. 33. and whereas the apostle had suggested, that all might prophecy, or preach, that is, that had gifts qualifying for it, he would be understood only of men, and not women, who were not permitted to speak in the church in a way of preaching; no, not even to ask questions there about what they heard, but if they wanted to be informed of any thing they did not rightly understand, they were to ask their husbands at home; this the apostle argues, partly from the law, which commands them to be in obedience to men, and partly from the indecency of such a practice, ver. 34, 35. and seeing as it should seem such a practice did obtain in the church at Corinth, the apostle warmly reproves them for it, it being what was not to be observed in other churches, by intimating to them, that the Gospel neither came out from them, nor did it come to them only, ver. 36. and whoever had a gift of preaching, or a spiritual understanding of things, must allow, that what the apostle said were not the commandments of men, but of God, ver. 37. but as for ignorant persons, who were affectedly and wilfully such, they must so remain, there was no help for it, ver. 38. upon which the apostle repeats his exhortation he set out with, to desire in the first place the gift of prophesying, or preaching, though he would not have speaking with tongues forbidden, provided the above rules were attended to, ver. 39. and concludes with a general exhortation to do all the above things, and every thing relating to the doctrine and discipline of the church, in a becoming and orderly manner, ver. 40.

Ver. 1. *Follow after charity, &c.*] The apostle having so highly commended charity, or love, in the preceding chapter, presses here to an eager pursuit after it; that is, to an exercise of it, and after those things which make for it, and will serve to maintain and increase it: and every thing he has said in praise of it before serves as an argument, or reason, to follow hard after it, with an eagerness used in hunting, and with such violence as persecutors express in pursuing and laying hold on those they seek after, to which there is an allusion in the word here used: *and desire spiritual gifts*: for though he had given charity the preference to them, he did not mean that they should despise and neglect them, or treat them with indifference, and be unconcerned about them; but, on the other hand, that they should be very zealous for them, ambitious of them, and earnestly covet them; since being rightly used and kept in their proper place, they were greatly beneficial and profitable to the churches of Christ, and the glory of God: *but rather that ye may prophesy*: of all the gifts of the spirit, the apostle prefers prophesying, and recommends this to the Corinthians, as what

they should be chiefly desirous of, and more desirous of than of speaking with tongues, which many among them were so very fond of: by which he means, not so much the gift of foretelling future events, though there was such a gift bestowed on some persons in those times, and, in certain cases, was very profitable to the churches; but a gift of preaching the word, or explaining the prophecies of the Old Testament, and of praying and singing of psalms, all which, as appears from some following parts of this chapter, were included in it; and that not in an ordinary, but in an extraordinary way: a person possessed of this gift could at once, without the use of means, or help of study, preach the word, and open the more difficult parts of Scripture; he had an extraordinary gift of prayer, which he could make use of when he pleased, and at once compose and deliver out a psalm, or hymn, in the public congregation.

Ver. 2. *For he that speaketh in an* unknown *tongue,* &c.] Or *with tongues*, as some copies and the Ethiopic version read: Dr. Lightfoot thinks, that the Hebrew tongue, which was become a dead language, and understood but by few, is here meant, and that not without reason; seeing the public prayers, preaching, and singing of psalms among the Jews, were in this language[a]; in imitation of whom, such ministers, who had the gift of speaking this language, read the Scriptures, preached, prayed, and sung psalms in it, which were no ways to the edification of the people, who understood it not; upon which account the apostle recommends prophesying, praying, and singing, in a language that was understood: otherwise he *speaketh not unto men;* to the understanding, profit, and edification of men: *but unto God;* to his praise and glory, and he only knowing, who knows all languages, and every word in the tongue what is said; excepting himself, unless there should be any present capable of interpreting: *for no man understandeth him;* or *heareth him;* that is, hears him, so as to understand him; he may hear a sound, but he can't tell the meaning of it, and so it is of no use and advantage to him: *howbeit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries;* though under the influence, and by the extraordinary gift of the spirit he has, and to his own spirit and understanding, and with great affection and devotion within himself, he speaks of the deep things of God, and the mysteries of his grace, the most glorious truths of the Gospel, yet the meaning of his voice and words not being known, he's a barbarian to them that hear him; and though what he delivers are truths of the greatest importance, they are a mere jargon to others, being unintelligible.

Ver. 3. *But he that prophesieth,* &c.] Preaches, prays, or sings, in a language understood by the common people: *speaketh unto men to edification;* to the building of them up in Christ, and on their most holy faith, so that they grow up as an holy temple to the Lord: *and exhortation;* to the more vigorous exercise of grace, and the more cheerful and fervent discharge of duty: *and comfort;* of distressed minds, either through the temptations of Satan, or divine desertions, or inward corruptions, or outward afflictions; for all which ends and purposes the Scriptures are written, and gifts are bestowed on men to explain them; and which ends are answered when God gives a blessing to the word; but can never be expected, if delivered in a language not understood. This bears hard upon the Papists performing any part of divine worship in a language unintelligible to the common people.

Ver. 4. *He that speaketh in an unknown tongue,* &c.] Be it the Hebrew language, or any other; some copies, and the Ethiopic version, read, *with tongues; edifieth himself;* his heart may be warmed, his affections raised, his devotion kept up, and he be in a very spiritual and comfortable frame, knowing and understanding what he himself says: *but he that prophesieth, edifieth the church;* which is the great end of the Gospel ministry, which is for the edifying the body of the church: wherefore that which tends to the edification of more, even the whole church, must be preferable to that, which at most can only edify one, and that the speaker himself.

Ver. 5. *I would that ye all spake with tongues,* &c.] This the apostle says, to prevent being misunderstood; for his view was not to bring the gift of tongues into contempt, or to represent it as at all times, and on all occasions, useless and insignificant; nor would he be thought to envy them this gift, or beat them off of desiring it; for, for his own part, he could wish they all had it, was it the will of God; though he must needs say, that prophesying was most desirable by him, as being most profitable; *but rather that ye prophesied;* he wished them all prophets, as Moses did all the Lord's people; he was not against their speaking with tongues, but this was the most eligible, for which he gives this reason: *for greater is he that prophesieth, than he that speaketh with tongues;* that is, he is more useful and profitable to men, and so consequently more honourable, in higher esteem, and more valued, and in greater dignity, being in a more serviceable post and office, and which is more beneficial and advantageous to mankind: *except he interpret;* what he said; and then he might stand upon an equal foot, and be equally useful with him that prophesieth; but this every one could not do that spake with tongues; for speaking with tongues, and the interpretation of tongues, were two distinct gifts; see ch. xii. 10, 30. and though a man that had the gift of tongues might understand what he himself said to his own edification, yet not be able to interpret it to the understanding and edification of others; and if he could not do this, his speaking was to no purpose: hence the apostle advises such an one to pray that he might interpret, have the gift of interpretation also, in ver. 13. *That the church may receive edifying;* which otherwise cannot be thought it should, or be expected, and then an opportunity and ordinance would be wholly lost.

Ver. 6. *Now, brethren, if I come unto you speaking with tongues,* &c.] The apostle exemplifies this matter in himself, and supposes it his own case, that should he who was the apostle of the Gentiles, and to be received by them as such, when he came to them, come with this gift of tongues, which he was capable of, as much, or more than any, see ver. 18. and only make use of that, *what shall I profit you?* of what use would

[a] Vid. Gloss. in T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 3. 1. & in Yoma, fol. 20. 2.

my ministry be to you? what instruction, comfort, and edification, could you receive by it? *except I shall speak to you, either by revelation*: by the revelation of Jesus Christ, whereby he received the Gospel he preached; or by the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ, and the mysteries of his grace, by which they were made known unto him at first, or by a fresh immediate revelation from heaven: or *by knowledge*; the word of knowledge, one of the peculiar gifts of the spirit, ch. xii. 8. *Or by prophesying*; the gift of prophecy, another of the extraordinary gifts of the spirit, mentioned in the same chapter, ver. 10. and already explained: *or by doctrine*? the same with the word of wisdom, another gift of the same spirit, in ch. xii. 8. The apostle intimates, that by the use and exercise of these gifts, he might be profitable to them, to lead them into a clearer view of the doctrines of the Gospel, and for the further improvement of their knowledge in the Scriptures of truth, which could never be done by bare speaking with tongues, and with tongues they understood not.

Ver. 7. *And even things without life giving sound*, &c.] He instances in things inanimate, that have neither reason, sense, nor life, in musical instruments, and these of various sorts: *whether pipe or harp*; wind-music, or hand-music; either that which is blown with the breath, or pressed or stricken with the hand: *except they give a distinction in the sounds*; or *tunes*, so as one may be discerned from another; as that this is such a musical note, and that is another: *how shall it be known what is piped or harped?* what tune is played; such an use of instruments would be a mere jargon, and not music, and so yield no pleasure to the ear, or mind; and just the like must speaking in an unknown tongue be, to one that understands it not.

Ver. 8. *For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound*, &c.] That is not plain and manifest, so as that it cannot be known on what account it is given: *who shall prepare himself to the battle?* the allusion is to the custom of many nations, Jews and others, who, when about to engage in war, made use of musical instruments, particularly the trumpet, to gather the soldiers together, prepare them for the battle, give them notice of it, and animate them to it[r]; the sound of the trumpet was the alarm of war; see Jer. iv. 5, 19, 21. Job. xxxix. 25. And particularly the allusion may be to the two silver trumpets, ordered by God to Moses for the Jews, which were to be made of a whole piece, and to be used for the calling of the assembly, and for the journeying of the camps, and to blow an alarm with when they went to war against the enemy, Numb. x. 1, 2, 9. and were a lively emblem of the Gospel, whose use is to gather souls to Christ, to direct saints in their journeying, and to prepare and animate them for battle, with their spiritual enemies; and of which use it is, when it gives a certain and even sound, as it does when clearly and rightly blown; and that is, the sound of love, grace, and mercy, to the sons of men, through a bleeding Saviour; salvation alone by a crucified Jesus, peace and pardon by his blood, justification by his righteousness, and atonement by his sacrifice; when it is blown aright, it blows a blast on all the goodliness of man, it magnifies the grace of God, exalts the person of Christ, debases the creature, shews its impurity, imperfection, and inability; and expresses the nature, use, and necessity of efficacious grace; and puts believers on doing good works for necessary uses, but not for life, righteousness, and salvation; and so its sound is equal, even, and certain: and when it is so, it is a means of gathering souls to Christ, the standard-bearer and ensign of the people; and of engaging them to enlist themselves as volunteers in his service; and of animating them to fight under his banner the battles of the Lord of hosts: but if this trumpet gives an uncertain sound, as it does when grace and works are blended together in the business of salvation; and faith or works put in the room of, or joined with the righteousness of Christ in justification; when particular election and general redemption, or the salvability of all men, are put together; the covenant of grace represented as conditional, and preparations for grace, and offers of grace, and days of grace talked of, that may be past and lost; then who can prepare himself for the battle? persons must be thrown into, and left in the utmost uncertainty and confusion: when this is the case, they know not what side to take on, but halt between two opinions; they know not what that faith is they are to fight and earnestly contend for; they are not able to discern an enemy from a friend; they have no heart to fight and endure hardness, as good soldiers of Christ; nor can they promise themselves, or be assured of victory, which the certain sound of the Gospel gives them.

Ver. 9. *So likewise you, unless ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood*, &c.] This is an accommodation of the foregoing similes to the case in hand: for as unless there is a distinction of notes and tunes, it can't be music, nor it cannot be known what is piped or harped; and unless the trumpet gives a certain sound, none can know when to prepare himself for the battle; so unless in the public ministry and service a language is spoken, and words made use of, which are understood without difficulty: *how shall it be known what is spoken?* the subject-matter of the discourse, prayer, or psalm, will be all lost, and therefore can't be for edification, exhortation, or comfort: *for ye shall speak into the air*; into which such words are resolved, and the use and benefit of them, as to others, cease with the breath, by which they are delivered: any part of divine service performed in such a way is all in vain, and to no purpose; it is all lost labour, 'tis beating the air, and talking to the wind. This condemns the practice of the Papists, performing divine service in a language not understood by the common people; and exposes the folly of those, who are fond of a florid style, of bombast words, great swelling words of vanity in their public discourses: this is only speaking into the air, with regard to the vulgar, whose edification should be consulted: and as the end of the Gospel ministry is public usefulness and edification, plainness of speech, words easy to be understood, should be used; such as are apt and fit to convey the true idea of things to people in common; these are the acceptable words, which the wise preacher, who is desirous of doing good to the souls of men, will seek out, and studiously make use of.

[r] Vid. Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 4. c. 2. p. 178.

Ver. 10. *There are it may be so many kinds of voices,* &c.] לשנא, *tongues*, or *languages*, as the Syriac version renders it; that is, as many as there are nations in the world: there may be seventy of them, as the Jews say there were at the confusion of languages at Babel; there may be more or less: *and none of them is without signification*: every language, and every word in a language, has a meaning in it, an idea annexed to it, which it conveys to him that understands it, and that can't be done without a voice ordinarily speaking.

Ver. 11. *Therefore if I know not the meaning of the voice,* &c.] The force and power of a language, the signification of it, the ideas its words convey, but only hear the sound of it: *I shall be to him that speaketh a barbarian, and he that speaketh shall be a barbarian unto me*: like one of those rude and uncultivated people that inhabit deserts and wild places, who can neither understand the language of others, nor be understood by others; and indeed may be meant of any sort of people, that don't understand one another's language: the word בר, *bar*, and ברא, *bara*, in the Chaldee, Syriac, and Arabic languages, not only signifies a field, a wood, or desert place, but also *without*, or any thing extraneous; and being doubled, signifies one that lives without, in another land; a stranger, and that speaks a strange language; so all other nations of the world were barbarians to the Hebrews, and particularly the Egyptians; see the Targum on Psal. cxiv. 1. and so were all other nations to the Greeks, see Rom. i. 14. and also to the Romans: and the sense is, that where the signification of a language and the sense of words are not known, the speaker is like a man that lives in a strange country to him that hears him; and the hearer is like to one that lives in a strange country to him that speaks, since they can't understand one another. The word sometimes is used for men, ἄφωνοι καὶ κωφοὶ[z], *that can neither speak nor hear*, men dumb and deaf; and when words can't be understood, the case is all one as with such persons.

Ver. 12. *Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts,* &c.] Gr. *of spirits*; that is, *of the gifts of the spirit*, as the Syriac version renders it; and we rightly, *spiritual gifts*; the extraordinary gifts of the spirit, for which the apostle does not blame them; these being what he had before exhorted them to covet earnestly, and zealously affect and desire: but then he further advises, *seek that ye may excel, to the edifying of the church*; above all, be desirous of such gifts, and of excelling in them, and abounding in the exercise of them, which may be most profitable and edifying to the members of the church; and what these were, and in what manner to be used, he had before signified: the Alexandrian copy reads, *seek that ye may prophesy*.

Ver. 13. *Wherefore let him that speaketh in an unknown tongue,* &c.] The Hebrew, or any other, the gift of speaking with which is bestowed upon him: *pray that he may interpret*: that he may have also the gift of interpretation of tongues; for as has been before hinted, these two gifts were distinct; and a man might have the one, and not the other; a man might speak in an unknown tongue, so as to understand himself, what he said, and be edified, and yet not be capable of translating it at once into the common language of the people; and if he could not do this, he would not excel in his gift to the edification of the church; whereas if he could interpret he would, and therefore, above all things, he should pray to the Father of lights, the giver of every good and perfect gift, that he might be furnished with this also.

Ver. 14. *For if I pray in an unknown tongue,* &c.] In the Hebrew tongue, which the greatest part of the Jewish doctors insisted[a] upon should be only used in prayer; which notion might be borrowed from them, and now greatly prevailed in the church at Corinth; and the custom was used by such as had the gift of speaking that language, even though the body and bulk of the people understood it not: *my spirit prayeth*: I pray with my breath vocally; or else with affection and devotion, understanding what I say myself, and so am edified; or rather with the gift of the spirit bestowed on me: *but my understanding is unfruitful*; that is, what I say with understanding to myself is unprofitable to others, not being understood by them.

Ver. 15. *What is it then?* &c.] A Talmudic way of speaking, and answers to מהו, often used when a difficulty arises in any case, then the question is, *what is it then?* what is to be done? what is most prudent, advisable, and eligible? what is proper to be determined and resolved on in such a case? the same with τί οὖν λεκτέον, *what then is to be said?* used by Philo the Jew[b]: as here, shall I not pray with the spirit at all, because my understanding, or that which I understand, is of no use to others, being not understood by them? shall I entirely neglect, lay aside, and make no use of the extraordinary gift of the spirit, bestowed upon me on this account? no: *I will pray with the spirit*; meaning not with the human breath, or spirit only, vocally, with an articulate voice, and distinct sounds, so as to be understood; nor with his own spirit, or in a spiritual way, with a spirit of devotion and fervency, with his whole heart and soul engaged in such service, though this is necessary to it; nor with the common and ordinary assistance of the spirit of God, though without this prayer cannot be performed aright, with faith and fervency, freedom and boldness; but with the extraordinary gift of the spirit, so as to pray in an extraordinary manner, with divers tongues, in an unknown language; this, as the apostle was capable of, he determined to use at proper times, and on proper occasions: but then he also resolves, *and I will pray with the understanding also*; not merely so as to understand himself, or with an understanding enlightened by the spirit of God; with a spiritual experimental understanding of things, so as to know the object of prayer, the way of access to him, the need of the spirit's influence, his own wants and necessities, and that he shall have the petitions he asks in faith, according to the will of God, all which is very requisite in prayer; but so as to be understood by others: his sense is, that though on some occasions he might choose to make use of his extraordinary gift, yet he would also pray in a language, in which he might be understood by the people; that so they might be able to join with him, and receive some fruit and advantage thereby; and

[z] Scholia in Aristoph. in Avibus, p. 550.
[a] Vid. Trigland. de Sect. Kar. c. 10. p. 170, 172.
[b] Leg. Alleg. l. 1. p. 48.

that their souls might be refreshed, as well as his: *I will sing with the spirit:* meaning also not with the spirit, or breath, singing vocally only; nor with his own spirit, with his heart engaged in the work, with grace in it, in the lively exercise of faith, hope, and love, with much spiritual light, knowledge, experience, and judgment, which are very necessary to the due discharge of this duty; nor merely with the ordinary aid of the spirit of God, which yet is greatly needful to excite attention, assist meditation, enlighten the understanding, raise the affections, strengthen faith, and make a comfortable application of what is sung; but as before, with the extraordinary gift of the spirit, by which the apostle was capable of delivering out a psalm, or hymn, extempore, and that in an unknown tongue: but then he also determines, *I will sing with the understanding also:* not to his own understanding, or by or with the understanding of what is sung, though that is absolutely needful; but to the understanding of others, and in a language also which may be understood by others, and in which they could join with him in that service: perhaps the apostle may have some respect to the title of some of David's psalms, משכיל, *Maschil*, which signifies *causing to understand.*

Ver. 16. *Else when thou shalt bless with the spirit,* &c.] Which must be understood of giving thanks to God, not in a private way, in the family and at meals, but in a public manner before the whole congregation, for mercies temporal and spiritual, especially the latter; and that not with the breath, or voice only; nor with the affections of the heart, with the soul, and all that is within it, though that is what should be; nor with the common assistance of the spirit, and under the influence of his grace, which excites to true gratitude; but with the extraordinary gift of the spirit, pronouncing the blessing, or expressing the thanksgiving with divers tongues, or in an unknown language: when this part of divine service, which by the way is distinct from singing, is performed in this manner, *how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned;* ἰδιώτης, *idiot.* The word הדיוט, *idiot*, is often used by the Jewish writers, and signifies a plebeian, one of the common people; and is sometimes indeed distinguished from a wise man, or a learned man; but frequently signifies a private person, whether learned or unlearned, that is not in so high a post as others; hence we read [c], דיינים הדיוטות, *of private judges,* which were not of the great sanhedrim, and of private men, as distinguished from kings [d]; "there are three kings, and "four הדיוטות, *private men,* (the Jews say,) that have "no part in the world to come; the three kings are "Jeroboam, Ahab, and Menasseh; the four *private* "persons are Balaam, Doeg, Ahitophel, and Gehazi:" here a private man is distinguished from the public minister that blesses, or gives thanks in the name of the people; and not to be understood of a single person, whose place and office it was to say *Amen,* at the minister's giving of thanks, and who stood in some particular place for that purpose; but of the whole body of the people, who, in distinction from the minister, were in the condition of private men, and all joined, as will be seen hereafter, in saying *Amen:* now the apostle's question is, that if thou who art a public minister, givest blessing and praise, or returnest thanks to God in an unknown tongue, how shall the common people, or any one that is in a private capacity, *say Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest?* It was usual to say *Amen* at blessing, or giving of thanks privately at meals, by those that were present, concerning which are the following rules [e]; "he that breaks the bread, might "not break it until the *Amen* was finished out of the "mouth of those that answered; Rab Chisdai says "out of the mouth of the major part of those that "answer:" and elsewhere [f] 'tis said, "they answer "*Amen* after an Israelite has blessed, but they do "not answer *Amen* after a Cuthite (a Samaritan, or "any Gentile, or Christian) hath blessed, unless the "whole blessing is heard:" but of this kind of blessing the apostle speaks not, but of blessing in public; upon which all the people, and not a single person only, as with one united voice, said *Amen:* see 1 Chron. xvi. 36. Neh. viii. 6. to this practice the apostle refers; concerning which the rule [g] is; "that the "congregation may not answer *Amen*, until the blessing is finished out of the mouth of the priests; and "the priests may not begin the other blessing, until "the *Amen* is finished out of the mouth of the congregation." There were different sorts of *Amen*, or rather different pronunciations of it; of which the Jews say [h], "they mayn't answer with a fatherless "*Amen;* nor with a sudden or violent *Amen;* (pronounced quick and in haste;) nor with an *Amen* cut "off, or asunder (the last letter of it not pronounced): "says Ben Azzai, whoever answers with a fatherless "*Amen*, his children shall be fatherless; with a quick "*Amen*, his days will be short; with an *Amen* cut "off, his days shall be cut off; and whoever prolongs "*Amen*, his days and years shall be prolonged." Now, אמן יתומה, *a fatherless Amen,* was when a person answered, and he did not know what he answered [i] to; and such an *Amen*, in the case here, must a private man answer with, at the giving of thanks in an unknown tongue; and to answer *Amen* to what was said in a language not understood, was not allowed of; so the woman suspected of adultery was to be sworn and examined by the priest in a language she understood; and was to say *Amen, Amen,* to what was said, in a language known to her [k]; for if she did not understand it, how could she say *Amen?* which is the apostle's reasoning here: but was this an affair of such importance, to be instanced in and argued upon in this manner? with the Jews it was, who say [l], "that greater is he that answers *Amen*, than he that "blesses:" and indeed they bestow very extravagant encomiums on those who say it in a proper manner;

[c] Misn. Yebamot, c. 12. sect. 1.
[d] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 90. 1.
[e] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 47. 1.
[f] Misn. Beracot, c. 8. sect. 8.
[g] T. Bab. Sota, fol. 39. 2.

[h] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 47. 1. Moses Kotsensis Mitzvot Tora, pr. affirm. 27.
[i] T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 12. 3. Succa, fol. 54. 1. & Megilla, fol. 72. 1.
[k] Maimon. Hilch. Sota, c. 3. sect. 7.
[l] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 53. 2. & Nazir, fol. 66. 2. Zohar in Gen. fol. 19. 2. & Baal Hatturim in Deut. xxvii. 15.

" there's nothing greater (they say[m]) in the sight of " the blessed God, than the *Amen* the Israelite answers " with; says R. Joden, whoever answers *Amen* in this " world, is worthy to answer *Amen* in the world to " come;" again[n], " says R. Joshua ben Levi, whoever " answers *Amen*, his name shall be great and blessed " for ever and ever; says R. Simeon ben Lakish, who- " ever answers *Amen* with all his strength, the gates " of paradise will be opened for him, according to " Isa. xxvi. 2." Moreover, it was a practice of the primitive Christians at the Lord's supper, at the close of it, to say with a loud voice *Amen*: the account Justin Martyr gives of it is this[o]; that " when the " minister had finished the prayers, and the thanks- " giving, all the people present, with a joyful accla- " mation, said *Amen*: which word, he observes, in " the Hebrew tongue, signifies *so be it*:" and this custom might obtain in the Corinthian church at this time, to which the apostle is thought by some learned men to refer.

Ver. 17. *For thou verily givest thanks well*, &c.] In very proper words, and pertinent expressions, with great affection and devotion, suitable to the service: *but the other is not edified*: the rest of the people, who don't understand the language in which thanks are given; *thy friend*, as the Syriac version reads it; or thy next neighbour, he that stands by thee, receives no manner of profit by it, because he does not understand what is said.

Ver. 18. *I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than you all.*] This the apostle says, to observe to them that he did not despise speaking with tongues: nor did he endeavour to beat them off, and dissuade them from desiring them, or envied their having them, because he was destitute of them himself; for he had this gift in a very eminent manner, and oftentimes made use of it, and was frequently under a necessity of so doing; he could speak with more tongues than any of those that had them, and spoke them oftener than they did; having occasion for them through his travelling into different countries, and preaching the Gospel to people of divers languages; and this he mentions also not in a boasting manner, but in great humility, giving thanks to God, and acknowledging him to be the author of this gift.

Ver. 19. *Yet in the church I had rather speak five words*, &c.] Referring not to the five books of Moses, as Jerom suggests, and much less, as the Papists say, to the five words, *for this is my body*; by the muttering of which they suppose the bread in the Lord's supper to be transubstantiated into the body of Christ; but meaning a very few words, which he chose to speak in the church before the congregation, when and where saints were met together for public worship, for their edification and comfort, and the glory of God; for though at other times, and to other people, he might think fit to make use of his gift in speaking with divers tongues, yet at such a time and place he thought it much more eligible to say ever so few words *with understanding*: so as to be understood by others, as well as himself: *that by my voice I might teach others also*; the doctrines of the Gospel, the mysteries of grace, the duty of men towards God and men, and one another: *than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue*: than to deliver ever so long an oration in a language not understood by them, which could be of no use unto them; for though they might hear his voice, the sound of his words, yet thereby he could not teach and instruct them to their profit, unless they understood the language which he spoke; and therefore five words understood were more likely to be of use than ten thousand spoken in a strange language.

Ver. 20. *Brethren, be not children in understanding*, &c.] There are some things in children in which it is reproachful for believers to be like them; as non-proficiency in knowledge, want of capacity to receive, bear, and digest strong meat; levity, fickleness, and inconstancy, unskilfulness in the word, deficiency of knowledge, want of understanding, not of things natural, but spiritual and evangelical; which is the more aggravated, since their understandings were opened and enlightened; an understanding was given them; the spirit of God, as a spirit of understanding, was bestowed on them; they had the Scriptures, which are able to make wise unto salvation, and the man of God perfect; and also the ministers of the Gospel to explain divine truths to them; and many had been a long time in the school of Christ, and might have been teachers of others; and yet, after all, were children in understanding, and needed to be taught the first principles of the oracles of God. The apostle here has chiefly reference to the gift of speaking with tongues, these Corinthians were so desirous of; which when they had it, was only to talk like children; and for them to prefer it to other gifts, which were more useful and beneficial, discovered their judgment to be but the judgment of children; and if they desired this, and made use of it for ostentation, it shewed a childish vanity, from which the apostle here dissuades: *howbeit in malice be ye children*: in other things it is commendable to imitate children, and be like them; as in innocence and harmlessness of conversation; to be meek, modest, and humble, free from pride and vain glory; to be without guile and hypocrisy, without rancour and bitterness, envying and malice, but tender-hearted, and ready to forgive. This the apostle recommends: *but in understanding be men*; or *perfect*, of ripe and full age, who have their senses exercised to discern between good and evil. גבר, *a man*, says Aben Ezra[p], in our language, signifies מלא דעת, *one full of knowledge*, as in Exod. x. 11. 'Tis not perfection of justification that is here meant, for babes in Christ are as perfect in this sense as grown men; nor a perfection of sanctification, for there is no such thing as this in any in this life; there's a perfection of sanctification in Christ, and of parts in every one that is a new creature; and as that denotes sincerity and uprightness, it is in all that have known the grace of God in truth; but then these are each of them as true of new-born babes, young converts, as of older Chris-

[m] Debarim Rabba, sect. 7. fol. 242. 2.
[n] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 119. 2. Shaare Zion, fol. 99. 2. 100. 2. 101. 1.
[o] Apolog. 2. p. 97.
[p] Comment. in Psal. xxxvii. 23.

tians, and strong men: but of knowledge and understanding in divine things; which though it is imperfect in the best, yet in some it is in greater perfection than in others; who may, in a comparative sense, be said to be perfect, or men of full age, who are arrived to a considerable ripeness and maturity of spiritual knowledge; and this is what believers should be pressing after, and desirous of, and make use of all proper methods, such as reading, hearing, and praying, to attain unto.

Ver. 21. *In the law it is written*, &c.] In Isa. xxviii. 11. for the word *law* is not be confined to the five books of Moses, but includes all the writings of the Old Testament; and this entirely agrees with the sense of the Jews. Says R. Azarias [q], "is it not to be "found with our wise men, of blessed memory, in "many places, that the word תורה, *law*, compre"hends the prophets, and the holy writings?" And he gives an instance out of the Talmud, and which indeed is very pertinent to the purpose, and is rightly produced, and will support the apostle in calling the prophecy of Isaiah the law, since it is so called in the following passage [r]. R. Chijah bar Aba says, that "R. Jochanan said, from whence is the resurrection "of the dead to be proved, מן התורה, *out of the law?* "from what is said in Isa. lii. 8. *thy watchmen shall lift "up the voice, with the voice together shall they sing.* "It is not said *they sing*, but *they shall sing*: from "hence the resurrection of the dead is to be proved "out of the law." And out of the same book the apostle cites the following words; *with* men of *other tongues, and other lips, will I speak unto this people, and yet for all that will they not hear me, saith the Lord:* the words, *men of*, are a supplement of our translators, and which does not seem very necessary: nor is any made in other versions. The words, as they are in our translation of the prophet, are read thus, *with stammering lips, and another tongue, will he speak to this people.* Some difference there is between the two passages, which are of no great moment: the words *lips* and *tongue* are inverted by the apostle; nor was it at all material to observe the strict order of them in the citation: and he has also rendered *stammering lips* by *other tongues*, and that very rightly: for the word לעג, used by Isaiah, does not signify stammering, but derision or mocking; so persons that are spoken to in a language they understand not, look upon themselves to be mocked and derided: and the apostle is to be justified by the Chaldee paraphrase, which renders the words, בשנוי מלל, *with change of speech*: that is, with another and different language. Moreover, it is to be observed, that the prophet delivers the passage in the third person, and the apostle cites it in the first: the reason of this is, because he adds these words to it, *saith the Lord*; partly for the sake of the authority of the words, and partly to engage the attention of the Corinthians to them; and certain it is, that Isaiah's meaning is, that the Lord would speak in such a manner to the Jews: the other phrase, *for all that will they not hear me*, are taken out of ver. 12. Some think that this prophecy refers to God's speaking, by the apostles on the day of Pentecost, with divers tongues, to the Jews; when, though there were three thousand converted at that time, yet these were but comparatively few; the body of the people remained incredulous, and hearkened not to the apostles, though their ministry was attended with such signs and wonders: but rather the sense seems to be this, that whereas the Lord had spoken in the plainest manner to the people of the Jews, by the prophets, as he would afterwards by the apostles, and had repeated his words so often, that even a child might be thought to be capable of receiving them; yet such was their stupidity and obstinacy, that they slighted and disregarded them; wherefore he threatens them he would take another method with them, and speak to them in his providences, by people of different and strange languages, as by the Chaldeans, Medes, and Persians, in the seventy years' captivity, and by the Romans, and other nations since, among whom they now are; and yet all this has had no effect upon them to listen to the doctrine of the prophets and apostles. Hence the Corinthians had no reason to be so desirous of speaking with divers tongues, since these have been threatened and used by God in a way of punishment to a people, and not a blessing.

Ver. 22. *Wherefore tongues are for a sign*, &c.] Of wrath and punishment inflicted on a rebellious and unbelieving people, and not of grace and kindness, as prophesying, or speaking to them by the prophets, was; and so this is an inference from what is said in the preceding verse, and shews, that there was no reason why believers should be so very desirous of them. But if these words refer to all that is said before on this subject, the word *sign* may be taken for a miracle; and so a new argument is formed against an over-fondness for divers tongues, and the use of them in public worship, shewing the preferableness of prophecy to them; for speaking with divers tongues was used in a miraculous way, *not to them that believe;* who have no need of miracles to raise their attention to what is said, and that it may gain credit with them, or to confirm their faith in it: *but to them that believe not;* to prepare them to listen to what might be suggested to them, when they see the persons speaking were endued with miraculous powers, and to engage their assent to it, and belief of it; and so with such persons, and for such purposes, was the gift of speaking with divers tongues used by the apostles, Acts ii. but inasmuch as the Corinthian church consisted of believers, there was no need of such a sign or miracle among them; wherefore, if they desired such gifts, and to make use of them, they should choose to do it, not in the church, but among unbelievers: *but prophesying* serveth *not for them that believe not;* that is, not for them only; for prophesying or explaining the prophetic writings, or preaching the word, may be, and often is, the means of converting unbelievers; yet this is not the only use, nor does it serve for, or administer comfort to unbelievers as such; but is profitable to, and serves *for them which believe:* it is for their edification, exhortation, and comfort, ver. 4. it is the means of building them up on their most holy faith; of quickening and stirring them up to the exer-

[q] Meor. Enayim, c. 7. fol. 47. 1.

[r] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 91. 2.

cise of grace, and performance of duty; of comforting them under various distresses, inward and outward; and of establishing, strengthening, and settling them, and therefore much more eligible to be used in a church of Christ, than speaking with tongues.

Ver 23. *If therefore the whole church*, &c.] The whole congregation of believers incorporated together in a Gospel church-state, consisting of its officers and private members: the church at Corinth is particularly designed: *be come together in one place;* to worship God, to pray unto him, sing his praise, preach and hear the word, as were usually done. Hence may be observed the custom of the primitive churches to meet together, in some certain place, for divine worship; nor did the members of them in common forsake the assembling of themselves together on that account, though it was the evil practice of some of them: the whole church, all the members of it, met together: and it may be seen from hence, that the church, and the place where it met, are two different things: *and all speak with tongues;* divers tongues, languages not understood; meaning, not that all that came together spoke with tongues; but that as many as did speak, should they speak with such, and without an interpreter. *And there come in those that are unlearned, or unbelievers;* either private Christians, who, though they have learned Christ, and understand the doctrines of the Gospel, yet are ignorant of languages; or rather the same persons with unbelievers, Heathens that have no knowledge of Christ, nor faith in him, and who also understood no other language but the Greek: if any such persons should come into the place where the church was met together, and should hear him or them that spoke, speak in a language they understood not, and which they were very well assured was equally unknown to the whole congregation, and so could be of no service to them: *will they not say ye are mad?* act like men in a phrensy, that have not the use of their reason; since speaking in a strange language to a congregation that know not one word of what is said, is speaking to the air, and to no profit at all to them that hear; and who but a madman would do this? The apostle here argues from the scandal and contempt that would be poured upon them by such a practice; and the rather he mentions this, because it seems as if their governing view was the glory and applause of men, in which, he suggests, they would be sadly disappointed.

Ver. 24. *But if all prophecy*, &c.] That is, all that speak publicly in the church, not together, but in their order, one after another, as is hereafter directed: *and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned* an unbeliever that has only the knowledge of his mother-tongue, in which prophesying or preaching is used: *he is convinced of all, he is judged of all;* of all the prophets or preachers; *they all reprove him, and detect his secret*, as the Arabic version renders the words; and to the same purport the Ethiopic. This must be understood of such persons whom the spirit of God, under, and by the ministry of the word, powerfully works upon; whose hearts he opens to receive the word, and to whom he effectually applies it; whom he convinces of sin, righteousness, and judgment, shews the evil of their hearts and ways, reproves their errors, convicts them of their mistakes, and informs their judgments, and condemns all their principles and practices which are not agreeably to the word of God.

Ver. 25. *And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest*, &c.] Not to the prophets, or preachers, or to the rest of the congregation, but to himself; the word preached being in the hands, and under the influence, direction, and application of the spirit of God, a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart; shewing the plague and naughtiness of it, discovering the lusts that are in it, detecting the errors of the mind, and filling the conscience with a sense of guilt, and a consciousness of deserved punishment; so that the person looks upon himself as particularly spoken to, and as if the person speaking had knowledge of all that was within him, and adapted his discourse on purpose to him, and delivered it for his sake alone; concluding, that there is, and must be, something more than human in it: *and so falling down on his face;* either publicly before the whole congregation; or when retired, as one ashamed of his sins and errors, and not able to look either God, or good men, in the face; and being in an adoration-posture; or however, being truly humbled before God under a sense of his iniquities, *he will worship God;* pray unto him, and earnestly entreat he would be merciful to him a sinner, and blot out all his trangressions, and forgive him all his sins; and will ever after acknowledge him to be the true God, embrace his Gospel, submit to his ordinances, and attend his service: *and report;* or *declare*, freely and openly to the church, to all men, to the world, and to his company from whence he came, and to whom he belonged, *that God is in you of a truth:* that the spirit of God, who is truly God, and searches the deep things of God, and reveals them, and the deep things of men, and makes them manifest, is in the prophets and preachers, otherwise they would never be able to make manifest the secrets of the heart as they do; and that the presence of God is in the church, and the power of God goes along with the ministration of the word: hereby, now many valuable ends are answered, a sinner is converted, God is worshipped and glorified, credit is brought to religion, the church of Christ is spoken well of, and prophets or preachers are honoured; wherefore prophesying, seeing it is both for the edification of believers, and conversion of sinners, ought to be desired, and made use of before speaking with tongues.

Ver. 26. *How is it then, brethren?* &c.] *Or what is it brethren?* The Arabic renders it, *what is the sense of my words?* The meaning of what he had said, the drift of his whole discourse; or rather the sense is, what is to be done in the case he was about to propose? *when ye come together;* as a church into one place, to worship God; *every one of you hath a psalm;* not that every one had this, or any other gift here mentioned, but that there were some among them that had one or other of these several gifts: some of them had a gift of composing and singing a psalm extempore; they delighted in psalmody, and were forward to promote it, and fond of spending the time wholly in it. *Hath a doctrine;* others of them had a gift of deducing doctrines out of the word of God, which is

profitable for that purpose, in an extraordinary manner, without study, and were capable of teaching them, and instructing men in them in a very edifying way: *hath a tongue:* others had the gift of speaking with divers tongues; or had knowledge and skill in the Hebrew tongue, could not only pray and sing in that language, and read the sacred text, but could deliver a sermon in it. *Hath a revelation:* others had a peculiar insight into the types and figures of the Mosaic dispensation, a clear view of the prophetic writings, and a large discovery of the mysteries of the Gospel, by the spirit, as a spirit of wisdom and revelation. *Hath an interpretation;* others had a gift of interpreting languages, particularly the Hebrew language, when any thing was delivered therein by another. Now the apostle answers to the question, what is to be done in such a case, where there is such a variety of gifts, and every one is desirous of exercising his peculiar gift? *let all things be done to edifying;* intimating, that each of these things might be done; every gift might be made use of: he that had a psalm might sing it; and he that had a doctrine might deliver it; he that had a tongue might speak with it; and he that had a revelation might declare it; and he that had an interpretation might make use of it; provided that care was taken that each was done in such a manner, as might be for the edifying of the church that was met together; otherwise, if it was only for ostentation-sake to make a shew of their gifts and talents, and to nourish their own pride and vanity, no good end would be answered; it had better be let alone: but if edification could be promoted, each gift might be employed; for which the apostle gives the following directions.

Ver. 27. *If any man speak in an unknown tongue,* &c.] He begins with the gift of tongues, with speaking in an unknown tongue, as the Hebrew language, because this they were desirous of: and the rule for this he would have observed is, *let it be by two, or at most by three, and that by course.* The Arabic version reads it, *let him speak to two, or at most three, and separately:* as if it respected the number of persons he was to speak to at a time, and that in a separate and private manner: but the apostle's sense is, that two such persons as had the gift of speaking in an unknown tongue, or three at most, should be only employed at one opportunity, lest too much time should be taken up this way, and prevent a more useful and edifying exercise; and that these should speak not together, which would be a mere jargon and confusion, and make them look like madmen, and render them entirely useless indeed; but in course, one after another, that so an interpreter might be able to take their sense, and render what they said, and express it in a language the people understood: for it follows, *let one interpret;* what the two or three had said. This practice seems to be borrowed from the Jews, who had such an officer in the synagogue as a *Methurgeman*, or *an interpreter*. The rise of which office, and the rules to be observed in the performance of it, are as follow, delivered by Maimonides[r]: "from the times of Ezra it has been customary that "an interpreter should interpret to the people what "the reader reads in the law, so that they may understand the nature of things; and the reader reads "one verse only, and is silent until the interpreter "has interpreted it; then he returns and reads a second verse; a reader may not raise his voice above "the interpreter, nor the interpreter raise his voice "above the reader. The interpreter may not interpret until the verse is finished out of the mouth of "the reader, and the reader may not read a verse until "the interpretation is finished out of the mouth of "the interpreter; and the interpreter might not lean "neither upon a pillar, nor a beam, but must "stand in trembling, and in fear; and he may not "interpret by writing, but by mouth: and the "reader may not help the interpreter[s]; and they may "not say the interpretation written in the law; and a "little one may interpret by the means of a grown "person, but it is no honour to a grown person to interpret by the means of a little one; and two may "not interpret as one, but one reads ואחד מתרגם, "*and one interprets*[t]." An interpreter might not interpret according to his own sense, nor according to the form of the words, or its literal sense; nor might he add of his own, but was obliged to go according to the Targum of Onkelos[u], which they say was the same that was delivered on Mount Sinai. The place they stood in was just before the reader; for so it is said[w], "the interpreters stand before the wise "man on the sabbath-days, and hear from his mouth, "and cause the multitude to hear." And elsewhere it is said[x], "the interpreter stands before the wise man, "the preacher, and the wise man (or doctor) whispers "to him in the Hebrew language, and he interprets to "the multitude in a language they hear," or understand. And sometimes these sat at his side, and only reported what the doctor whispered privately. So "it "is said[y], that when the son of R. Judah bar Ilai died, "he went into the house of Midrash, or the school, "and R. Chaniah ben Akabia went in and sat by his "side, and he whispered to him, and he to the interpreter, and the interpreter caused the multitude to "hear." And they never put any man into this office until he was fifty years of age[z]. Several of the Jewish Rabbins were interpreters, as R. Chananiah before mentioned, and R. Chutzphit, and others[a].

Ver. 28. *But if there be no interpreter,* &c.] None that has the gift of interpretation of divers tongues, and he that speaks with them has not that, which was sometimes the case: *let him keep silence in the church;* let him not make use of his gift publicly before the whole congregation, since without an interpreter it will be entirely useless: *and let him speak to himself, and to God;* he may make use of his gift to his own edification, and to the glory of God, by speaking with a low voice, or in his heart, which he himself may be

[r] Hilchot Tephilla, c. 12. sect. 10. 11.
[s] Vid. T. Bab. Roshhashana, fol. 27. 1. & Megilla, fol. 21. 2.
[t] T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 49. 1. & Maimon. Hilchot Ishot, c. 8. sect. 4.
[u] T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 50. 2. Gloss. in ib.
[w] Gloss. in T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 20. 2.
[x] T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 21. 1.
[y] Juchasin, fol. 44. 2.
[z] Ib. fol. 42. 1. & 44. 1, 2.

conscious of, and God the searcher of hearts, and that knows all languages, fully understands; and so may be edified himself, and God may be glorified by him; whereas, if he was to use it openly and publicly, it would not only be unprofitable, but an hinderance to others: or he might retire to his own house, and there exercise it by himself, and in the presence of God, when it might be of some use and advantage to himself, but would be highly improper to bring it into the church, or public congregation; for instead of assisting, it would but damp their devotion, and therefore it was very reasonable he should be silent there.

Ver. 29. *Let the prophets speak, two or three,* &c.] The apostle having finished the rules for speaking with an unknown tongue, proceeds to lay down some for the gift of prophesying; and observes, that where there are a number of prophets, as very likely there were in the church at Corinth, two or three of them might prophesy, or explain the prophecies of the Old Testament, or preach the Gospel at one opportunity or meeting: he does not use that restrictive clause, *at most*, as before, because if there was any necessity or occasion for it, more might be employed, so that care was taken not to burden the people, and send them away loathing; and this they were to do, as before, in course, one after another, otherwise it would be all confusion, nor could they be heard to edification. Though some have thought that they might speak together at one and the same time, in different parts of the church: *and let the other judge*: the other prophets that sit and hear, and all such as have a spirit of discerning, whether what the prophets say comes from their own spirits, or from a lying spirit, from the spirit of antichrist, or whether from the spirit of God; and even the body of the people, private members of the church, and hearers, might judge of the doctrine for themselves, according to the word of God, the standard of faith and practice; and were not to believe every spirit, but try them, whether they were of God, and their doctrines by his word, whether they were true or false; for the spiritual man is in a measure capable of judging all things of a spiritual kind, through that spiritual experience he has of the word of God, and divine things, and by the assistance of the spirit of God.

Ver. 30. *If any thing be revealed to another that sitteth by,* &c.] To another prophet that sits, and hears, and tries, and judges what he hears; if he has a clearer revelation made to him of what the other is speaking of, and has a more distinct knowledge of it, and is capable of removing any difficulty that attends it, and of expressing it more plainly, and of proving it more largely, and of setting it in an easier light to the understandings of men: *let the first hold his peace*; he that was speaking, upon such an intimation being made to him, let him stop, and give way to him that has the revelation, that the church may receive the benefit of it: hence it may be observed, that the custom of the primitive churches was to hear the word sitting, and the prophet or preacher stood, or sat, as he thought fit; see the note on Matt. v. 1. and that sometimes a revelation was made, and light conveyed to these prophets in a very sudden and extraordinary manner, when it was proper that it should be at once communicated for the good of the whole society: but this is to be understood only of those prophets or preachers, not of the common people; for it must not be thought that any that rose up, and pretended to a revelation, might be indulged to deliver it, and the speaker give way to him, which might be attended with much confusion, and many bad consequences: but only such who were known to have gifts, and who at certain times had peculiar revelations made unto them.

Ver. 31. *For ye may all prophesy one by one,* &c.] Not every member of the church, but every one that had the gift of prophecy; so that they were not confined to two or three prophets at a meeting, but as many as would, or as had any thing to deliver, and as time would allow; only care must be taken that confusion be avoided, and order preserved by exercising in turns one after another. This was agreeably to the custom of the Jewish synagogue, in which more might read and speak, though but one at a time; for "it is "forbidden to read in the book of the law, except "one only, that all may hearken, and be silent, that so "they may hear the words from his mouth, as if they "had heard them that very moment from Mount Sinai." So here, *that all may learn*: more of the doctrine of Christ, and of the mind and will of God, and attain to a greater knowledge in the mysteries of the Gospel, and in the duties of religion, even prophets and teachers as well as private members and common hearers; for there are none who know ever so much, but are capable of being further taught and instructed, and that sometimes by such whose gifts are inferior to them: *and all may be comforted*; or *exhorted*, or receive exhortation. The word used signifies both; and prophecy is useful both for exhortation and comfort, and that both to preachers and people.

Ver. 32. *And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets.*] Meaning either that the doctrines which the prophets deliver, the explanations they give of passages of Scriptures, the revelations they declare, are subject to the examination, judgment, and censure of other prophets; who have a right to try and judge them, either according to a more clear revelation they may have, or rather according to the sure word of prophecy, the Scriptures of truth; and indeed they are subject to the trial and judgment of the whole church, and therefore ought not to be stiff in their own sentiments, and obstinately persist in them, but cheerfully and readily submit them to be examined, and approved or disapproved by others; and particularly when one that sits by signifies he has something revealed to him, which will better explain, or give further light into what the speaker is upon, he ought to submit and give way to him; and thereby truth may be made manifest and established, instruction, edification, and comfort promoted, and peace and order preserved: or else the sense is, that the spiritual gifts of the prophets, and the inspirations and instincts by which they are acted, and the affections which are excited in them, are subject to themselves, so that they can use, or not use those gifts; though they have the word of the Lord they can forbear speaking, as Jeremy did, for a while, and as the case of Jonah shews; or they can refrain themselves and be silent, and wait till they have proper opportunity of speaking, being not like the prophets of false gods, who

are acted by an evil spirit, and observe no order or decorum, but with a sort of fury and madness deliver involuntarily what is suggested to them: but such is not the case of true prophets that are influenced and directed by the spirit of God, who will give way to one another; one will be silent while the other speaks, and by turns prophesy one after another; and where there is not such a subjection, 'tis a sign that the spirit of God is not in them, for the reason that follows.

Ver. 33. *For God is not the author of confusion, &c.*] Or disorder, or *tumult*, as the Syriac renders it; wherefore he does not inspire and excite his prophets to deliver themselves in a disorderly and tumultuous manner, so as to break in one upon another; but when one speaks, the other is silent, or when one has any thing revealed to him, and he signifies it in a proper manner, the other stops and gives way to him, and when he has done another succeeds, and so the rest in order, till the whole opportunity is filled up in an orderly and edifying manner; and whatever is contrary to, or breaks in upon such a method, God is not the author of: for he is the author *of peace*, harmony, unity, and concord among his prophets and teachers, and so of order, for the former can't be without the latter; where there is no order in the ministry, there can be no peace among the ministers, nor comfort in the churches; but God is the God of peace, he calls for, requires, disposes, and approves of peace and order among all his people: *as in all churches of the saints.* The Vulgate Latin reads, *as I teach in all*, &c. and so read some copies, and may refer to all that is said before; and the sense be, that all the rules he had prescribed concerning speaking with tongues, and prophesying, were not new ones, but such as he had directed to be observed in all churches he was concerned with, and which consisted of holy and good men; or God is the author, not of confusion, but of peace in all the churches; he orders and disposes peace among them, and they attend to it: peace and order, and not confusion and tumult, prevail in all churches that deserve to be called churches of the saints, and therefore were in this to be imitated by the church at Corinth.

Ver. 34. *Let your women keep silence in the churches, &c.*] This is a restriction of, and an exception to one of the above rules, that all might prophesy; in which he would be understood of men only, and not of women; and is directed against a practice which seems to have prevailed in this church at Corinth, allowing women to preach and teach in it; and this being a disorderly practice, and what was not used in other churches, the apostle forbids and condemns, and not without reason: *for it is not permitted unto them to speak;* that is, in public assemblies, in the church of God, they might not speak with tongues, nor prophesy, or preach, or teach the word. All speaking is not prohibited; they might speak their experiences to the church, or give an account of the work of God upon their souls; they might speak to one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs; or speak as an evidence in any case at a church-meeting; but not in such sort, as carried in it direction, instruction, government, and authority. It was not allowed by God that they should speak in any authoritative manner in the church; nor was it suffered in the churches of Christ; nor was it admitted of in the Jewish synagogue; there, we are told [b], the men came to teach, and the women לשמוע, *to hear:* and one of their canons runs thus [c]; "a woman may not read (that is, in the law), "בצבור, *in the congregation*, or church, because of "the honour of the congregation;" for they thought it a dishonourable thing to a public assembly for a woman to read, though they even allowed a child to do it that was capable of it. *But* they are commanded *to be under obedience, as also saith the law.* In Gen. iii. 16. *thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.* By this the apostle would signify, that the reason why women are not to speak in the church, or to preach and teach publicly, or be concerned in the ministerial function, is, because this is an act of power, and authority; of rule and government, and so contrary to that subjection which God in his law requires of women unto men. The extraordinary instances of Deborah, Huldah, and Anna, must not be drawn into a rule or example in such cases.

Ver. 35. *And if they will learn any thing, &c.*] If they are desirous of learning any thing in relation to doctrine, duty, or discipline, and of improving their knowledge of divine things, which is very commendable in them; if any difficulty arises in their minds whilst hearing the word, which they want to have removed, or any question to ask for information-sake, *let them ask their husbands at home;* privately, when retired from the public assembly; for though men might ask one another concerning this, and the other point, in the church, as was usual in the synagogue-worship, to which this church at Corinth in many things conformed; yet women were not allowed this freedom, and even in things which belonged to women to do; as for instance, making the cake of the first of their dough, which was to be an heave-offering to the Lord, the men were to teach the women at home how, and when to separate it from the rest [d]. So the apostle directs women, when they wanted to be informed about any point, to apply to their husbands at their own houses, if they were such as were capable of instructing them; if not, they might apply to other men that were Christian men, and men of knowledge, especially to the prophets, pastors, and teachers of the church, at their habitations: *for it is a shame for women to speak in the church:* it is a shame to themselves, as being contrary to the natural modesty and bashfulness of the sex, and a shame to the church, to the men-members of it, and especially to the elders, and more experienced part of it, to be taught and directed by a woman; it is a disgrace to herself and sex, as betraying uncommon pride and vanity, and an unnatural boldness and confidence; and a disgrace to the church to be under such a ministry and conduct.

Ver. 36. *What? came the word of God out from you? &c.*] That you must give laws to other churches, and introduce new customs and practices never known or used before? No; the word of the Lord came out of Zion, and the law or doctrine of the Lord, the word

[b] T. Hieros. Chagiga, fol. 75. 4. & T. Bab. Chagiga, fol. 3. 1.
[c] Maimon. Hilch. Tephilla, c. 12. sect. 17. T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 23. 1.
[d] Bartenora in Misn. Challa, c. 2. sect. 1.

of the Gospel, the doctrine of the grace of God, came out of Jerusalem. The apostles that first preached it were Jews, and they preached it first in their own land, and planted churches there, before it came to the Gentiles; and therefore the apostle suggests it would be right to consider what was the practice of the churches in Judea, the first Gospel-churches, concerning women's speaking in the church, and to conform thereunto; when they would be able to observe, that these first churches from whence the word of God came to them, disallowed of any such practice, but in this point agreed with the old synagogue: *or came it unto you only?* no, it came to many other nations, and people, and towns, and cities besides them; and many churches were formed among the Gentiles, who had no such custom, did not permit their women to speak in the church: and therefore why should they be singular and different from all others? other churches had the word of God, had gifts, and prophesying as well as they, and yet had introduced no such custom; and therefore it became them to pay a deference to the judgment and practice of others, especially since these were under, and acted according to the direction of the apostle, which they ought to have been subject to.

Ver. 37. *If any man think himself to be a prophet,* &c.] Or *seems to be a prophet*, and is really one; for the apostle does not so much design to strike at the pride, vanity, and appearances of false prophets, as to observe, that those that are really prophets, have the gift of prophesy, either of foretelling future events, or a peculiar gift of preaching the Gospel, and explaining the Scriptures, will allow what he had said to be right: *or spiritual:* not merely one that has the spirit of God, is regenerated and sanctified by him, in opposition to a natural and carnal man; or one that has a larger knowledge of spiritual things, in distinction from a babe in Christ; but one that is endued with spiritual gifts, with the extraordinary gifts of the spirit, with a discerning of spirits; as there were such among them no doubt, as well as prophets, and who were distinct from them, having the word of wisdom and knowledge: *let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord:* if he is a true prophet, and really a spiritual man, he'll clearly see, and therefore ought to own, that the rules here prescribed concerning speaking with tongues and prophesying, and concerning the intolerableness, unlawfulness, and indecency of women's speaking in public assemblies, are perfectly agreeable to the commands of Christ, and are to be esteemed as such, being delivered under the influence and direction of his spirit; and which the prophet and spiritual man must discern and allow, if they have the spirit of God; for whatever was commanded by the apostles under divine inspiration, was all one as if immediately commanded by Christ himself.

Ver. 38. *But if any man be ignorant,* &c.] Of these words, as the Arabic version adds, and does not know and own them to be the commandments of Christ; though he may profess himself to be a prophet, or a spiritual man, he is a very ignorant one, and has not the spirit of God he pretends to: and if he will not be convinced, but goes on to doubt, and call in question the truth of these things, and obstinately persist in his ignorance, *let him be ignorant:* let him be treated and despised as an ignorant man; and let his ignorance be no hinderance to any in receiving these rules and directions as the commandments of Christ; for no regard is to be had, or pity shewn, to a man of affected ignorance, and wilful obstinacy; such a man is not to be known and owned, but shunned and rejected.

Ver. 39. *Wherefore, brethren, covet to prophesy,* &c.] The apostle now draws to a conclusion, and reassumes the exhortation he gave in the beginning of the chapter, pressing the members of this church to desire the gift of prophecy, that being the most eligible and preferable to others, particularly to speaking with tongues, since it was the most useful and edifying, as he abundantly proves: *and forbid not to speak with tongues;* such as have that gift, and are desirous of exercising it, provided they observe the rules prescribed, and have an interpreter; this he adds to promote love, and prevent dissension and discord.

Ver. 40. *Let all things be done decently and in order.*] Which may refer not only to what is said in this chapter, but in the foregoing part of the epistle; go not to law before the unbelievers; let not a believing yokefellow depart from an unbelieving one; let not him that has knowledge sit in an idol's temple, and eat meat there; let not a man pray with his head covered, and a woman with her's uncovered; come not to the house of God to eat and drink intemperately, thereby reflecting dishonour and scandal on the ordinance of the Lord's supper; let not any speak in an unknown tongue in the church, without an interpreter, as if he was a madman, nor suffer women to teach in public; all which are very unbecoming, and contrary to the rules of decency: do not encourage animosities, factions, and parties; despise not the faithful ministers of the word, but honour and obey them in the Lord; neglect not the discipline of the church, lay on censures, and pass the sentence of excommunication on such as deserve them; keep the ordinances as they have been delivered, particularly that of the Lord's supper; observe the rules prescribed for prophesying and speaking with tongues, and so all these things will be done according to the order of the Gospel: and the words may be considered as a general rule for the decent and orderly management of all things relating to the worship of God, and discipline of his house; that in all things a good decorum, and strict order, be observed, that nothing be done contrary to the rules of decency, and the laws and commandments of Christ.

CHAP. XV.

THE apostle, in this chapter, recommends the Gospel, and gives a summary of it, proves the resurrection of Christ, and by various arguments establishes the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, and answers objections made unto it. He also sets forth the glory there will be upon the bodies of risen saints, and

the change that will be made on living ones; and concludes with an exhortation to perseverance in faith and holiness. As his chief view is the doctrine of the resurrection, he introduces this by recommending the Gospel in general, or by observing that this is a principal doctrine which should be remembered and retained, because it was the Gospel which he had preached, and they had received, and had hitherto persevered in, ver. 1. and besides was essential to salvation, and the means of it, by which they would be saved, if they retained it, except their faith in it was in vain, as it would be should they drop it, ver. 2. And moreover, the apostle had received it by divine revelation, and had faithfully delivered it to them, and therefore it became them to hold it fast; the sum of which were the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, agreeably to the Scriptures of the Old Testament, ver. 3, 4. and then he reckons up the eye-witnesses of the latter, as first Peter, then the twelve disciples, then five hundred brethren at one time; next James, and all the apostles; and last of all himself, ver. 5, 6, 7, 8. of whom he speaks in a very diminishing style, describing himself as an abortive, affirming himself to be the least of the apostles, and unworthy to be in that office, or bear that name, giving this as a reason for it, because he had been a persecutor of the church of Christ, ver. 9. wherefore he ascribes the dignity he was raised to entirely to the free grace of God; and yet he magnifies his office, and observes, that the gifts of grace bestowed upon him were not in vain, and that he was a more abundant labourer than the rest of the apostles, and had more success; but then he freely declares that all he had, and all he did, were by the grace of God, ver. 10. But however, not to insist upon the difference between him and other apostles; he observes, that the subject-matter of their ministry was the same, namely, a suffering and risen Saviour, and who was also the object of the faith of the believing Corinthians, ver. 11. wherefore the apostle proceeds to blame some among them for denying the doctrine of the resurrection from the dead, seeing it was a principal part of the ministry of the Gospel, that Christ was risen from the dead, ver. 12. whereas that would not be true, if there is no resurrection of the dead, ver. 13. but that Christ is risen, is not only evident from the testimonies of eye-witnesses before produced, but from the absurdities that follow upon a denial of it, as that the preaching of the Gospel was a vain thing, and faith in it also, ver. 14. yea, the apostles would be no other than false witnesses of God, testifying that he raised up Christ, when he is not risen, if the dead rise not, ver. 15. which argument is repeated, ver. 16. and other absurdities following such an hypothesis are added; as besides what was before mentioned, that faith becomes hereby a vain thing, such as have believed in him must be in an unregenerate state, and both under the power and guilt of sin, ver. 17. nay, not only so, but such who are dead in Christ, or for his sake are lost and perished, ver. 18. and even those of the saints who are alive must be the most unhappy and miserable of all mortals, ver. 19. But inasmuch as it is a certain point that Christ is risen, it is as clear a case that the saints will rise, which is argued from Christ being the first-fruits of those that are fallen asleep in him, which secures their resurrection to them, ver. 20. and from his being their covenant-head, as Adam was to his posterity; so that as all his offspring died in him, all the saints will be quickened by Christ, death coming by the one, and the resurrection by the other, ver. 21, 22. And whereas it might be objected, if this is the case, why did not the saints, who were dead before the resurrection of Christ, rise from the dead when he did, or quickly after? To which it is answered, there is an order observed agreeable to the first-fruits and lump: Christ, the first-fruits, is first, and then they that believe in him, ver. 23. and this will not be until the second coming of Christ, and the end of all things, when all the elect of God shall be gathered in; and then they'll be raised and presented to the father complete in soul and body, and all rule and authority among men will cease, ver. 24. But in the mean while Christ must reign until all enemies are subject to him, and the last of all that will be destroyed by him is death; which is another argument proving the resurrection of the dead; for if death is destroyed, the dead must rise, and never die more, ver. 25, 26. That all things will be put under the feet of Christ, every enemy, and so death, is proved from a testimony out of Psal. viii. 6. But to prevent a cavil, and secure the honour of God the father, he is excepted from being subject to him, ver. 27. so far is he from being so, that the son shall be subject to him, and apperr to be so as Mediator, by giving up the account of things to him; the end of which is, that God, Father, Son, and Spirit, may be all in all, ver. 28. The resurrection of the dead is further argued from the sufferings of the saints and martyrs of Jesus, for the sake of him and his Gospel, and particularly this doctrine of it, which are first figuratively expressed under the notion of a baptism, ver. 29. and then more literally and clearly signified by being in *jeopardy*, and exposed to danger of life continually, ver. 30. and which is exemplified in the case of the apostle himself, who was liable to death daily, ver. 31. of which he gives a particular instance in his fighting with beasts at Ephesus. Moreover, another absurdity would follow upon this, should this doctrine not be true; and that is, that a loose and licentious life, such an one as the Epicureans live, would be encouraged hereby, ver. 32. from which the apostle dissuades; partly from the pernicious effect of it, which he shews by a passage cited out of one of the Heathens, ver. 33. and partly from its being contrary to a righteous conversation, and from the stupidity, sinfulness, and ignorance, which such a course of life, upon such principles, declares, ver. 34. And then the apostle proceeds to answer questions, and remove objections relating to the resurrection of the dead; which questions and objections are put, ver. 35. which suppose the thing to be impossible and absurd, and to which answers are returned, first by observing, that grain which is sown in the earth first dies before it is quickened, and that it does not rise up bare grain as it was sown, but in a different form and shape, with additional circumstances greatly to its advantage; and has a body given by the power, and according to the pleasure of God, and suitable to the nature of the seed; by which is suggested, that in like manner the body first dies, and then is raised; and though the same body, yet it is raised in a different

form, or with different qualities, by the power, and according to the will of God; and therefore seeing there are every year such innumerable instances in nature, of dead and putrified grain being revived, it need not be thought incredible, impracticable, and absurd, that God should raise the dead, ver. 36, 37, 38. and that the body, though the same shall rise different from what it was when laid in the grave, is illustrated by the difference of flesh in men, beasts, fishes, and birds; which, though all of it flesh, differs from each other; and so will the flesh of the body, in the resurrection, differ from the flesh it is now clothed with, ver. 39. And the same is further illustrated by the difference there is in the heavenly and earthly bodies, in the sun, and moon, and stars, and in one star from another; all which have respect to the same, shewing not any difference there will be in risen bodies among themselves, but in risen bodies from what they now are, ver. 40, 41. as appears by the accommodation of these similes to the resurrection of the dead; and which differences are clearly expressed, the present bodies being corrupt, dishonourable, weak, and natural, the risen ones being incorruptible, glorious, powerful, and spiritual, ver. 42, 43, 44. And that the risen bodies will be spiritual, the apostle proves, by comparing Adam and Christ together; the one had a natural body, the other had a spiritual body after his resurrection, ver. 45. the order of which is given, the natural body of Adam was before the spiritual body of Christ, ver. 46. Their original is also taken notice of, the one being of the earth, the other from heaven, ver. 47. and so accordingly the offspring of the one, and of the other, are different; the offspring of the first Adam are earthly like him, and have a natural body, as he had; the offspring of the second Adam are heavenly, as he was, and will have a body like to his; for as they bear the image of the first man, from whom they naturally descend, by having a natural body like to his, so they must bear the image of the second man, the Lord from heaven, by having a spiritual body fashioned like to his glorious body, ver. 48, 49. And there is an absolute necessity for this, seeing bodies, in their present state, and case, as natural, mortal, and sinful, cannot be admitted into the possession of the kingdom and glory of the Lord, ver. 50. but inasmuch as all will not die, and so be raised again, but some will be alive at the coming of Christ and the resurrection of the dead, a difficulty arises how the living saints will come by spiritual bodies, in order to inherit the kingdom of God, without which they cannot inherit it: this difficulty the apostle removes, by making known a secret never divulged before, that at the same time the dead will be raised, which will be at the sounding of a trumpet; in a moment, at once the living saints will be changed, and become immortal and incorruptible, as the raised ones, ver. 51, 52. for so it must be that these corruptible and mortal bodies be clothed with incorruption and immortality, either by the resurrection of them, or a change upon them, when either way they will become spiritual, ver. 53. And hereby some prophecies in Isaiah and Hosea will have their accomplishment, ver. 54, 55. on the mention of which, some things in them are explained, as that sin is the sting of death, and the law is the strength of sin, which regard the prophecy in Hosea, ver. 56. and the victory obtained over death, which is mentioned in the prophecy of Isaiah, is ascribed to God, who gives it through Christ, to whom thanks are returned for it, ver. 57. And the chapter is concluded with an exhortation steadfastly to abide by the cause of Christ, and in his service; to which the saints are encouraged from this consideration, that they will find their account in it, ver. 58.

Ver. 1. *Moreover brethren, I declare unto you the Gospel, &c.*] The apostle here passes on, and proceeds to a new subject, the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, which some in this church denied; and which he undertakes to prove, establish, and defend; and in order to lead on to it, observes, that what he was about to declare, make known, or put them in mind of, was no other than the Gospel he had formerly preached to them, they had received, professed to stand in, and were saved by, unless their faith was in vain. The doctrine of the resurrection of the dead he calls *the Gospel*, that being a most important doctrine, and a fundamental article of it. The resurrection of Christ from the dead made a considerable part in the ministry of the apostles, to the grief of the Sadducees among the Jews, to the scorn of the Gentile philosophers, and to the faith, hope, and comfort of Christians: this is the sum and substance of the word of faith, or doctrine of the Gospel, upon which the whole depends; see Rom. x. 8, 9. and the resurrection of the saints is connected with it, and assured by it. This indeed is the Gospel, good news, glad tidings that the bodies of the saints shall be raised again, and made like to the glorious body of Christ; and being reunited to their souls, shall live with him to all eternity; and were this out of the Gospel, it would not be Gospel, or good news; it would be an idle story, faith would be a vain thing, and hoping and believing Christians of all men the most miserable. Moreover, says the apostle, the Gospel I declare, is *which I preached unto you*: meaning, when he first came among them, and which had been so very useful to them for conversion and consolation; and therefore if he himself, or an angel from heaven, was to preach any other doctrine, it was to be rejected; and hence, much less should the false teachers be regarded: yea, adds he, 'tis the doctrine *which also you have received*: when first enlightened and converted, with all gladness and joyfulness, with all readiness and cheerfulness, in the love of it, and by a full assent to it; and therefore having had such an experience of it, should not now depart from it: nay, he further says, *and wherein ye stand*: as he hoped they did, at least it was what they ought to have done, and doubtless was the case of the majority of them, and whose example it became the rest to follow.

Ver. 2. *By which also ye are saved, &c.*] It was the means of their salvation, and had been made the power of God unto salvation to them. Salvation is inseparably connected with true faith in Christ as a Saviour, and with a hearty belief of his resurrection from the dead, which is the earnest and pledge of the resurrection of the saints; and because of the certainty of it in the promise of God, through the obedience and death of Christ, and in the faith and hope of believers, which are sure and certain things, they are said to be saved already. To which the apostle puts in the following

provisos and exceptions; the one is, *if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you*; or rather, *if ye hold fast, or retain*; that is, by faith, the doctrine preached to you, and received by you, particularly the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead; for the salvation that is connected with it does not depend upon the strength of the memory, but upon the truth and steadfastness of faith: it is the man that perseveres in the faith and doctrine of Christ that shall be saved; and every one that has truly believed in Christ, and cordially embraced his Gospel, shall hold on, and out to the end; though the faith of nominal believers may be overthrown by such men, as Hymeneus and Philetus, who asserted, that the resurrection was past already; but so shall not the faith of real believers, because the foundation on which they are built stands sure, and the Lord has perfect knowledge of them, and will keep and save them. The other exception is, *unless ye have believed in vain*; not that true faith can be in vain; for that is the faith of God's elect, the gift of his grace, the operation of his spirit; Christ is the author and finisher of it, and will never suffer it to fail; it will certainly issue in everlasting salvation: but then as the word may be heard in vain, as it is by such who are compared to the way-side, and to the thorny and rocky ground; and as the Gospel of the grace of God may be received in vain; so a mere historical faith may be in vain; this a man may have, and not the grace of God, and so be nothing; with this he may believe for a while, and then drop it: and since each of these might possibly be the case of some in this church, the apostle puts in these exceptions, in order to awaken the attention of them all to this important doctrine he was reminding them of.

Ver. 3. *For I delivered unto you first of all*, &c.] Not only in the first place as to order; but among the chief and principal things, as the words will bear to be rendered, this was insisted on in his ministry; this was one he after relates, even a crucified Christ, or the doctrine of his dying for the sins of his people; and which he mentions to lead on to his resurrection; which he meant to improve, and does improve, in a very strong manner, in favour of the resurrection of the saints. This doctrine of a crucified Saviour, which he at first determined only to make known among them, and did make known, was what he fully and faithfully delivered to them, as he had received it: *that which also I received*: not from men, but from Christ; for from him he had the doctrines of the Gospel, as well as the ordinances of it; and he delivered nothing to be believed and practised, but what he had received, and which ought to be the practice and conduct of every Gospel minister; whatever they have received they should deliver, and nothing else: and especially the following important doctrine, *how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures*; that is, of the Old Testament, the writings of Moses, and the prophets, according to Scripture promises, Scripture types, and Scripture prophecies; particularly Gen. iii. 15. Psal. xxii. Isa. liii. Dan. ix. which declare that his heel was to be bruised, that he should be brought to the dust of death, should pour out his soul unto death, and be stricken and cut off in a judicial way, and that for sins; not his own, but for the sins of his people, in order to atone for them, procure the pardon of them, take them away, make an end of them, and abolish them; all which he has done, as the Gospel declares, and the apostle affirms; and thereby was accomplished what Moses and the prophets did say should come to pass. Every promise, type, and prophecy recorded in the law, in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning his sufferings and death, had their fulfilment in him; nothing was more clearly prefigured and foretold, and nothing more punctually and fully answered.

Ver. 4. *And that he was buried*, &c.] That is, according to the Scriptures; for as he died and rose again according to the Scriptures, he was buried according to them; which speak of his being in hell, in *sheol*, in the grave, and of his making his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, Psal. xvi. 10. Isa. liii. 9. and which had their accomplishment through Joseph of Arimathea, a rich man, who begged the body of Jesus, wrapped in linen, and laid it in his own new tomb. And besides these Scripture-prophecies of his burial, Jonas's being three days and three nights in the whale's belly was a type of it, and according to which our Lord himself foretold it, Matt. xii. 40. Now since this was prophesied of, and typified, and had its actual accomplishment, it was very proper for the apostle to take notice of it, both to confirm the certainty of Christ's death, and the truth of his resurrection, which his death and burial are mentioned, in order to lead on to, and next follows: *and that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures*; that he should rise again from the dead was very plainly hinted or expressed in several prophecies which speak of the rising of his dead body, of its not being left in the grave so long as to see corruption; and which therefore could not be in it more than three days; and of his lifting up his head after he had drank of the brook by the way; of his ascension to heaven, and session at the right hand of God, which suppose his resurrection, Isa. xxvi. 19. Psal. xvi. 10. and lxviii. 18. and cx. 1, 7. And that he should rise again the third day, is not only suggested in Hos. vi. 2. but was prefigured by the deliverance of Isaac on the third day after Abraham had given him up for dead, from whence he received him, in a figure of Christ's resurrection; and by Jonah's deliverance out of the whale's belly, after he had been in it three days. The Jews take a particular notice of the third day as remarkable for many things they observe*, as "of the "third day Abraham lift up his eyes, Gen. xxii. 4. of "the third day of the tribes, Gen. xlii. 18. of the third "day of the spies, Josh. iii. 16. of the third day of the "giving of the law, Exod. xix. 16. of the third day of "Jonah, Jon. i. 17. of the third day of them that came "out of the captivity, Ezra viii. 15. of the third day of "the resurrection of the dead, as it is written, Hos. vi. "2. after *two days will he revive us, in the third day* "*he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight.*" From which passage, 'tis clear, that they understood the prophecy in Hosea of the resurrection of the dead; and it is observable, that among the remarkable third days they take notice of, are the

* Bereshit Rabba, sect. 56. fol. 49. 3.

two instances of Isaac's and Jonah's deliverances, which were Scripture types of Christ's resurrection. From which observations they establish this as a maxim[f], that "God does not leave the righteous "in distress more than three days." That Christ did rise again from the dead, in pursuance of those prophecies and types, the apostle afterwards proves by an induction of particular instances of persons who were eye-witnesses of it.

Ver. 5. *And that he was seen of Cephas,* &c.] Or Simon Peter; for Cephas was a name given him by Christ, John i. 42. This was not another Cephas, one of the seventy disciples, as Clemens suggests[g], but the Apostle Peter himself, to whom it is certain the Lord appeared. Not that he was the first person by whom Christ was seen after his resurrection, for he first appeared to Mary Magdalene, Mark xvi. 9. but the testimony of the women the apostle omits, and it seems as if Peter was the first of the men that saw Christ when risen, see Luke xxiv. 34. Whether he was one of the disciples that went to Emmaus, to whom Christ joined himself, and entered into discourse with, is not certain; it should rather seem, that the appearance here referred to was when he was alone; *then of the twelve;* though there were then but eleven of them, Judas being gone from them, and having destroyed himself; and at the first appearance of Christ to them, there were but ten present, Thomas being absent; and yet because their original number, when first chosen and called, were twelve, they still went by the same name; see John xx. 24. Gen. xlii. 13. The appearance or appearances here referred to are those in John xx. 19, 26. The Vulgate Latin reads the *eleven;* and so the Claromontane exemplar.

Ver. 6. *After that he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once,* &c.] Not at, or near Jerusalem, for the number of the disciples that were together there, made but about an hundred and twenty, Acts i. 15. but in Galilee, where Christ, in the days of his flesh, had most chiefly conversed, most frequently preached and wrought his miracles, and where the number of his disciples and followers were very large: here he promised his disciples to go before them, and shew himself to them after his resurrection, as he accordingly did, Matt. xxvi. 32. and xxviii. 7, 16, 17. And this being signified by the apostles to the brethren there, 'tis no wonder that there was such a number of them gathered on that occasion: *of whom the greater part remain unto this present:* and so might be personally applied unto for the truth of this, was it necessary; it being but about five or six and twenty years ago at the writing of this epistle: *and some were fallen asleep:* were dead, as it might be reasonably thought there were among so many, and in such a length of time; though doubtless these had surviving friends, relations, and acquaintance, to whom they had communicated this important case, and who were ready to attest what they had heard them in the most solemn manner declare.

Ver. 7. *After that he was seen of James,* &c.] Not James the son of Zebedee, and brother of John, though he was seen by him with other disciples, John xx. 19, and xxi. 1, 2. who was now dead when the apostle wrote this, having been killed by Herod many years ago, Acts xii. 2. and so not quite so proper a witness to be mentioned; but James the son of Alpheus, and brother of our Lord, a man of great fame and credit with the Jews, and still living, and therefore a proper and pertinent evidence. This appearance was made unto him when alone; and though the Scripture elsewhere makes no mention of it, there is no room to doubt it, since the apostle here affirms it. As for the account of the appearance of Christ to this James, immediately after his resurrection, recorded by Jerom as he found it in the Gospel according to the Hebrews, it seems to be fabulous. His account is this[h]; "the "Gospel written according to the Hebrews, which "was lately translated by me into the Greek and Latin "tongues, and which Origen often uses, relates, after "the resurrection of the Saviour, that when the Lord "had given the linen cloth to the priest's servant, he "went to James, and appeared to him: for James had "swore that he would not taste any bread from the "time he had drank the cup of the Lord, until he saw "him rising from the dead. Again, a little after, "bring me, says the Lord, the table and the bread; "and it is immediately added, he took the bread, and "blessed, and brake it, and gave it to James the just, "and said unto him, my brother, eat thy bread, for "the son of man is risen from the dead." *Then of all the apostles;* at the Mount of Olives, when he led them out of Jerusalem, as far as Bethany, blessed them, and was parted from them, and ascended to heaven out of their sight, Luke xxiv. 50, 51. so that this was the last appearance of him on earth after his resurrection.

Ver. 8. *And last of all he was seen of me also,* &c.] Either when the apostle was caught up into the third heaven; or when he was in a trance in the temple at Jerusalem; or rather at the time of his conversion, when he not only heard the voice of Christ, but saw him in the human nature; for he expressly says, that he appeared unto him, and he calls it the heavenly vision, Acts xxvi. 16, 19. This was a sight of Christ in heaven, not on earth, such an one as Stephen had, and was a corporeal one; otherwise it would have been impertinent to have mentioned it, with the rest of the ocular testimonies of Christ's resurrection. Not that this was the last time that Christ was seen, or to be seen, for he was seen after this by the Apostle John in a visionary way, and will be corporeally seen by all the saints at the last day; but Paul was the last of the apostles and brethren before named, and he had his vision of Christ after them all; and perhaps it might be a more clear, full, and distinct one than any of the rest, as the last things are sometimes the most excellent. The apostle adds, *as of one born out of due time:* or *as an abortive:* not that he was really one, but like one: several learned interpreters think the apostle refers to a proverbial way of speaking among the common people at Rome, who used to call such supernumerary senators in the times of Augustus Cæsar, who got into the senate-house by favour or bribery, *abortives*[i], they being generally very unworthy persons; and therefore calls himself by this name, as being in his own opinion a supernumerary apostle, and very unworthy

[f] Mattanot Cehunah in ib.
[g] Apud Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. 1. c. 12.
[h] Catalog. Script. Eccles. sect. 3. fol. 90. I.
[i] Vid. Sueton. in Vita August. c. 35.

of that office: though others rather think that he refers to a *posthumous* birth, to one that is born after the death of his father; because that the rest of the apostles were all chosen, and called, and sent forth, whilst Christ, their everlasting father, was living on earth, but he not till after his death, resurrection from the dead, and ascension to heaven: but it seems best to understand him of an abortion, a miscarriage, or birth before its time; and may respect either the manner of his conversion, which was done both suddenly, immediately, and at once, by a sudden light from heaven, when he little thought of it, and had no expectation of it, which is commonly the case of abortions; and also powerfully and irresistibly, being effected by mighty and efficacious grace, as births before the full time are often occasioned by blows or outward force, and are violent extrusions of the fœtus; or else the state and condition in which he was when Christ was first seen by him: as to his bodily state, as soon as ever he saw the light about him, and the object by it, he was struck blind, and continued so some days, like an hidden untimely birth, and like an infant that never saw light, Job iii. 16. And as to his spiritual estate, his soul was like an unshapen fœtus, Christ being not yet formed in him, his image instamped on him, and his grace implanted in him; yea, it may be applied to the present apprehensions he had of himself, and which he expresses without a figure in the next verse, though in a beautiful manner, with a view to what he here says, when he observes that he was *the least of the apostles, and not meet to be called* one; as an abortive, or one born before its time, is imperfect in one respect or another, is not come to its proper bigness and shape, and scarcely is to be reckoned in the class and number of men.

Ver. 9. *For I am the least of the apostles*, &c.] Referring not to the littleness of his stature, but to the figure before used, and as expressing not the opinion of others concerning him, but the true and real sense he had of himself, for which he himself gives the strongest reason that can be given; and by *apostles* he means not only the twelve, but all other ministers of the Gospel that were sent forth by Christ to preach it; nor need this be wondered at, when he says, that he was *less than the least of all saints*, Eph. iii. 8. though when his person and doctrines were traduced by false teachers, and attempts were made to disgrace his ministry, and render it useless, in vindication of himself, and without vanity, he does not stick to assert, that he was not a whit behind the very chiefest of the apostles, 2 Cor. xi. 5. and xii. 11. and yet here adds, *that am not meet to be called an apostle*; not only to be one, but to bear the name of one. No man was meet or fit for such an office of himself; none of the apostles were any more than himself; but his meaning is, that though he was chosen, and called, and qualified by the gifts and grace of God for this office, yet he was unworthy to be called by the name of an apostle of Christ, for the reason following, *because I persecuted the church of God*: he not only consented to the death of Stephen, the first martyr, and held the clothes of them that stoned him; but he made havoc of the church, haling men and women to prison, and continued to breathe out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord; and had letters of commission from the high-priest in his pocket, to seize any of this way at Damascus, and bring them bound to Jerusalem, when Christ met him in the way, and was seen by him: according to his own account, he shut up many of the saints in prison, gave his voice against them when they were put to death, punished them oft in every synagogue, compelled them to blaspheme, and being exceeding mad against them, persecuted them to strange cities; see the Acts of the Apostles, ch. vii. and viii. and ix. and xxvi. This he mentions both for his own abasement and humiliation, and to magnify the grace of God, to which he ascribes all he was, had, and did, as in the next verse.

Ver. 10. *But by the grace of God I am what I am*, &c.] As he was what he was by the grace of God in a private capacity, upon a level with other Christians, being a chosen vessel of salvation, not by works, nor on account of faith, or any holiness of his, but by grace; being regenerated, called, sanctified, justified, pardoned, and adopted by it; being a believer in Christ through faith, as a gift of God's grace, and having a good hope of eternal glory the same way; so he was what he was, as a minister of the Gospel, as an apostle, as in that high office purely by the grace of God: he was not made one by men, nor by his education, learning, and industry, nor through any merits of his own, but by the free favour and sovereign will of God, bestowing on him gifts and grace, by which he was qualified for apostleship, and to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ: *and his grace which was bestowed on me was not in vain*; by *grace*, in the former clause, is meant the good will and free favour of God, from whence all the blessings of goodness arise; here the gifts of grace, particularly such as qualify for the ministry. For what qualifies men for the preaching of the Gospel is not human learning, nor natural parts, nor internal grace, neither separately nor altogether: but peculiar gifts, which lie in an understanding of the Scriptures, and the doctrines of the Gospel, and in an aptitude to explain and teach them to the edification of others: and these gifts are not of nature, nor acquired by art and industry, but are of grace; are gifts freely bestowed by God, and are not in vain, at least should not be; they are not to be wrapped up in a napkin, and hid in the earth; they are not to be neglected, but to be stirred up and improved by prayer, meditation, reading, constant study, and frequent use, as they were by the apostle; and by a divine blessing were not without their use, to the good of souls, and the glory of God. Hence as what he was, so what he had, was by the grace of God, and likewise what he did, as follows: *but I laboured more abundantly than they all*; meaning, not the false apostles, who were loiterers, and not labourers, but the true apostles of Christ; not than them all put together, but than any one of them singly considered; he laboured in the Lord's vineyard, in the word and doctrine, preaching in season and out of season; he travelled over a greater part of the world, preached oftener, and wrote more than any of the rest; was the instrument of converting more souls, and he planted more churches, endured more hardships and sufferings than any of the other apostles. *Yet*

not I, but the grace of God which was with me: he attributes all to the grace of God, and nothing to himself; it was the grace of God that made him an apostle of Christ, and preacher of the Gospel; it was that which being bestowed on him qualified him for it; it was that which enabled him to labour and toil, to do and suffer all he did, and which gave success to all his ministrations. He is exceedingly careful to magnify the free favour of God, and the gifts of his grace; and means not the grace that was in him, but the grace that was without him, though with him.

Ver. 11. *Therefore whether it were I or they,* &c.] By whom Christ was seen first or last, we were all eye-witnesses of him; or whether I am the least, and others the chief of the apostles; or whether I have laboured more abundantly than they all, this matters not: *so we preach;* we agree in our ministry to preach Christ, and him only, and with one heart and mouth assert, that he died, was buried, and rose again the third day: *and so ye believed;* these several truths relating to the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. Thus the apostle, after he had made a digression upon his own character, as one of the witnesses of Christ's resurrection, returns to the subject he set out upon in the beginning of the chapter, in order to lead on to the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, which he proves by the resurrection of Christ, in the following verses. One of Stephen's copies read, *so we believed;* and so the Ethiopic version seems to have read; see 2 Cor. iv. 13.

Ver. 12. *Now if Christ be preached that he arose from the dead,* &c.] As he was by the Apostle Paul, when at Corinth, and by all the rest of the apostles elsewhere. *How say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?* Who these were is not certain, whether Hymeneus and Philetus, whose notion this was, were come hither, or any of their disciples; or whether they were some of the followers of Simon Magus and Cerinthus, who denied the resurrection; or rather, whether they were not Jews, and of the sect of the Sadducees, who though they believed in Christ, retained their old principle, that there is no resurrection of the dead, cannot be affirmed: however, it is certain that they were such as were then at Corinth, and went under the Christian name; and 'tis highly probable were members of the church there; and who not only held this notion privately, but broached it publicly, saying, declaring, affirming, and that openly, before the whole church, what were their opinions and sentiments: it was indeed but some of them, not all that were chargeable with this bad principle, which the apostle asks how, and with what face they could assert, then it had been preached, and so fully proved to them, that Christ was risen from the dead; and if so, then it is out of question that there *is* a resurrection of the dead: for their notion, as it is here expressed, was not only that there would be no resurrection of the dead, but that there was none, nor had been any: though the apostle's view is also to prove the future resurrection of the dead, and which is done by proving the resurrection of Christ, for his resurrection involves that of his people: for not only the saints rose in, and with Christ, as their head representatively, and which is the sense of the prophecy in Hos. vi. 2. but because he is their head, and they are members of him, therefore as sure as he the head is risen, so sure shall the members rise likewise; nor will Christ's resurrection, in a sense, be perfect, until all the members of his body are risen: for though the resurrection of Christ, personally considered, is perfect, yet not as mystically considered; nor will it till all the saints are raised, of whose resurrection Christ's is the exemplar and the pledge: their bodies will be raised and fashioned like unto Christ's, and by virtue of union to him, and as sure as he is risen, for he is the first-fruits of them that slept. Besides, as he became incarnate, obeyed, suffered, not for himself, but for his people, so he rose again on their account, and that they dying might rise also; which if they should not, one end at least of Christ's resurrection would not be answered: add to this, that the same power that raised Christ from the dead, can raise others, even all the saints; so that if it is allowed that Christ is raised, it need not be thought incredible that all the dead shall be raised; and particularly when it is observed, that Christ is the efficient, procuring, and meritorious cause of the resurrection from the dead, as well as the pattern and earnest of it.

Ver. 13. *But if there be no resurrection of the dead,* &c.] If there is no such thing as a resurrection of any, if the thing is not possible, if it never has been, is, or will be true in fact: *then is Christ not risen.* The apostle argues from a general, to a particular; from the general resurrection of the dead, to the particular resurrection of Christ; and from a negation of the one, to a negation of the other; for what does not agree with the whole, does not agree with the part; and what is true of the whole, is true of the part; but if the resurrection of Christ is not true, many are the absurdities that must follow upon it, and which the apostle next enumerates.

Ver. 14. *And if Christ be not risen,* &c.] If this is a truth, and must be taken as granted, as it must be, if there is no resurrection at all: *then is our preaching vain;* false, empty, delusory, unprofitable, and useless; not only that part of it which more especially concerns the resurrection of Christ, but even the whole of it; preaching Christ as the son of God, which was the subject of the apostle's ministry, and which he set out with, is to no purpose, if he is not risen; for one considerable proof of his sonship depends upon his resurrection, which is the declaration of it; for who can believe him to be the son of God, if he is detained under the power of the grave? one reason why he could not be held of death, and the pains and cords of it, any longer than was necessary, and was his pleasure, was because he was the son of God, as well as surety of his people, who had paid the whole debt: so the preaching of his incarnation, obedience, sufferings, and death, is of no use and avail, if he has not abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light, first in himself, and then for his people: *and your faith is also vain:* either the grace of faith, by which they believe upon Christ, or the doctrine of faith; or since this is repeated, ver. 17. the one may be meant here, and the other there. The doctrine of faith they had given their assent to, not only respecting the resurrection of Christ, but any other truth relating to his person and office, must be

vain and empty, and without any foundation; even that faith which is one, uniform, harmonious, and consistent, which was once delivered to the saints; which they are to stand fast in, to strive, contend, and fight for, and not part with at any rate, upon any account whatever; and yet this, and the preaching and belief of it, are useless and insignificant things, if Christ is not risen; such wretched absurdities must follow upon the denial of that truth.

Ver. 15. *Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God,* &c.] The apostles were chosen to be witnesses of the resurrection of Christ; he appeared to them, and was seen by them for this purpose; and they were sent into all the world, to bear their testimony to this truth, which they accordingly did: now if Christ is not risen, they have bore a false testimony; and what greater scandal, or a more odious character can be fixed upon a man, than to be a false witness? but God forbid that such an imputation should be fastened upon the holy apostles of Christ, who can't be thought to have any sinister end in publishing such a falsehood; who were sure on account of declaring it, and abiding by it, to meet with nothing but hatred, reproach, persecution, poverty, and death; but this is not all, nor the worst; for if they are false witnesses, they are false witnesses of God; they are of his suborning; he selected them as witnesses; he must put this lie into their mouths, and send them into the world under his authority to publish it; than which to say nothing can be thought of more blasphemous and execrable; and yet this must follow, upon a denial of the resurrection of Christ: *because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ, whom he raised not up, if so be the dead rise not*, it may be read, *we have testified against God*, as the Vulgate Latin does; for as it must be bringing a false testimony from God, so it must be bearing a false testimony against him, to say that he raised Christ from the dead, when he is not risen; which must be the case, if there is no resurrection of the dead.

Ver. 16. *For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised.*] This is a repetition of the argument in ver. 13. made partly to shew the importance of it, and partly to observe other absurdities, following upon the conclusion of it.

Ver. 17. *And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain,* &c.] As before in ver. 14. not only the doctrine of faith, but the grace of faith in Christ; even that faith, which is the faith of God's elect; the pure gift of his grace, and the operation of his power; which Christ is the object, author, and finisher of; and which he prays for, that it may not fail; and to which salvation is so often promised in the sacred Scriptures; and yet is vain, than which nothing can be more absurd: it follows, *ye are yet in your sins;* in a state of nature and unregeneracy, under the power and dominion of sin, being neither regenerated nor sanctified; for regeneration is owing to the resurrection of Christ from the dead, and is a branch of the power, virtue, and efficacy of it: but if Christ is not risen, there never was, is, or will be any such thing as regeneration and sanctification; things, if ever wrought by the spirit, are done by him in virtue, and in imitation of the resurrection, as well as the death of Christ: moreover, if Christ is not risen, his people are under the guilt of their sins; there is no expiation nor remission of them, nor justification from them; for though he was delivered as a sacrifice to atone for their offences, and his blood was shed to obtain the forgiveness of their sins, yet he must be raised again for their justification, and be exalted as a Prince and a Saviour, as to give repentance, so remission of sins, or they will never enjoy these blessings; for notwithstanding his sufferings and death, if he lies under the power of the grave, they must remain under the power and guilt of sin, and be liable to everlasting punishment for it.

Ver. 18. *Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ,* &c.] That is, who are dead, and have died in Christ: death is often represented by a sleep, and that more than once in this chapter; and doubtless with a view to the resurrection, which will be an awaking out of it, since it will not be perpetual: some understand this of such only who were fallen asleep, or died martyrs for the sake of Christ and his Gospel; as Stephen, James the brother of John, and others; but rather it designs all such as die in Christ, in union with him, whether in the lively exercise of faith, or no; of whom it must be said, if Christ is not risen, that they *are perished;* soul and body; for if there is no reason to believe the resurrection of the dead, there is no reason to believe the immortality of the soul, or a future state, but rather that the soul perishes with the body, and that there is no existence after death: though should it be insisted on that the soul survives, and shall live without the body to all eternity, it must be in a state of misery, if Christ is not risen, because it must be in its sins; and neither sanctified nor justified, and consequently can't be glorified, so that the whole may be said to be perished; the body perishes in the grave, the soul in hell; but God forbid that this should be said of those, who have either died for Christ, or in him: can it be that any that are in Christ, that are united to him, one body and spirit with him, should ever perish? or those that are asleep in him be lost? no, those that sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him at the last day, who shall be for ever with him, and for ever happy.

Ver. 19. *If in this life only we have hope in Christ,* &c.] The object of a believer's hope is not any creature, man, or angel; nor any creature-enjoyment, as gold and silver; nor any creature-righteousness, moral, legal, and civil; nor any external privilege, or profession of religion; but Christ alone as a surety, Saviour, and Redeemer; his person, blood, righteousness, sacrifice, and fulness: and what they hope for in him are, all grace, and the supplies of it; the forgiveness of their sins, the justification of their persons, eternal life and salvation; grace here, and glory hereafter; for all which they have great reason and encouragement to hope in him; but if their hope in him was only in this life, or whilst this life lasts; if they had not hope in death, that they should live again, and after death for the resurrection of their bodies; or if they hoped in Christ only for the things of this life, or as the Arabic version renders it, *if we from Christ, and by him, expect happiness in this world only;* if our hope in him is bounded with this life, and confined to the things of it, and does not

reach to the things of another life, the things of eternity, the invisible glories of another world, to be enjoyed in soul and body; *we are of all men the most miserable:* which may have respect not only to the apostles, though eminently true of them, who had little of the comforts of this life, being continually exposed to hardships and persecution for the sake of Christ; were set forth as a spectacle to angels and men; were accounted the filth of the world, and the off-scouring of all things; and suffered many indignities, and great reproach and affliction, and that for asserting the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead; but is also true of all others that hope in Christ, and believe in him; for these not only deny themselves the pleasures, honours, and profits of this world, but are exposed continually to the hatred, reproach, and persecution of it; they are chastised by God as other men are, that they may not be condemned with the world, and yet they must be condemned, if Christ is not risen; they are harassed and distressed by Satan, who follows them with his temptations and suggestions, which are so many fiery darts, which give them great pain and uneasiness, when others are unmolested by him; they groan under a body of sin they carry about with them, and desire and long to be unclothed, that they might be clothed upon with glory and immortality; and yet these very desires and earnest longings after a blessed eternity do but add to their misery, if there is no foundation for them, and they will at last be frustrated: these are the sad conclusions, and wretched absurdities that must follow, upon the denial of the resurrection of the dead, and of Christ.

Ver. 20. *But now is Christ risen from the dead,* &c.] As was before proved by ocular testimonies, and before preached and asserted; and now re-assumed and concluded, from the glaring contradictions, and dreadful absurdities that follow the denial of it: *and became the first-fruits of them that slept;* who were already fallen asleep; respecting chiefly the saints that died before the resurrection of Christ; and if Christ was the first-fruit of them, there's no difficulty of conceiving how he is the first-fruits of those that die since. The allusion is to the first-fruits of the earth, which were offered to the Lord: and especially to the sheaf of the first-fruits, which was waved by the priest before him, Deut. xxvi. 2. Lev. xxiii. 10, 11. and to which Christ, in his resurrection from the dead, is here compared. The first-fruits were what first sprung out of the earth, were soonest ripe, and were first reaped and gathered in, and then offered unto the Lord; so Christ first rose from the dead, and ascended to heaven, and presented himself to God; as the representative of his people; for though there were others that were raised before him, as the widow of Sarepta's son by Elijah, the Shunamite's son by Elisha, and the man that touched the prophet's bones when put into his grave, and Jairus's daughter, the widow of Naim's son, and Lazarus by Christ; yet as these did not rise by their own power, so only to a mortal life: but Christ, as he raised himself by his own power, so he rose again to an immortal life, and was the first that ever did so; he was the first to whom God shewed, and who first trod this path of life. The first-fruits were the best, what was then ripest, and so most valuable; Christ is the first, and rose the first in dignity, as well as in time; he rose as the head of the body, as the first-born, the beginning, that in all things he might have, and appear to have, as he ought to have, the pre-eminence. The first-fruits sanctified the rest of the harvest, represented the whole, gave right to the in-gathering of it, and ensured it; Christ by lying in the grave, and rising out of it, sanctified it for his people, and in his resurrection represented them; they rose with him, and in him; and their resurrection is secured by his; because he lives, they shall live also. The first-fruits were only such, and all this to the fruits of the earth, that were of the same kind with them, not to tares and chaff, to briers and thorns; so Christ, in rising from the dead, is only the first-fruits of the saints; of such as are the fruits of his death and of his grace, who have the fruits of his spirit in them, and are filled with the fruits of righteousness by him; just as he is the first-born from the dead, with respect to the many brethren, to whom he stands in the relation of a first-born: once more, as the allusion is particularly to the sheaf of the first-fruits, 'tis to be observed, that that was waved before the Lord, the morrow after the sabbath, Lev. xxiii. 11. which, as the Jews [f] interpret, was the morrow after the first good day, or festival of the passover; the passover was on the fourteenth day of the month; the festival, or Chagiga, on the fifteenth, and which, in the year that Christ suffered, was a sabbath-day also; and the morrow after that, the sheaf of the first-fruits was waved; now Christ suffered on the passover, rested in the grave on the seventh-day sabbath, and on the morrow after that, rose from the dead, the very day that the first-fruits were offered to the Lord: so that the allusion and phrase are very appositely used by the apostle.

Ver. 21. *For since by man came death,* &c.] The first man, by sin, was the cause of death; of its coming into the world, and upon all men, by which corporeal death is here meant; though the first man also by sin brought a moral death, or a death in sin on all his posterity; and rendered them liable to an eternal death, which is the just wages of sin; but since the apostle is treating of the resurrection of the body, a bodily death seems only intended: *by man came also the resurrection of the dead;* so God, in his great goodness and infinite wisdom has thought fit, and he has so ordered it, that it should be, that as the first man was the cause of, and brought death into the world, the second man should be the cause of the resurrection of life. Christ is the meritorious and procuring cause of the resurrection of his people; he by dying has abolished death; and by rising from the dead has opened the graves of the saints, and procured their resurrection for them, obtained for them a right unto it, and made way for it: and he is the pattern and exemplar, according to which they will be raised; their vile bodies will be fashioned, and made like to his glorious body; and whereas both in life and in death they bear the image of the first and earthly man, in the resurrection they will bear the image of the second and heavenly one:

[f] Targum & Jarchi in Lev. xxiii. 11.

he also will be the efficient cause of the resurrection; all the dead will be raised by his power, and at the hearing of his voice; though the saints only will be raised by him, in virtue of their union to him, and interest in him, being members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

Ver. 22. *For as in Adam all die, &c.*] The apostle here shews who he meant in the former verse, by the one man the cause of death, and by the other the author of the resurrection of the dead, and that he intended Adam and Christ; all men were in Adam seminally, as the common parent of human nature, in such sense as Levi was in the loins of Abraham when Melchizedek met him, and in him paid tithes unto him; and they were all in him representatively, he being the federal head of all his posterity, and so a type and figure of Christ that was to come; and being in him, they all sinned in him, and so died in him, the sentence of death passed on them in him; they became subject to a corporeal death, which has ever since reigned over mankind, even over infants, such who have not sinned after the similitude of his transgression; this was the doctrine of the Jewish church; see the note on Rom. v. 12. to which may be added one testimony more; says[z] one of their writers, "by the means of the first Adam "נקנסה מיתה לכל, *death was inflicted by way of punish-" ment on all:*" *even so in Christ shall all be made alive;* not made spiritually alive, for Christ quickens whom he will; not all in this sense, some die in their sins; nor are all entitled to an eternal life; for though Christ has a power to give it, yet only to those whom the father has given to him; 'tis true indeed, that all that are in Christ, chosen in him and united to him, are made alive by him, and have the gift of eternal life through him; but the apostle is not speaking of such a life, but of a corporeal one: to be quickened or made alive, is with the Jews, and other eastern nations, a phrase of the same signification with being raised from the dead, and as the context here shews; and not to be understood of the resurrection of all men, for though there will be a resurrection of the just and unjust, yet the one will be the resurrection of life, and the other the resurrection of damnation; now it is of the former the apostle here speaks, and expresses by being made alive: and the sense is, that as all that were in Adam, all that belonged to him, all his natural seed and posterity, all to whom he was a federal head, died in him, became mortal, and subject to death through him; so all that are in Christ, that belong to him, who are his spiritual seed and offspring, to whom he is a covenant-head, and representative, shall be raised to an immortal life by him; or as all the elect of God died in Adam, so shall they all be quickened, or raised to life in and by Christ.

Ver. 23. *But every man in his own order, &c.*] Not of time, as if the saints that lived in the first age of the world should rise first, and then those of the next, and so on to the end of the world; nor of dignity, as that martyrs should rise first in the order of martyrs, and preachers of the word in the order of preachers, and private Christians in the order and rank of private Christians; or of age, as the elder first, and then the younger; or of state and condition, as married persons in the order of married persons, and virgins in the order of virgins; these are all foreign from the sense of the words; the order regarded is that of head and members, the first-fruits and the harvest. There seems to be an allusion to the ranging and marshalling of the Israelites, every one by his *own standard;* which both the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan render על טקסיה, *by* or *according to his own order;* and so the Septuagint κατα ταγμα, the word here used; and the sense is, that every man shall be raised from the dead, according to the head under which he is ranged and marshalled. Christ the head is risen first; next all those that are under him, as an head, will rise from the dead; the dead in Christ will rise first; and then a thousand years after that, those who are only in their natural head, by whom death came to them, and have lived and died in a natural estate, will rise last; but as the apostle is only upon the resurrection of the saints, he carries the account and observes the order no further than as it concerns Christ and his people: *Christ the first-fruits;* he rose first in order of time, dignity, causality and influence; see the note on ver. 20. *afterwards they that are Christ's;* not immediately after; for now seventeen hundred years* are elapsed since the resurrection of Christ, and yet the saints are not raised; and how many more years are to run out before that, is not to be known; but as there was an interval between the first-fruits, and the in-gathering of the harvest; so there is a considerable space of time between the resurrection of Christ as the first-fruits, and the resurrection of his people, which will be the harvest; and that will be at the end of the world, according to Matt. xiii. 39. the persons who shall rise first and next after Christ, are they that are his; who were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and were given to him by his father as his spouse, his children, his sheep, his portion, and his jewels; who were purchased and redeemed by his blood, are called by his grace and regenerated by his spirit, and who give up themselves to him, and are possessed by him; and the interest that Christ has in them here expressed, carries in it a strong argument of their resurrection; which may be concluded from their election in Christ, which can never be made void; from the gift of their whole persons to Christ by his father, with this declaration of his will, that he should lose nothing of them, but raise it up at the last day; from his redemption of their bodies as well as their souls; from the union of both unto him; and from the sanctification of both, and his spirit dwelling in their mortal bodies as well as in their souls: the time when they will be raised by Christ is, *at his coming;* at his second and personal coming at the last day; then the dead in Christ will rise first, and immediately; and he will judge the quick and dead, those that will be found alive, and those that will be then raised from the dead; when this will be no man knows; yet nothing is more certain, than that Christ will come a second time; and his coming will be speedy and sudden; it will be glorious and illustrious, and to the joy and salvation of his people; since their bodies will then be raised and re-united to their souls, when they, soul and body, shall be for

[z] Baal Hatturim in Deut. iii. 26.

* The Reader will observe, that this calculation was made in the year 1747.—Ed.

ever with the Lord. The Vulgate Latin reads the words thus, *they that are Christ's, who have believed in his coming*: both in his first and second coming; but there is nothing in the Greek text to encourage and support such a version and sense.

Ver. 24. *Then cometh the end*, &c.] Or *after* that *the end*, the end of all things; either at the close of the thousand years, when the wicked dead will be raised last, and the final state of all men will openly take place; the end of the righteous will be peace and everlasting joy, and an uninterrupted communion with Christ, and enjoyment of life eternal, of the ultimate glory, and consummate happiness in soul and body; and the end of the wicked will be destruction and death, everlasting punishment in hell, where will be weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth for evermore: or at the beginning of the thousand years; immediately upon Christ's second and personal coming, will be the end of the world; the heavens shall pass away, the elements shall melt, and the earth and all its works be burnt up; though these shall not be annihilated or destroyed, as to their being and substance, but only as to their present form and qualities; they shall be renewed, out of them shall arise new heavens, and a new earth, whereon righteous persons, and only righteous persons, will dwell, even all the righteous that will be raised at Christ's coming, or shall then be found alive, where they shall reign with him during the thousand years; and then there will be an end of preaching the Gospel, and of administering ordinances, there being no more elect souls to be gathered in; nor will saints stand in need of edification and comfort from such means; then will also be the end, the accomplishment of all the purposes, promises, and prophecies of God, relating to the state and condition of his church and people in all the periods of time, and to their complete glory and happiness; the number of God's elect in regeneration, sanctification, and glorification will now be complete, the saints will be all perfected, and the church be as a bride prepared and adorned for her husband; and their salvation in soul and body consummate, there will be nothing wanting; then that which is perfect will be come, their bodies being raised and re-united to their souls, and both with the Lord: so the word *end* denotes the accomplishment, completion, and perfection of things; see Luke xxii. 37. Rom. x. 4. Moreover, there will now be an end of all sin and sorrow of the saints; of all troubles and afflictions, inward or outward, and of death itself; and also of the kingdom of Christ, in its present form and manner of administration: the kingdom or church of Christ will not consist then of nominal and real Christians, of foolish and wise virgins, hypocrites and saints, but only of the latter; nor will it be governed by such laws and ordinances as now; nor will these be in the hands of such officers, as pastors and teachers, as at present, who are appointed to explain, enforce, and execute them: and this end of all things at the coming of Christ, will be *when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the father*: not the kingdom of nature, which he has as the son of God, as God equal with the father, in right of nature, and upon the foot of creation, all being made by him; and which kingdom reaches to all creatures, angels, and men; this he did not receive from his father, nor is he in it subordinate to him, but rules and works conjunctly with him in it; nor is he accountable to him in the administration of it; nor will he ever deliver it up to him: nor the kingdom of glory, which was prepared for the saints from the foundation of the world, is freely given to them by their father, which they are called unto, and have a meetness for it, and a right unto it; this Christ has in his hands for them, and will not deliver it up to his father, but introduce the heirs of it into it, quickly upon his coming; but the mediatorial kingdom is here meant, the kingdom of saints, over which Christ is appointed and set as King; even the whole church and general assembly of the first-born, written in heaven. These were all given to Christ, put into his hands, and made his care and charge by his father; and he undertook to preserve, protect, and save them; and had, as Mediator, all power in heaven and in earth, and every thing subservient to support his kingdom and interest as such, given him; and he has been from the beginning of the world ruling in the midst of his enemies, subduing the people under him, and causing his people in the day of his power to be willing to serve him; writing his laws in their hearts, putting his spirit within them, to cause them to walk in his statutes and keep his judgments; saving them out of the hands of their enemies, protecting and keeping them in safety, and providing every good thing for them; and continually delivering one or another of them from the power of darkness, and translating them into his own kingdom; and now having completed the number of them, in whose hearts he has reigned by his spirit and grace, he will deliver them up to the father from whom he received them; even every one of them; all the children he gave unto him, and all of them; their bodies as well as their souls being now raised from the dead, as it was his father's declared will they should be, when he gave them to him; and they will be delivered up and presented by him to his father, perfectly holy, entirely faultless, and without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing: and now this does not suppose that he will then cease to reign over his church and people; for, as the father is the everlasting King, and reigned in and over the church, whilst this kingdom was in the hands of Christ, so Christ will continue to reign over it, when he shall have delivered it to the father; he will no more cease to reign then, than the father does, during the present administration of the government of the church; Christ will then be so far from ceasing to reign, that he will reign more visibly and gloriously than ever, though in a different manner to what he does now; now he rules over his people in the midst of his enemies, but then he will rule in the midst of his saints; now he reigns in their hearts by his spirit, and through the use of the word and ordinances, but then he will reign in person among them, displaying the glory of his majesty, without the use of such means, signs, and symbols. Nor does this imply any inferiority in Christ, as God, to the father; since this is to be understood of him as Mediator, who as such is the father's servant, and a righteous and faithful one he is, who will give a good account of the persons

committed to his care and government, and of his administration; and in which sense it will be allowed the father is greater than he; but this no way militates against his proper deity, and equality with the father. The Ethiopic version, contrary to all copies and other versions, reads, *when God the father shall have delivered up his own kingdom*. The Jews[b] speak of "ten kings "that have ruled, from one end of the world to another: the first King is the holy and blessed God, "the second Nimrod, the third Joseph, the fourth "Solomon, the fifth Ahab, the sixth Nebuchadnezzar, "the seventh Cyrus, the eighth Alexander the Macedonian, the ninth will be the King Messiah, according to Dan. ii. 35. and of the tenth King they "say, *then shall the kingdom return to its author*; or "to him that was the first King, and he shall be the "last; as is said, Isa. xliv. 6. Zech. xiv. 9." and this will be, *when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power*: which since it is expressed in such universal terms, may very well be thought to reach to, and include all sort of rule, authority, and power whatever; when this time and state of things take place, all civil rule, authority, and power, will cease; even that which is now of God, and to which we are to be subject for the Lord's sake, and for conscience-sake; and which is now encouraged and supported by Christ, by whom kings reign, and princes decree justice; this will be pulled down and utterly destroyed by him, the stone cast out of the mountain without hands; when the kingdom and the greatness of it will be given to him and to his saints; when the kings and princes of the earth will be no more, have no more rule and authority among men, but be upon a level with the meanest peasants, and shall be brought to the tribunal of Christ, and be judged by him: then also will all ecclesiastical rule, authority, and power be laid aside; there will be no more apostles, prophets, evangelists, nor bishops, elders, pastors, and teachers; who are now set over the churches in the Lord, to rule them according to the laws of Christ, by ministering the word faithfully, and administering the ordinances truly; and to whom when they rule well, subjection and honour are due; but all this will be no more, when the end comes, and the kingdom is delivered to the father: nor will there be any more domestic, or family rule and government, as of the husband over the wife, the parent over the child, or the master over the servant; all will be upon an equal foot: nor any angelical authority and power, which angels may now exercise under God, over kingdoms, provinces, states, or particular persons: and especially all diabolical rule, authority, and power will be abolished, which Satan has usurped, or has been given him by men, as the god of this world; he, the prince of the world, was cast out through Christ's death, and by the preaching of the Gospel in the Gentile world; his principalities and powers were then spoiled and triumphed over; though he has still retained some sort and shew of government, but then there will not be the least appearance of any; during the thousand years he will be cast into and shut up in the bottomless pit, and not suffered to go out and deceive the nations any more; and at the end thereof, though he will make one and his last onset, on the city of the saints, it will be fruitless, and he and all his shall be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, and there lie in torment for ever and ever: not the persons of these several powers shall be destroyed, but they shall be divested of the power and authority which they now have, either by right or usurpation.

Ver. 25. *For he must reign*, &c.] That is, Christ must reign; he is set as King over God's holy hill of Zion; he is King of saints; he is made and declared to be both Lord and Christ; he is exalted at the right hand of God as a Prince, where he sits and rules and reigns; and his sitting at God's right hand is here explained by his reigning, for reference is had to Psal. cx. 1. he *must* reign because it is the unalterable will, and unchangeable decree and purpose of God, that he should reign; and because he has promised it, and prophesied of it; and because the state and condition of his people require it, who otherwise could not be saved, nor dwell safely: and so he must and will, *till he hath put all enemies under his feet*: and made them his footstool; meaning either all the elect of God, who in a state of nature are enemies in their minds, by wicked works, to himself and to his father; whom he conquers by his grace, subdues their rebellious wills, of enemies makes them friends, brings them to his feet, and to a subjection to his sceptre, to his Gospel and ordinances; and he must reign till he has brought every elect soul into such an obedience to himself: or rather antichrist and his followers, and all wicked and ungodly men, with Satan and his angels; who will be destroyed with the breath of his mouth, and the brightness of his coming; and will be cast down by him into hell, and there be ever objects of his wrath and vengeance: and till all this is done he must reign; not that he shall cease to reign afterwards, but that he shall reign notwithstanding these enemies of his and his people, who would not have him to reign over them; and will reign until they are subdued or destroyed; and when they are entirely vanquished and overcome, who can doubt of his reigning then? or what, or who will there be to hinder it? The Alexandrian copy, and others, read, *his enemies*; and so do the Syriac and Ethiopic versions.

Ver. 26. *The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.*] Not eternal death; for though that is abolished by Christ with respect to his own people, who shall never be hurt by it, and over whom it shall have no power; yet the wicked will always be subject to it, and under the dominion of it; but a corporeal one is here meant; which is an *enemy*, the fruit, effect, and wages of sin; the penalty and curse of the law; is contrary to human nature, and destructive of the work of God's hands: it is, indeed, through the blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ, become the friend of his people; it is disarmed of its sting, and ceases to be a penal evil; it is the saints' passage to glory, what frees them from the troubles of this world, and is their way to the joys of another; but yet in itself is formidable to nature, and disagreeable to it: and it is the *last* enemy; it is so both in its rise and duration; it appeared as an enemy last; Satan was the first enemy of mankind, who attacked, tempted, and ruined the

[b] Pirke Eliezer, c. 11.

first parents of human nature, and all their posterity in them; and by this means, sin, the next enemy, came into the world of men; and, last of all, death, with its numerous train of calamities, either going before, attending, or following of it: and as it was the last enemy that came into the world, 'tis the last that will go out of it; for when the saints are rid of Satan, and clear of sin, they will remain in the grave under the power of a corporeal death till the resurrection, and then that will be *destroyed*: for the saints will be raised to an immortal life, never to die more, and to an enjoyment of everlasting life, in the utmost glory and happiness; and though the wicked when they rise, they will rise to damnation, to shame and contempt, yet their worm will never die, nor their fire be quenched; they will always live, though in torment, there will be no more corporeal death, neither among the righteous nor the wicked; it will be utterly abolished: and thus the apostle, though he seems to digress from his subject awhile, by relating the several things which will either immediately or quickly follow the second coming of Christ; yet at the same time has it in view, and proves the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, which must needs be, or death cannot be said to be destroyed, and by degrees returns to his subject again.

Ver. 27. *For he hath put all things under his feet, &c.*] This is a reason proving that all enemies, and death itself, shall be put under the feet of Christ, and is taken out of Psal. viii. 6. which is spoken of one that is styled man, and the son of man; and is to be understood not of Adam in a state of innocence; for the word there used signifies a frail mortal man, which he then was not, nor could he be called the son of man; and though the earth was subdued and subject to him, and he had dominion over the fish of the sea, the fowls of the air, and every living thing that moveth on the earth, yet all creatures were not subject to him in this large sense, in which it is here and elsewhere explained by the apostle; and much less of man in his fallen state, who instead of having all things under his feet, is become like the beasts that perish; many of them are unsubdued to him, and he is even in fear of them, and he himself is subject to corruption and vanity: but of the man Christ Jesus, who took and bore all the sinless infirmities of human nature; is often called the son of man; of whom God was mindful, and whom he visited in his state of humiliation, at the time of his death, resurrection, and exaltation; who was made through sufferings of death a little lower, or a little while lower than the angels, but now crowned with glory and honour; in whose days God ordained strength and praise out of the mouths of babes and sucklings, to the confusion of his enemies; and has put all things under his feet, which may include all things animate and inanimate, the whole creation and universe of things, the world and its fulness, the earth and all that is therein, the beasts of the forest, and the cattle of a thousand hills; he is heir of the world, and has a right to it, and to dispose of it, not merely as the Creator, but as Mediator; 'tis put in subjection to him to make use of, and what is in it to subserve his mediatorial kingdom and and glory; when his ends are answered by it, the earth and all that is therein shall be burnt up, and a new earth arise out of it, in which Christ and his people will dwell; the air and all that is therein are under him; the fowls of it are at his dispose; he it was that rained feathered fowls as the sand of the sea, about the camp of the Israelites in the wilderness, and commanded the ravens to feed Elijah in distress; and who holds the winds in his fist, lets them loose, calls them in, and commands them at pleasure; as he also does the sea, and the boisterous waves of it, and has dominion over the fishes in it; one of those supplied him with money, to pay his tribute; and multitudes of them, more than once, were gathered together, and taken up by his order and direction; and at the last day, the sea at his command will give up the dead that are in it; yea, this may extend to all rational creatures, angels and men, friends or foes; good angels, principalities and powers, are subject to him, as appears by their attendance on him, at his incarnation, ascension, and second coming; by their ministration to him in the wilderness, and in the garden, by their employment under him, for the good of the heirs of salvation; by their dependence on him, as their Creator and head, and by their adoration of him as their Lord and God. Evil angels, the devils, are also put under his feet, as is evident from his overcoming Satan, and baffling all his temptations; by his dispossessing the devils out of the bodies of men, and giving his disciples also power over them; by his spoiling them at death, and triumphing over them in his ascension; by delivering his people out of their hands, and power, in conversion; and by his binding of Satan during the thousand years, and by casting him and his angels into everlasting fire prepared for them. Elect men are made subject to him, by the power of his grace upon them; and yet their subjection to him, to his Gospel ordinances, and the sceptre of his kingdom; is voluntary and from their hearts; it proceeds from a principle of love to him; and is universal, being a regard unto, and a compliance with all his precepts; and evil men are also under his dominion and control; he rules them with a rod of iron; he disappoints their counsels, restrains their wrath, overrules their evil designs and actions against his people for good; and will one day gather them all before him, pass the righteous sentence on them, and send them into everlasting punishment. Moreover, this may reach to every thing that is for the glory of Christ as Mediator, and for the good of his church, and to every enemy of his or theirs, as the world, sin, Satan, and the last enemy, death; to prove the subjection of all which to Christ, this testimony is produced: and respects Christ as Mediator, and the father's delivering all things into his hands, and giving him all power in heaven and in earth, and rule over all creatures and things; *but when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him*: that is, when David, or the Holy Spirit by him, said the above words, in Psal. viii. 6. nothing is more clear and evident, than that God the father, who made all things subject to Christ as Mediator, is himself unsubjected to him; since his power as such must be greater than his: this exception is made to secure the government, power, and honour of the father: for though he has made his firstborn higher than the kings of the earth, yet not higher

than himself; and though he has set him his King over his holy hill of Zion, yet not over himself; and though it is his will that all men should honour the son, as they honour the father, yet not above him, or more than he; nor has he quitted the government, either in the world or in the church, by subjecting all things to Christ: and this exception is also made to confirm the universal power and empire of Christ, for an exception to a general rule does but the more establish it; and since the father is only excepted, it is a clear case, that he has left nothing that is not put under him; see Heb. ii. 8. but it must be observed, that though the Holy Spirit is not mentioned, yet he is equally excepted; since he is the one God with the father, and was jointly concerned in the mission, unction, and installation of Christ, as Mediator; nor can he be reckoned among the all things put in subjection to Christ, for they regard only creatures, and many of these enemies, with neither of which the spirit of God can be numbered; and though the gifts and graces of the spirit are put into Christ's hands, and are at his dispose, yet the person of the spirit can never be thought to be put under his feet.

Ver. 28. *And when all things shall be subdued unto him*, &c.] For all things as yet are not put under him in fact; though in right God the father has given to him an authoritative power over all things, and a right to dispose of them at his pleasure; but all things are not actually and in their full extent subject to him, yet they will be when the last enemy is destroyed: and *then shall the son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him*: which must be interpreted and understood with great care and caution; not in the Sabellian sense, of refunding of the characters of the son, and so of the father unto God; when they suppose these characters, which they imagine to be merely nominal, bare names, will be no more, and God shall be all; but as the father will always remain a father, so the son will remain a son; for, as the son of the Highest, he will reign over his people for ever, and he the son, as a priest, is consecrated for evermore: nor in the Eutychian sense, of the change of the human nature into the divine, in which they fancy it will be swallowed up, and God will be all; but Christ will always continue as a man; he went up to heaven as such, and he will return as a man, and be visible to all in the human nature, and in that be the object of the beatifical vision of the saints to all eternity: nor in the Arian sense, according to the divine nature, as if he was in that inferior to the father, when he is equal with him, has all the perfections he has, and the whole fulness of the Godhead dwelling in him; it is much better and safer to understand it as it commonly is of him, as man; though in this sense, he was always subject to his father, ever since he was incarnate, whereas this seems to respect something peculiar at this time. Others therefore think, that the church, the mystical body of Christ, is here meant, which in all its members, and these both in soul and body, will be presented and delivered up to God; but the words are spoken of him under whom all things are put, which is not true of the church; and though that is sometimes called Christ, yet never the son; and besides, the church has been always subject to God, though indeed, it will not be in all its members, and in every respect subject until this time: it is best therefore to understand it of the son's giving up the account of his mediatorial kingdom and concerns to his father; when it will appear that he has in the whole of his conduct and administration been subject to him; that he has in all things acted in his name, done all by his power, and to his honour and glory; and now having accomplished all he undertook and was intrusted with, gives in his account, delivers up his charge, and resigns his office; all which will be plain proofs of his subjection: when I say he will resign or lay aside his office as Mediator, my meaning is not that he will cease to be God-man and Mediator; but that he will cease to administer that office as under God, in the manner he now does: he will be the prophet of the church, but he will not teach by his spirit, and word, and ordinances as now, but will himself be the immediate light of the saints, he will be a priest for ever, the virtue of his sacrifice and intercession will always remain, but he will not plead and intercede as he now does; he will also reign for ever over and among his saints, but his kingdom will not be a vicarious one, or administered as it now is; nor be only in his hands as Mediator, but with God, Father, Son, and Spirit: *that God may be all in all*: for by God is not meant the father personally, but God essentially considered, Father, Son, and Spirit, who are the one true and living God; to whom all the saints will have immediate access, in whose presence they will be, and with whom they shall have uninterrupted fellowship, without the use of such mediums as they now enjoy; all the three divine Persons will have equal power and government in and over all the saints; they will sit upon one and the same throne; there will be no more acting by a delegated power, or a derived authority: God will be all things to all his saints, immediately without the use of means; he will be that to their bodies as meat and clothes are, without the use of them; and all light, glory, and happiness to their souls, without the use of ordinances, or any means; he will then be all perfection and bliss, to all the elect, and in them all, which he now is not; some are dead in trespasses and sins, and under the power of Satan; the number of them in conversion is not yet completed; and of those that are called many are in a state of imperfection, and have flesh as well as spirit in them; and of those who are fallen asleep in Christ, though their separate spirits are happy with him, yet their bodies lie in the grave, and under the power of corruption and death; but then all being called by grace, and all being raised, and glorified in soul and body, God will be all in all; this phrase expresses both the perfect government of God, Father, Son, and Spirit, over the saints to all eternity, and their perfect happiness in soul and body, the glory of all which will be ascribed to God; and it will be then seen that all that the Father has done in election, in the council and covenant of peace, were all to the glory of his grace; and that all that the Son has done in the salvation of his people, is all to the glory of the divine perfections; and that all that the Spirit of God has wrought in the saints, and all that they have done under his grace and influence, are all to the praise and glory of God,

which will in the most perfect manner be given to the eternal Three in One. The Jews have some expressions somewhat like this, as when they say [i] of God, "things "future, and things that are past, are together with "thee; what is from everlasting and to everlasting, "or from the beginning of the world to the end of it, "these are *all* of them in thee, and thou art *in* them "*all*." So כל, *all*, is with the Cabalistic doctors [k], the name of the Lord. And he is so called because all things are in him; *Jovis omnia plena*.

Ver. 29. *Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead*, &c.] The apostle here returns to his subject, and makes use of new arguments to prove the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, and reasons for it from the baptism of some persons; but what is his sense, is not easy to be understood, or what rite and custom, or thing, or action he refers to; which must be either Jewish baptism, or Christian baptism literally taken, or baptism in a figurative and metaphorical sense. Some think that he refers to some one or other of the divers baptisms of the Jews; see Heb. ix. 10. and particularly to the purification of such who had touched a dead body, which was done both by the ashes of the red heifer burnt, and by bathing himself in water; and which, the Jews say [l], intimated לתחיית המתים, *the resurrection of the dead*; wherefore such a right was needless, if there is no resurrection; to strengthen this sense, a passage in Ecclesiasticus, ch. xxxiv. 25. is produced, βαπτιζόμενος ἀπὸ νεκροῦ, *he that washeth himself after the touching of a dead body, if he touch it again, what availeth his washing?* but the phrase there used is different; 'tis not said, he that baptizeth or washeth himself for the dead, but from the dead, to cleanse himself from pollution received by the touch of a dead body: 'tis also observed, that the Jews, as well as other nations, have used various rites and ceremonies about their dead, and among the rest, the washing of dead bodies before interment; see Acts ix. 37. and this by some is thought to be what is here referred to; and the reasoning is, if there is no resurrection of the dead, why all this care of a dead body? why this washing of it? it may as well be put into the earth as it is, since it will rise no more; but how this can be called a baptism for the dead, I see not: rather therefore Christian baptism, or the ordinance of water-baptism is here respected; and with regard to this, interpreters go different ways: some think the apostle has in view a custom of some, who when their friends died without baptism, used to be baptized in their room; this is said to be practised by the Marcionites in Tertullian's time, and by the Cerinthians in the times of the Apostle John; but it does not appear to have been in use in the times of the Apostle Paul; and besides, if it had been, as it was a vain and superstitious one, he would never have mentioned it without a censure, and much less have argued from it; nor would his argument be of any weight, since it might be retorted, that whereas such persons were mistaken in using such a practice, they might be also in the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead: others are of opinion that such persons are intended, called Clinics, who deferred their baptism till they came upon their death-beds, and then had it administered to them; but as this practice was not in being in the apostle's time, and was far from being a laudable one; and though the persons to whom it was administered were upon the point of death, and nearer the dead than the living, and were as good as dead, and might be intended by them, for their advantage, when dead and not living; yet it must be a great force and strain on words and things, to reckon this a being baptized for the dead: others would have the words rendered, *over the dead*; and suppose that reference is had to the Christians that had their *baptisteries* in their places of burial, and by being baptized here, testified their faith and hope of the resurrection of the dead; but this was rather a being baptized among the dead than over them, or for them; and moreover it is not certain, that they did make use of such places to baptize in; to which may be added, that the primitive Christians had not so early burying-grounds of their own: others would have the meaning to be, that they were baptized for their dead works, their sins, to wash them away; but this baptism does not of itself, and no otherwise than by leading the faith of persons to the blood of Christ, which alone cleanses from sin, original and actual; nor is this apposite to the apostle's argument. Others imagine, that he intends such as were baptized, and added to the church, and so filled up the places of them that were dead; but the reason from hence proving the resurrection of the dead is not very obvious: those seem to be nearer the truth of the matter, who suppose that the apostle has respect to the original practice of making a confession of faith before baptism, and among the rest of the articles of it, the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, upon the belief of which being baptized, they might be said to be baptized for the dead; that is, for, or upon, or in the faith and profession of the resurrection of the dead, and therefore must either hold this doctrine, or renounce their baptism administered upon it; to which may be added another sense of the words, which is, that baptism performed by immersion, as it was universally in those early times, was a lively emblem and representation of the resurrection of Christ from the dead, and also both of the spiritual and corporeal resurrection of the saints. Now if there is no resurrection, why is such a symbol used? 'tis useless and insignificant; I see nothing of moment to be objected to these two last senses, which may be easily put together, but this; that the apostle seems to point out something that was done or endured by some Christians only; whereas baptism, upon a profession of faith in Christ, and the resurrection from the dead, and performed by immersion, as an emblem of it, was common to all; and therefore he would rather have said, what shall we do, or we all do, who are baptized for the dead? I am therefore rather inclined to think that baptism is used here in a figurative and metaphorical sense, for afflictions, sufferings, and martyrdom, as in Matt. xx. 22, 23. and it was for the belief, profession, and preaching of the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, both of Christ and of the saints, that the apostles and followers of Christ endured so much as they

[i] R. Judah in Shir Hajichud, fol. 341. 1. apud Seder Tephillot, Ed. Basil.

[k] Lex. Cabalist. p. 474, 475, 652. Shaare Orah, fol. 6. 1.

[l] R. Bechai & Zohar apud Lightfoot in loc.

did: the first instance of persecution after our Lord's ascension was on this account. The Apostles Peter and John, were laid hold on and put in prison for preaching this doctrine; the reproach and insult the Apostle Paul met with at Athens were by reason of it; and it was for this that he was called in question and accused of the Jews; nor was there any one doctrine of Christianity more hateful and contemptible among the Heathens than this was. Now the apostle's argument stands thus, what is, or will become of those persons who have been as it were baptized or overwhelmed in afflictions and sufferings, who have endured so many and such great injuries and indignities, and have even lost their lives for asserting this doctrine, *if the dead rise not at all?* how sadly mistaken must such have been! *why are they then baptized for the dead?* how imprudently have they acted! and what a weak and foolish part do they also act, who continue to follow them! in what a silly manner do they expose themselves to danger, and throw away their lives, if this doctrine is not true! which sense is confirmed by what follows: the Alexandrian copy, and some others, read, *for them*, and so the Vulgate Latin version; and the Ethiopic in both clauses reads, *why do they baptize?*

Ver. 30. *And why stand we in jeopardy every hour?*] Not only they that have suffered martyrdom for the faith of Christ, and for this article of it, have acted very injudiciously and indiscreetly; but we, also, who are on the spot, whether ministers or private Christians, must be highly blameworthy, who continually expose ourselves to dangers, and are for Christ's sake killed all the day long, are every moment liable to innumerable injuries, tortures and death: who in his senses would act such a part, if there is no resurrection of the dead? such, as they must be of all men the most miserable, so of all men the most stupid.

Ver. 31. *I protest by your rejoicing*, &c.] Some copies read, *our rejoicing*; and so the Ethiopic version, which seems most natural and easy; since it follows, *which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord*: who in him could rejoice and glory in afflictions and sufferings, which he endured as a preacher of the Gospel for his sake; and which being certain and evident, and what might be depended upon, he makes a protestation by it, saying, *I die daily*: which is to be understood, not in a spiritual sense of dying unto sin; he was dead unto sin, as to its damning power, through the death of Christ, and as to its governing power, through the Spirit and grace of Christ, but still it was living and dwelling in him; but in a corporeal sense: he instances in himself in particular, who was one that was in jeopardy or danger of his life every hour; he always bore in his body the dying of the Lord Jesus, and was continually delivered to death for Jesus' sake; death was always working in him, he expected it every day, and was ready for it; he did not count his life dear unto himself, but was very willing to lay it down for the sake of Christ and his Gospel; which he would never have done, if he had not good reason to believe the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead.

Ver. 32. *If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus*, &c.] This is one of the particulars of the jeopardy and danger of life he had been in: some understand this in a figurative sense, and think that by *beasts* are meant Satan, the roaring lion, and his principalities and powers; or men of savage dispositions, persecuting principles, and cruel practices; as Herod is called a fox, by Christ, and Nero a lion, by the apostle; and suppose his fighting with them at Ephesus designs his disputations with the hardened and unbelieving Jews, his concern with the exorcists, the seven sons of Sceva, and the troubles he met with through Demetrius the silversmith, and others of the same craft: the reason of such an interpretation is, because Luke makes no mention of any thing of this kind, that befell the apostle in his history of the Acts of the Apostles: but to this it may be replied, that Luke does not relate every thing that befell him and the rest; and his omission of this is no sufficient argument against it; besides, a literal sense is not to be departed from, unless there is a necessity for it; and especially when it is suitable to the context, and to the thread and reasoning of the discourse, as it is certainly here; the literal sense best agrees with the apostle's argument. There were two sorts of usages among the Romans in their theatres; sometimes they cast men naked to the wild beasts, to be devoured by them, as wicked servants, deadly enemies, and the vilest of men [a]; and so the Syriac version renders the words here, *if as among men*, אשתדית לחיותא, *I am cast to the beasts*; and seems to represent it as a supposed case, and not as matter of fact, in which the difficulty about Luke's omission is removed, and the argument in a literal sense is just and strong: sometimes they put men armed into the theatre to fight with beasts [b], and if they could conquer them and save themselves it was well, if not, they fell a prey to them; 'tis this last custom that is here referred to: and if regard is had to what befell the apostle at Ephesus, when Demetrius and his craftsmen made the uproar mentioned in Acts xix. this could not be in reality, but only in the purpose and design of men; and certain it is, that though he was not then had to the theatre, yet Demetrius and his men intended to have hurried him there, as they did Gaius and Aristarchus his companions; and he himself was desirous of going thither, had he not been prevented by the disciples, and by the Asiarchs his friends, who had the command of the theatre where these practices were used; and then the sense is this, *if after the manner of men*, or in the intention and design of men, and as much as in them lay, *I have fought with beasts at Ephesus*; though if this epistle was written, as it is said to be, before that commotion by Demetrius, no respect can be had to that; but rather to something in fact before, at the same place, when the apostle did actually fight with beasts, and was wonderfully and providentially preserved; and may be what he refers to, in 2 Cor. i. 8, 9, 10. when he despaired of life, had the sentence of death in himself, and yet was delivered; and then his sense is, if *after the manner* of brutish *men*, the Romans, *I have fought with beasts at Ephesus*: which I was obliged to do, or deny the Gospel I preached: *what advantageth it me, if the dead rise*

[a] Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 3. c. 5. Tertul. Apolog. c. 40. & de Spectaculis, c. 19.

[b] Tertul. de Spectaculis, c. 21. & 23. Cicero in Vatinium Orat. 22.

not? instead of its being a glorious action, it was a fool hardy one; and if he had died in it, what profit could he have had by it, if he rose not again; or if there is no resurrection of the dead? instead of incurring such dangers, and running such risks, it would be more eligible to sit down and say with the Epicureans, *let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die;* which words seem to be taken out of Isa. xxii. 13. and are used in favour of the doctrine of the resurrection, shewing that the denial of it opens a door to all manner of licentiousness; and are not spoken as allowing or approving of such a conduct; nor as his own words, but as personating a libertine, and pointing out what such an one would say, and might justly infer from such a tenet, that there is no resurrection of the dead.

Ver. 33. *Be not deceived,* &c.] By such as deny the doctrine of the resurrection, and by their reasonings about it; or by such libertines who go into the denial of it, and argue from thence in favour of their licentious course of life: *evil communications corrupt good manners.* This is a sentence taken out of Menander, an Heathen poet, shewing how dangerous is the conversation of evil men, and what an influence bad principles communicated and imbibed, have on the lives and practices of men. This the apostle cites not out of ostentation, or to shew his reading, learning, and acquaintance with such sort of writers; but partly to observe, that this was a truth obvious by the light of nature, and partly because such a testimony might be more regarded by the Corinthians, who might be fond of such authors, and what was said by them; just as when he was at Athens among the philosophers there, he cites a passage out of Aratus, Acts xvii. 28. as he does another out of Epimenides concerning the Cretians, Titus i. 12.

Ver. 34. *Awake to righteousness, and sin not,* &c.] The apostle represents the Corinthians as inebriated with bad principles and notions, and as fallen asleep, and as greatly remiss, and declined in the exercise of grace and discharge of duty; and therefore calls upon them to awake out of sleep, to watch and be sober, and attend *to righteousness:* to the justice of God, which requires the resurrection of the dead, and makes it necessary that men may receive the things done in the body, whether good or evil; for as it is a righteous thing with God to render tribulation to them that sin against him, and trouble his people; so it is but just, that those bodies which Christ has purchased with his blood, who have served him, and suffered for his sake, should be raised again, that, together with their souls, they may enjoy the happiness provided for them; and to the righteousness of Christ, to look unto it, lay hold on it, exercise faith upon it, desiring to be found in it living and dying; and to works of righteousness, to a holy life and conversation, a living soberly, righteously and godly; and not spend their time, and give up themselves to vain speculations and notions; which were so far from being edifying, that they were very detrimental to themselves and others. The Vulgate Latin version reads, *awake, ye righteous:* for righteous persons, good men, the wise as well as foolish virgins, sometimes fall asleep, and need awaking out of it; which is done by one providence or another, or by the ministry of the word, and whenever to purpose, by the powerful and efficacious grace of God: the words may be rendered, *awake righteously;* or as the Syriac version reads, *awake your hearts righteously;* and as the Arabic, *with a due awaking:* that is, as it becomes you, and as it is just, right, and proper you should: *and sin not:* not that they could be, or that it could be thought they might be without sin in them, or without sin being done by them; but that they ought not to live a sinful course of life, which the denial of the resurrection led unto, or indulged in; or not sin by denying that doctrine, and giving themselves up to a vicious life in consequence of it: *for some have not the knowledge of God;* are like the Gentiles that are without God, and know him not; they know not, or, at least, do not own the truth of God in his word, declaring and testifying the doctrine of the resurrection; they err in that point, not knowing the Scriptures, the sense of them, and this truth contained in them; nor the power of God in raising the dead, nor the justice of God, which makes it necessary that the dead should be raised: *I speak this to your shame;* that there should be such ignorant persons in their community; that there were any of such bad principles as to deny the resurrection of the dead, and of such dissolute lives as to give up themselves to sensual lusts and pleasures: that such were continued in the church, kept company with, indulged and caressed; and that there was so great a corruption in doctrine, discipline, and conversation, among them.

Ver. 35. *But some man will say,* &c.] Or *some one of you,* as the Syriac and Arabic versions read; for there were some among them members of this church, that denied the resurrection of the dead, ver. 12. a weak believer indeed may be designed, one of the babes in Christ in this church, that could not digest such strong meat, but had some doubt and difficulties in his mind about this point, though he did not absolutely deny it; but by the manner in which the objections and queries are put, and the sharpness in which the apostle answers them, it looks rather that an infidel as to this doctrine is intended, one of those Epicureans, who said, ver. 32. *let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die;* or some Heathen philosopher, a mere natural man, that rejected this doctrine because not agreeable to his carnal reason, and laughed at it as monstrous and ridiculous: *how are the dead raised up?* This query is put, not as though the person merely hesitated, and was in some suspense about this matter, or with a desire to be informed; but as denying the thing, and as objecting to it as a thing impossible, and impracticable; suggesting it could not be, it was a thing incredible that those dead bodies which have been laid in the earth for so many hundred, and some, thousands of years, and have been long ago reduced to dust, and this dust has undergone a thousand forms; that such whose bodies have been burnt to ashes, or destroyed by wild beasts, and digested by them, should ever be raised again. Such a doctrine must be past all belief: *and with what body do they come?* out of their graves, as you say, and appear on the earth at the last day: will they come forth with the same bodies, or with other? with earthly or heavenly ones? mortal or immortal? with bodies different from one another, and from what they now are?

Ver. 36. *Thou fool*, &c.] Not transgressing the law of Christ, which makes him that calls his brother a fool in danger of hell-fire; for the apostle said not this in anger, and from a malevolent disposition, as that rule supposes, but out of zeal for truth, and to reprove the stupidity and folly of such a bold objector; in opposing the veracity and power of God, in setting up his reason above divine revelation, and in not attending even to natural philosophy itself; in which professing to be wise he might be justly called a fool, and therefore sends him to the husbandman to learn of him how to answer his own queries: *that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die*; and which is more especially true of a grain of wheat: our Lord observes the same, John xii. 24. see the note there, and designs by the simile his own death, and resurrection, and the fruit following thereon. This seed being cast into the earth corrupts, rots, and dies, and then is quickened, and rises up in stalk, blade, and ear. Which shews that the dissolution and corruption of the body by death is so far from being an objection to its resurrection, that it is necessary to it, even as the dying and putrifying of the seed, or grain of wheat, is necessary to its quickening and rising up again; and that if God is able to quicken a seed or grain that is rotten and entirely dead, and cause it to rise up in verdure and with much fruit, as he does every year in millions of instances, why should it be thought incredible that God should quicken dead bodies, when the one is as much an instance of his power as the other? The Claromontane exemplar reads, *except it die first*; and so the Vulgate Latin version.

Ver. 37. *And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be*, &c.] The sower, for instance, does not take a stalk of wheat in its blade, and ear, and full corn in the ear, encompassed with the husk, and sow it in the earth, which is the body or form in which it appears when it rises up again, and is come to its full growth: but *bare grain* (or *naked grain*) *it may chance of wheat, or some other* grain; wheat, or any other grain, is cast into the earth naked, beat out of the husk; and that self-same grain rises up again, clothed with additional verdure, beauty, and fruitfulness; and so the body which comes out of its mother's womb naked, and returns naked again, Job. i. 21. to which the apostle seems to allude, will rise again the same body, though with additional glories and excellencies; so that if it should be asked, how is it possible that a dead body can be raised up again? the possibility of it may be seen, in the quickening and raising up of a grain of wheat, that first rots and dies; and if it be inquired with what body the dead will be raised, it may in some measure be observed in this instance, that though it will be the same body, yet with different and excelling qualities: this simile seems to have been much in use among the Jews, to illustrate this doctrine, and we have some traces of it still in their writings[e]: "Cleopatra the queen asked R. Meir, saying, I know that "the dead shall live, for it is written, *they of the city* "*shall flourish like grass of the earth*, Psal. lxxii. 16. "but when they rise, shall they rise naked, or shall "they rise in their clothes? to which he replied, "much more than wheat: for as wheat is buried, "ערומה, *naked*, it comes forth, (or springs up,) with "many clothings; and how much more the righteous, "who are buried in their clothes?" and again[f], "says "R. Eliezer, all the dead shall stand in the resurrec-"tion of the dead, and shall rise with their garments "on; from whence do you learn this? from the seed of "the earth, especially from wheat; for as wheat is "buried *naked*, and comes forth with many clothings, "much more the righteous, who are buried in their "clothes."

Ver. 38. *But God giveth it a body, as it hath pleased him*, &c.] It is not the husbandman, nor the sun, nor the rain, that give the grain of wheat, or any other, its verdure and beauty, the form in which it springs up, its stalk, blade, and ear, but God by his own power, and of his sovereign will and pleasure; and he does not create this new form, but gives it; and does not barely give it, but gives the body to *it*; to the self-same grain, and not another: so the resurrection of the dead is God's work; it is an instance of his power, and of his sovereign will; and is to his people a branch of that eternal life, which is his pure gift through Jesus Christ; all that glory in which the body will arise springs from his free grace, and is bestowed upon the self-same body, which was carried about here, and laid in the grave: *and to every seed its own body*; which is suitable and natural to it, according to its kind; see Gen. i. 11. as cummin to cummin, anise to anise, wheat to wheat, barley to barley, and not on the contrary; shewing, that it is the same body that is raised that dies, though it is in a more glorious, and with more excellent qualities; which is manifest from express passages of Scripture; see Job xix. 26, 27. 1 Cor. xv. 42, 43, 44, 53, 54. from the signification of the word resurrection, which is a raising up of that which is fallen; and if the same body that falls by death is not raised, but another is given, it will not be a resurrection, but a creation: and also from the figurative phrases by which it is expressed, as here by the quickening of seed cast into the earth, and elsewhere by awaking out of sleep; now as it is the same seed that is sown that springs up again, and the same body that sleeps that is awaked out of it, so it is the same body that is interred in the earth, and falls asleep by death, that will be quickened and awaked at the resurrection: and it is clear from the places from whence the dead will be raised, the repositories of them, as death and hell, or the grave, and the sea; for none but the same bodies that are laid in the grave, or cast into the sea, can be said to come forth out of them, or be delivered up by them: and from the subject of the resurrection, the bodies of men, their vile and mortal bodies, which can be no other than their present ones; and from the end of the resurrection, which is that some may come to life, and others to damnation; and from the justice of God, which requires that the same bodies Christ has purchased, and who have served and suffered for him, should be glorified; and the same that have done evil against him, and abused themselves and his people, be punished: this might be argued from the translations of Enoch and Elijah in their bodies to heaven, in which

[e] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 90. 2.

[f] Pirke Eliezer, c. 33.

they were on earth; and from the resurrection of the bodies of the saints at Christ's resurrection, and the change that will be on the bodies of living saints at the coming of Christ; for it is not reasonable to suppose, that some of the saints shall have their own bodies, and others none at all, or not the same they lived in here: this may be further confirmed, from the resurrection of Christ's body, which was the same he had before; it was not changed into a spirit, but consisted of flesh and bones, as it had done: and had on it the very print of the nails, and spear in his hands, feet, and side; and to this the bodies of the saints are to be fashioned: add to all this, if it is not a resurrection of the same body, but new ones are created, to which the soul will be united, it will not be a resurrection, but a transmigration of souls into other bodies; but as every seed has its own body, so will every soul have its own body, though greatly different as to its qualities, and much improved for the better, as in seed sown: and this is the sense of the ancient Jews [q], "says R. "Chijah, דההוא גופא דהוה יקום, *that that self-same* "*body that was shall rise*, is clear from what is written, "*thy dead men shall live*, Isa. xxvi. 19. and it is not "written, shall be created; from whence it is evident "that they shall not be created, but shall be quick-"ened:" and again [r], "in the time to come, the holy "blessed God will quicken the dead, and raise them "מעפרם, *out of their own dust*, that they may not be a "building of dust, as they were at first, when they "were created out of dust itself, a thing which is not "stable, according to Gen. ii. 7. and at that time they "shall be raised out of the dust, out of that building, "and shall stand in a stable building, that they may "have stability, or duration." So on those words, *I kill and I make alive, I wound and I heal*, Deut. xxxii. 39. they observe [s], that "as wounding and healing are "באחד, *in one*, (and the same body,) so death and "life are באחד, *in one and* the same."

Ver. 39. *All flesh is not the same flesh*, &c.] Or *equal*, as the Syriac version renders it; though all flesh is flesh, as to the nature and substance of it; agrees in its original, being by generation; and is supported by food, and is alike frail and mortal; all flesh is grass, rises out of it, or is maintained by it, or withers like that, yet not of equal worth, value, and excellency: *but there is one kind of flesh of men*: which is superior to, and more excellent than any other; being animated by a rational soul, and is set in the first place; so we read of בשר איש, *the flesh of man*, for mankind, Job xii. 9. see Exod. xxx. 32. *Another flesh of beasts*; as sheep and oxen, and other beasts of the field; another *of fishes*: which may be observed against the Papists, who distinguish between flesh and fish, as if there was no flesh of fishes; and on their fast days prohibit flesh, but allow the eating of fish; thus flesh is attributed to fishes, as here, in Lev. xi. 11. upon which text Aben Ezra observes, lo, fish is called flesh; but as our doctors say, according to the custom of those times; and so it is by the Jews, who say [t], "all flesh is for-"bidden to boil in milk, מבשר דגים, *except the flesh* "*of fishes*, and locusts; and it is forbidden to set it on "a table along with cheese, except *the flesh of fishes*, "and locusts:" *and another of birds*, the fowls of the air. This is another similitude, illustrating the resurrection of the dead; and is not designed to point out the difference between the raised bodies of the righteous, and the wicked; as if the former were signified by the flesh of men, and the other by the flesh of beasts, fishes, and birds; nor among the wicked themselves, with whom there will be degrees of punishment; nor among the saints, as if the flesh of one should differ from that of another. The intent of this simile is only to shew, that the resurrection of the dead will be in real flesh, in their own flesh, in the self-same flesh, as to substance, with which they were clothed when on earth; but that it will, as to its qualities, be different from it, as one sort of flesh is now from another; and that if God can, as he does, make different sorts of flesh, and yet all for kind are flesh, there is no difficulty in conceiving, that God is able to raise the dead in their own flesh, and yet different from what it now is; being free from all weakness, frailty, corruption, and mortality.

Ver. 40. *There are also celestial bodies*, &c.] Or bodies in the heavens, as the sun, moon, and stars: *and bodies terrestrial*, or bodies on earth, animate and inanimate, men, beasts, trees, minerals, *&c. But the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another*: though both sorts are bodies, yet their qualities differ, and there is a greater glory in the one than in the other. This is another similitude, serving to help our ideas of this doctrine of the resurrection of the body; that though it is the same in substance, yet different in qualities; and does not design any difference between the bodies of good men and bad men, elect and reprobate; as if the one were intended by the celestial bodies, and the other by the terrestrial; and much less degrees of glory in the saints themselves, who, imagine them in as low a form as can be, can never be compared to terrestrial ones; but it shews the difference there will be between the raised bodies and the present ones; which will be as great as that which now is between celestial and terrestrial bodies.

Ver. 41. *There is one glory of the sun*, &c.] Which is the greater light, the fountain of light, and whose glory exceeds that of the other heavenly bodies: *and another glory of the moon*: which is the lesser light, and receives its light from the sun, and consequently its glory is inferior: *and another glory of the stars*: which though very bright and sparkling, and are innumerable, have a lesser glory, at least to our appearance, than the sun and moon: the Jews have a notion [u], that "all the "stars and the orbs are endued with a soul, and with "knowledge, and understanding; and that they live, "and stand, and know him that said, and the world "was; and every one of them, *according to his great-*"*ness*, ולפי מעלתו, *and according to his dignity*, praise "and glorify their Creator, as the angels; and as they "know God, so they know themselves, and the angels "that are above them; for the knowledge of the stars "and the orbs is lesser than the knowledge of angels,

[q] Zohar in Exod. fol. 12. 3.
[r] Midrash Hanneelam in Zohar in Gen. fol. 61. 1.
[s] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 91. 2.
[t] Misn. Cholin, c. 8. sect. 1.
[u] Maimon. Iesode Hatorah, c. 3. sect. 11.

" and greater than the knowledge of men:" *for one star differeth from another star in glory*: all which is to be understood, not as if the glory of the sun meant the glory of Christ, the sun of righteousness, who excels in glory, even in his human nature; and the glory of the moon, the glory of the church, who receives her's from Christ; and the glory of the stars, the glory of particular saints; and as if there will be, in the resurrection-state, degrees of glory among them: for what peculiar glory can be thought to be upon the body of one, that is not upon another, when the righteous shall shine forth as the sun, in the kingdom of their father? and admitting there was any truth in this, 'tis not the truth of this text; the only design of which, as the above, is to shew, that as not only celestial and terrestrial bodies differ from each other, but even heavenly ones, so at the resurrection, the bodies of the saints then will differ in glory from their present ones; though these are now the members of Christ, are presented to God an holy sacrifice, and are washed with pure water.

Ver. 42. *So also is the resurrection of the dead*, &c.] This will be the case and condition of risen bodies, they will be as different from what they now are, though they will be the same in substance, as a stalk of wheat in its blade and ear, and full corn in the ear, is from the naked grain, when cast into the earth; or as the flesh of men is from the flesh of beasts, fishes, and birds; or as celestial bodies from terrestrial ones; or as the glory of the sun differs from the glory of the moon and stars; or as one star differs from another star in glory; that this is the apostle's sense is clear from the induction of particulars following, by which he explains in clear terms what he before signified by similitudes: *it is sown in corruption*; it should be observed, that the word *sown*, in this and the following verses, does not merely relate to the interment of the body, but also to its generation; and includes its state, condition, and character, during life; as well as points out what it is at death, and its sepulture in the earth: it is from first to last a corruptible body; it is born frail and mortal, and liable to corruption and death; it is corrupted with sin, and so a vile body; there is a world of iniquity in one of its members, the tongue, and what then must there be in all its parts? but besides this moral corruption, in which it is during the present state, it is liable to a natural one; from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot, it may be covered with wounds, bruises, and putrefying sores; a right arm may be dried up and withered away, and a leg may corrupt and mortify, and so any other part; the whole is supported by corruptible things, by meat that perisheth; and which if it did not corrupt and perish, would not be nourishing; and as meats are for the belly, and the belly for meats, in a short time God will destroy both it and them; the whole frame and texture of the body will be dissolved by death, and be brought to worms, corruption, and dust; and in this case will lie in the grave till the resurrection-morn: *it is raised in incorruption*: the very same body that was sown, generated, lived, and died, shall be raised again, but different from what it was; it will be incorruptible; its parts will be no more subject to corruption; it will not be supported by corruptible things; it will be immortal, and never die more, and will be clear of all its moral corruption; it will no more be a vile body, but fashioned like to the holy and glorious body of Christ.

Ver. 43. *It is sown in dishonour*, &c.] Its original is dishonourable, it comes, as the Jews often say[y], מטפה סרוחה, *from a filthy drop*; its generated and brought forth in a manner we are ashamed of; it is conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity; it is unclean, and born of the flesh; and when born, is in such a condition, as is to the loathing of it; some of its members are less honourable; and so uncomely as always to need a covering; it is subject to various blemishes, defects, and imperfections, and few bodies are without one or another; and liable to many injuries and affronts, as the body of our Lord himself was, who gave his back to the smiters, his cheek to them that plucked off the hair, and hid not his face from shame and spitting; and in death, 'tis nauseous, filthy, and very dishonourable, so that the nearest relation and friend cannot take pleasure in it, but desires to bury it out of sight; and amidst the greatest funereal pomp and splendour, it is laid in the grave in dishonour, to be the companion of corruption and worms: but in the resurrection, *it is raised in glory*: in perfect beauty and comeliness, without the least blemish, defect, or imperfection; nor will there be any part of it that will occasion shame; it will be metamorphosed, and fashioned like to the glorious body of Christ; it will shine as the sun, and be as the brightness of the firmament: and so the Jews understand the passage in Dan. xii. 3. they say[z], that "God will beautify the bodies of the righteous in "time to come, as the body of the first man when he "entered into the garden of Eden; and that the soul, "whilst it is in its dignity, is sustained by the superior "light, and is clothed with it; and when it enters into "the body in time to come, it enters with the light; "and then will the body shine as the brightness of the "firmament, according to Dan. xii. 3." *It is sown in weakness*: it comes into the world in great weakness; what is weaker than the body of a new-born babe? it can't move, nor help itself in any respect; and how weak and defenceless is the body of man, when adult; as he is subject to various diseases and disorders, which weaken his strength in the way, and is surrounded with natural infirmities, arising from hunger, thirst, nakedness, labour, &c. so he is not armed, as many other creatures are, for defence and offence; nor can he resist and overcome many things which do him hurt, much less can he resist death, or retain his spirit then; and through weakness at last dies, and is devoid of all strength, and as such is laid in the grave, where there is no work that he can do: but *it is raised in power*: it is raised by the power of God, and with great power in itself; being able to subsist without food, and of moving itself from place to place, with great agility; and capable of the highest services before God and the Lamb, without weariness; nor will it be ever more liable to weakness or death; death shall have no more power over it; nor shall it be encompassed or attended with any infirmity whatever.

[y] Pirke Abot, c. 3. sect. 1.

[z] Zohar in Gen. fol. 69. 1.

Ver. 44. *It is sown a natural body*, &c.] Or *an animal* one, being generated as animals are, and supported with food as they be, and die at last as they do: see Eccl. iii. 19, 20, 21. *It is raised a spiritual body*: not as to substance, but as to its quality; it will not be changed into a spirit; our Lord's risen body, to which ours will be conformed, was not a spirit, but, as before, consisted of flesh and bones: but the body will then be subject to the spirit and soul of man; it will be employed in spiritual service, for which it will be abundantly fitted and assisted by the spirit of God; and it will be delighted with spiritual objects; it will be like the angels, those excellent spirits; it will live as spirits do, without natural helps and means, as meat, drink, clothes, sleep, *&c.* and, as they, will never die: *there is a natural*; or *animal body*, such as the first man's was, and those are that descend from him by ordinary generation; and *there is a spiritual body*: such as the body of Christ now is, and as will be the bodies of the risen saints; the phrase is Jewish, הגוף הרוחני, *the spiritual body*[y], and the flesh of the righteous, being בשרים רוחנים, *spiritual flesh*[z], are to be met with in their writings.

Ver. 45. *And so it is written*, &c.] In Gen. ii. 7. *the first man Adam was made a living soul*: in the Hebrew text it is, *man*, or Adam, *became*, or *was made a living soul*; that is, as the apostle says, *the first man Adam*: he calls him, as the Jews[a] frequently do, אדם הראשון, *the first man*: he was the first man that was made, and the first parent of mankind, and the head and representative of all his posterity, and so the first in time, causality and dignity; whose name was Adam, so called by God in the day he was created, because he was formed מן האדמה, *from the ground*, or *earth*; when God breathed life into the earthly mass, or lump; and being animated with a rational soul, it became an animal body, or a living creature; and so the apostle proves, from the first man that was upon earth, that there is a natural, or animal body; a body animated by a soul, and which was supported by eating and drinking, by sleep and rest; and was capable of dying, and should die, in case of sin; and which was the state of it in its first creation, whilst in innocence, and before the fall; and this is all he meant to prove by this Scripture; for what follows is not mentioned as therein written, or elsewhere, but as the apostle's own assertion: *the last Adam* was made *a quickening spirit*: by *the last Adam* is meant Jesus Christ, called Adam, because he is really and truly a man, a partaker of the same flesh and blood as the rest of mankind; and because he is the antitype of the first man Adam, who was a figure of him that was to come; and therefore called Adam, for the same reason as he is called David and Solomon: he is said to be *the last*, in distinction from the first Adam, with respect to him he stood, אחרון, *last* upon the earth, as in Job xix. 25. to which passage some think the apostle here alludes; and because he appeared in the last days in the end of the world, and is the last that shall rise up as a common head and representative of the whole, or any part of mankind: now he is made *a quickening spirit*: which some understand of the Holy Spirit, which filled the human nature of Christ, raised him from the dead, and will quicken our mortal bodies at the last day; others of the divine nature of Christ, to which his flesh, or human nature, was united; and which gave life, vigour, and virtue, to all his actions and sufferings, as man; and by which he was quickened, when put to death in the flesh, and by which he will quicken others another day: though rather I think it is to be understood of his spiritual body, of his body, not as it was made of the virgin, for that was a natural, or an animal one; it was conceived and bred, and born as animal bodies are; it grew and increased, and was nourished with meat and drink, and sleep and rest; and was subject to infirmities, and to death itself, as our bodies be; but it is to be understood of it as raised from the dead, when it was made a spiritual body, for which reason it is called a *spirit*: not that it was changed into a spirit, for it still remained flesh and blood; but because it was no more supported in an animal way; nor subject to those weaknesses that animal bodies are, but lives as spirits, or angels do; and a *quickening* one, not only because it has life itself, but because by virtue of the saints' union to it, as it subsists in the divine person of the son of God, their bodies will be quickened at the last day, and made like unto it, spiritual bodies; also because he lives in his body as a spiritual one, they shall live in theirs as spiritual ones: and so the apostle shews, that there is a spiritual, as well as an animal body; that as the first man's body, even before the fall, was an animal or natural one; the last Adam's body upon his resurrection is a spiritual and life-giving one, as the Syriac version renders it; so the Cabalistic writers[b] speak of "Adam, who is the "holy and supreme, who rules over all, and gives "spirit and life to all."

Ver. 46. *Howbeit, that* was *not first which is spiritual*, &c.] As the apostle before proves the distinction of a natural and spiritual body, and gives instances of both in the two principal men in the world, the first and the last; and points out the difference between them, the one being animated, and having life given unto it, the other animating, and giving life to others; proceeds to observe the order of these, how that one was before the other; the spiritual body, though the more perfect and most excellent, yet was not first in being: *but that which is natural*; Adam's animal body was before Christ's spiritual body: *and afterwards that which is spiritual*; yea, even Christ's animal, or natural body, was before his spiritual one; his body taken from the virgin, and formed in her womb, and in which he lived here on earth, was an animal body, as before observed; and upon his resurrection, it commenced a spiritual one; being the same in substance as the former, only different in qualities; and just so it is, and will be, with the bodies of the saints; which is the apostle's design and view, in observing this order; the natural body is first, and then the spiritual; it is first a natural body, as generated and nourished, as weak and dying, and it is afterwards a spiritual one, when raised from the dead.

Ver. 47. *The first man is of the earth, earthy*, &c.] He

[y] Nishmath Chayim, fol. 37. 1.
[z] Tzeror Hammor, fol. 9. 4.

[a] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 28. 2. & 100. 1. & alibi passim. & אדם קדמון, Cabala denud. par. 4. p. 195, &c. Vid. 2 Esdras iii. 21.
[b] Zohar in Exod. fol. 59. 4.

was formed out of the earth, Gen. ii. 7. and the word there used signifies red earth. Josephus[c] observes, that the first man was called Adam, which in the Hebrew tongue signifies *red*, because he was made out of red earth; for such, adds he, is the true and virgin earth: Pausanias[d] makes mention of a clay, which is not the colour of earth, but like the sand of brooks and rivers; and gives a smell very near to that of the skin, or body of men; and which is said to be the remains of that clay, out of which all mankind was made: but be that as it will, Adam was certainly made out of the earth, and had his habitation and abode assigned him in the garden of Eden, and was made to cultivate and till it; his lordship and dominion, at most and best, only extended to the terraqueous globe, and the creatures in it; and having sinned, he was not only thrust out of the garden to till the ground out of which he was taken, but doomed to return to the dust from whence he came; and whose sin and fall had such an influence on him and his posterity, as to make their souls sensual and earthly, to mind, affect, and cleave unto earthly things: *the second man is the Lord from heaven*: as Adam was the first man, Christ is *the second man*; and these two are spoken of, as if they were the only two men in the world; because as the former was the head and representative of all his natural posterity, so the latter is the head and representative of all his spiritual offspring: and he is *the Lord from heaven*; in distinction from the first man, who was of the earth, and whose lordship reached only to the earth; whereas Christ is Lord of all, not only Lord of lords below, but Lord of angels and saints above; the whole family in heaven and in earth is named of him; and he has all power in heaven and in earth, and a name above every name in this world, and that to come, and is indeed higher than the heavens: this is not to be understood of his human nature, or of his human body, as if that came down from heaven, and passed through the virgin, as some heretics of old said, as water through a pipe; for though it was conceived and formed in a miraculous manner, under the overshadowing of the Holy Ghost from on high, yet was formed out of the matter and substance of the virgin, and so was of the earth; and was indeed an earthly body, supported by earthly means, and at last returned to the earth, and was interred in it: but it is to be understood either of Christ as a divine person, as the son of God, as Lord of all, coming down from heaven at his incarnation; not by local motion, or change of place, but by assumption of the human nature into union with him, the Lord from heaven; or rather of him as he shall descend from heaven, as the Lord and Judge of all at the last day, when he'll come in his glorious, spiritual, and heavenly body; and raise the righteous dead, and fashion their bodies like his own; when what follows will have its full accomplishment. The Cabalistic doctors among the Jews often speak[e] of אדם עליון, *the superior man*, and ואדם תתאן, *the inferior man*; and in their Cabalistic table[f], in the sixth *sephirah*, or number, they place the man from above, the heavenly Adam; and, in one of their writings[g], have these remarkable words, "מאן אדם עלאה ואדם תנינא, *who is the supreme* "*man and the second man*, but of whom it is said, "Prov. xxx. 4. *what is his name, and what is his son's* "*name?* what is his name? this is the supreme man; "what is his son's name? this is the inferior man; "and both of them are intimated in that Scripture, "Exod. iii. 13. *and they shall say unto me, what is his* "*name? what shall I say?*" Some copies, and the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions, leave out the word *Lord*, and add the word *heavenly*, reading the clause thus, *the second man from heaven, heavenly*.

Ver. 48. *As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy*, &c.] As was Adam's body, so are the bodies of those that descend from him; they are houses of clay, earthly houses of this tabernacle, which rise out of the earth, are maintained by the things of it, and return to it again: *and as is the heavenly, such* are, or will be *they also that are heavenly*; as is the glorious and spiritual body of Christ, the Lord from heaven, as that now is in heaven, and will be when he descends from thence; so will be the bodies of them that are heavenly, that are heaven-born souls now, are partakers of the heavenly calling, and whose conversation is in heaven; and who, in the resurrection-morn, will have heavenly, spiritual, and glorious bodies, like unto Christ's: so Philo[h] the Jew on those words, *and man became a living soul*, has this note; "there are "two kinds of men, for the one is *the heavenly man*, "and the other is *earthy*; the heavenly man is he, "who is made after the image of God, incorruptible, and "wholly devoid of earthy substance; the earthy is made "of seminal matter, which is called the ground."

Ver. 49. *And as we have borne the image of the earthy*, &c.] Which regards not so much the sinful image of the first man upon the soul, or the depravity of the powers and faculties of it, as his image of frailty and mortality on the body, having like him a body subject to infirmities and death: *we shall also bear the image of the heavenly*; which likewise regards not so much the spiritual image of Christ instamped on the soul in regeneration, when Christ is formed in the heart, and the new man is created after his likeness, and which more and more appears, through every transforming view of him, and will be complete in glory, as the image and likeness of Christ upon the bodies of the saints in the resurrection, when they shall be fashioned like unto his: some copies, as the Alexandrian and others, read the words as an exhortation, *let us bear the image*, &c. as if the words were an improvement of the apostle's reasoning on this subject, engaging saints to be more concerned for, and seeking after a greater likeness to Christ in righteousness and true holiness; but the other reading and sense are best.

Ver. 50. *Now this I say, brethren*, &c.] Upon the whole, I assert this, and observe it to you, out of a truly Christian respect for you, as brethren in the Lord, that *flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God*: this shews the necessity there is of a difference between the body that now is, and that which shall be, which the apostle has so largely insisted on, and so

[c] Antiqu. l. 1. c. 1. sect. 2.
[d] Phocica, sive l. 10. p. 615.
[e] Raziel, fol. 26. 1. & 31. 1. & 33. 1. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 1. 4.
[f] In Cabala Denudata, par. 2. p. 9.
[g] Zohar in Gen. fol. 39. 2.
[h] Leg. Allegor. l. 1. p. 46.

clearly proved and explained, in the preceding verses; because the body, as it now is, is not capable of possessing the heavenly glory; was it to be introduced into heaven, in the condition it is now, it would break in pieces, and crumble into dust; it would not be able to bear the glory of that state and place: by *flesh and blood* is meant, not human nature as to the substance of it, or as consisting of flesh and blood, for that can and does inherit the kingdom of God; witness the human nature, or body of Christ, the bodies of the saints that rose after his resurrection, and those of Enoch and Elijah, who were translated body and soul to heaven; so that this passage makes nothing for those that deny the resurrection of the same body, and plead for a new and an aërial one: but the human nature, or body, so and so qualified, is here meant; either as corrupted with sin, for without holiness and righteousness no man shall see the Lord, or enter into and possess the kingdom of heaven; or flesh and blood, or an human body, as it is now supported in this animal life, with meat and drink, &c. and as it is frail and mortal, and subject to death, in which sense the phrase is used in Scripture; see Matt. xvi. 17. Gal. i. 16. Eph. vi. 12. and often by the Jews; so Abraham is represented by them as saying[1], "I am "בשר ודם, *flesh and blood*, to-morrow I shall depart "out of the world, or die:" it would be endless to give the many instances that might be produced of this use of the phrase with them, and in which sense it is to be taken here: and the meaning is, that saints in their frail mortal bodies, such as they now are, are not capable of enjoying the heavenly glory; which is called *the kingdom*, because of its riches, glory, grandeur, and magnificence; and the kingdom *of God*, because it is of his preparing and giving: and what he calls his people to, and makes them meet for, and in which they'll reign with him for evermore: heirs of it they may be, and are now whilst in this frail and mortal state; but inherit, possess, and enjoy it, they cannot, as not without holiness of soul, so not without immortality of body; and therefore 'tis necessary that the body should rise different in qualities from, though the same in substance with, the present body; that it should rise incorruptible, glorious, powerful, and spiritual; that it may be fitted for, and be able to bear the exceeding weight of glory in the other world: *neither doth corruption inherit incorruption*: by *corruption* is not so much meant sin, or the corruption of nature, or man as corrupted by sin, though it is true of such an one, that he does not, and cannot *inherit incorruption*; the incorruptible crown, the crown of glory that fadeth not away, the incorruptible inheritance, reserved in the heavens, those riches which moth and rust corrupt not; but the body, as it is generated in corruption, is supported by corruptible things, and is subject to corruption and worms; in such a situation 'tis unfit for, and incapable of inheriting eternal glory; it must be different from what it is; it must put on immortality, and be clothed with incorruption: the word *inherit* in both clauses shews, that the heavenly glory is an inheritance, and belongs to children only; is their heavenly father's bequest unto them; is not bought or acquired by any thing of theirs; and is what they enter into and upon, in virtue and consequence of the death of the testator, Christ.

Ver. 51. *Behold, I shew you a mystery*, &c.] Or a *secret*, which could never have been discovered by reason, or the light of nature, and what is of pure revelation; and which perhaps the apostle became acquainted with, when he was caught up into the third heaven; and is what is never made mention of by any prophet, or apostle, but himself: he prefaces the account of it in this manner, partly to shew the great respect he had for these Corinthians, that he treated them as his bosom-friends, to whom he communicated his secrets; and partly to excite their curiosity and attention: *we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed*; some copies read, *we shall all rise again, but we shall not all be changed*, and so the Vulgate Latin version; according to which the sense is, all will rise again, both just and unjust, but all will not be changed into a state of glory; but the apostle is only speaking of the saints, of whom it is true, not only that they shall rise again, but shall be changed from corruption to incorruption; wherefore this cannot be a true reading: others read the words thus, *we shall all die, but we shall not all be changed*; and so the Ethiopic version and the Alexandrian copy seem to have read; which is just the reverse of the text, and arises from a wrong sense of Heb. ix. 27. where it is not said, *it is appointed unto all men*, but *unto men once to die*; from which rule there has been some exceptions, as the instances of Enoch and Elijah shew; and there will be more at the time of Christ's coming, for all will not sleep in their graves, or die, for death is meant by sleeping; they will not die as men ordinarily do, and continue under the power of death, but they will be changed at once from corruption to incorruption, from dishonour to glory, from weakness to power, from being natural to be spiritual bodies; this change all the saints will undergo, whether dead or alive, at Christ's coming; the dead by a resurrection from the dead, and the living by a secret and sudden power, which will at once render their bodies, without separating them from their souls, immortal and glorious: and this reading and sense are confirmed by the Syriac and Arabic versions.

Ver. 52. *In a moment*, &c.] Or point of time, which is very short indeed; what a moment is, according to the Jewish doctors, see the note on Matt. iv. 8. *In the twinkling of an eye*: these two the Jews not only put together as here, but make one to be as the other; so they say[k], הרגע כהרף עין, *a moment is as the twinkling of an eye*. This phrase, *as the twinkling of an eye*, is frequently used in Jewish writings[l], to signify how speedily and suddenly any thing is done, and which is the design of it here; and the apostle's meaning is, that the change upon the bodies of living saints will be so quick, that it will be done in a trice, before a man can shut his eyes and open them again; so that

[1] Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 11. fol. 202. 2.
[k] T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 2. 4. Echa Rabbati, fol. 54. 4.

[l] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 2. 2. Sabbat, fol. 31. 2. Zohar in Gen. fol. 28. 4. & 29. 1. & 63. 4. Caphtor, fol. 76. 2. Bereshit Rabba, sect. 77. fol. 67. 4.

it will be as it were imperceptible, and without the least sensation of pain; this may also be referred to the resurrection, which will be quick, and done at once; though it seems rather, and chiefly, to respect the change of the living; what follows, indeed, favours the other sense also; for all will be quick and sudden, the coming of Christ, the raising of the dead, and the change of the living: *at the last trumpet, for the trumpet shall sound;* or *by the last trumpet*, as the Syriac and Arabic versions render it; that is, by means of it, through the sounding of that: *and the dead shall be raised incorruptible;* free from all frailty, mortality, and corruption, when the trumpet shall sound: *and* at the same time also, *we shall be changed;* the saints that will be found alive; the apostle speaks in the first person, because of the uncertainty of Christ's coming, and of the blowing of the last trumpet, he not knowing but it might be in his time; what this last trumpet will be, is not easy to say; it can hardly be thought to be a material one: the Jews[m] have a notion, that a trumpet will be blown at the time of the resurrection of the dead, as at the giving of the law on Mount Sinai; which will quicken the dead, as they say it then did; and that this will be blown by Michael the archangel[n]; it seems very likely to be the same with the shout, the voice of the archangel, and the trumpet of God, 1 Thess. iv. 16. all which may be no other than the voice of Christ; at the hearing of which, the dead will rise; but whether this will be an articulate one, as at the raising of Lazarus, or is only expressive of his power, which will then be put forth, is not material, nor a point to be determined: and what if by all this should be meant some violent claps of thunder, as at Mount Sinai, which will shake the whole earth; and when almighty power will be put forth to raise the dead: since such are by the Jews[o] called the voices of the son of David, and are expected by them, a little before his coming? This is called the *last* trumpet, not so much with respect to those that go before, much less to the seven trumpets in the Revelations, of which as yet there was no revelation made, but because there will be none after it; see 2 Esdras vi. 23.

Ver. 53. *For this corruptible must put on incorruption,* &c.] The apostle returns to what he had before asserted, concerning the necessity of an alteration in the qualities of bodies, in order to the enjoyment of the heavenly state; shewing, that the self-same body the saints now have, for he seems to point with his finger to his own, and which are incorruptible ones, shall and must be clothed with incorruption: *and this mortal must put on immortality;* the body that now is mortal, must become immortal; it must put off its rags of mortality, and be clothed with the shining robes of immortality; and which must be done, either by first dying, and then rising from the dead; or by undergoing alive a quick and sudden change, which will at once remove all corruption and mortality; see 2 Esdras ii. 45.

Ver. 54. *So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption,* &c.] As at the coming of Christ, both the bodies of living saints, and of dead ones being raised, will: and this *mortal shall have put on immortality;* which will be the case, in the resurrection-morn: *then shall be brought to pass that saying that is written;* then that passage will have its full accomplishment, which stands in Isa. xxv. 8. where it is read, *he will swallow up death in victory, or for ever.* That is, the Messiah shall by his death, and resurrection from the dead, obtain such an entire victory over death, not only for himself, but for all his people, that in the resurrection-morn, when they will be all raised from the dead, death will be so swallowed up, that it will be no more: the Jews acknowledge that this prophecy belongs to the times of the Messiah; so they say[q], that "the Messiah shall descend from Pharez, "and in his day the holy blessed God will cause death "to be swallowed up, as it is said, Isa. xxv. 8. *he* "*shall swallow up death in victory:*" and again[r], "when "the King Messiah comes, the holy blessed God will "raise up those that sleep in the dust, as it is written, "*he shall swallow up death in victory:*" they also say[s], that this passage refers to future time, and to the world to come. The prophet expresses it actively, it being a prediction of what was to be done by the Messiah; the apostle cites it passively, as being accomplished by him after the resurrection, and considered as a part of the song sung by the risen saints; to which is added,

Ver. 55. *O death, where is thy sting?* &c.] These words, with the following clause, are taken out of Hos. xiii. 14. and that they belong to the times of the Messiah, the ancient Jews acknowledge; and the Chaldee paraphrase interprets them of the Logos, or Word of God, rendering them thus, "my Word shall "be among them to kill, and my Word to destroy;" wherefore the apostle is not to be charged with a misapplication of them, nor with a perversion of them, as he is by the Jew[t]: in the prophet they are thus read, *O death, I will be thy plagues, O grave, I will be thy destruction;* between which, and the apostle's citation of them, there is some difference; the word אהי, which we render in both clauses, *I will be*, the apostle translates *where*, and that very rightly, and so it should be rendered there; and so it is by the Septuagint interpreters, who render the whole as he, with a little variation, *where's thy revenge, O death? where's thy sting, O grave?* and so the Arabic version of Hosea still nearer the apostle, *where is now thy victory, O death? or where is thy sting, O grave?* and even the Chaldee paraphrase on ver. 10. renders the same word *where*; for instead of, *I will be thy king*, the Targum reads, אי מלכך, *where is thy king?* and Aben Ezra, a Jewish writer of great note, on ver. 10. observes, that there are some that say the word is to be inverted, as if it was איה, *where*, and he adds, and it is right; a like observation he makes on those words in ver. 14. and that that is the

[m] Targum. Jon. in Exod. xx. 18. & Kettoreth Hassammim in ib. Abarbinel. Mashmia Jeshua, fol. 11. 4.
[n] Abkath Rachel, p. 138.
[o] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 97. 1. & Gloss. in ib. Vid. Megilla, fol. 17. 2.
[p] Shemot Rabba, sect. 20. fol. 121. 4.

[q] Zohar in Gen. fol. 73. 1.
[r] Zohar in Exod. fol. 109. 1, 2, 4. Misn. Moed Katan. c. 3. sect. 9. Zohar in Lev. fol. 46. 3. Yade Mose in Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 20. 1. Echa Rabbati, fol. 48. 2.
[s] R. Isaac Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 27. p. 461.

true sense of the word in both verses, is attested by Ebn Jannahius Tanchuma[t]; so that the apostle is thus far to be justified, in his citation of this passage: it is further to be observed, that instead of *thy plagues*, he reads, *thy sting*: and I doubt not, but that among the many things which דבר signifies, as it must be owned it does signify the plague, or pestilence, see Psal. xc. 6. and which perhaps is so called, from the venomous nature of it, and the poisonous sting that is in it, so likewise a sting, though there is no instance of it: certain it is, that bees are called דברים, and as Cocceius[u] observes, from their sting; and so in the Chaldee and Arabic languages, a bee, or a wasp, is called דברא; and it is to such sort of creatures, that the allusion is here made; who having lost their stings, can do no hurt; and which will be the case of death in the resurrection-morn, when risen saints will insult over it in this triumphant manner; having nothing more to fear from it, any more than a man has to be afraid of any animal whatever, that has lost its sting: and in the following clause, *O grave, where's thy victory?* instead of *destruction*, as it must be allowed the word קטב signifies, see Psal. xc. 6. the apostle reads *victory*: but then there is no difference in the sense; for the grave gets its victory over its thousands, and ten thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousands, and millions of millions, by the destruction of them, which now it glories in, and boasts of: but in the resurrection-morn, when its destruction will be at an end, the triumphant saints may reasonably ask, where's its boasted victory, since it can destroy no longer.

Ver. 56. *The sting of death is sin*, &c.] Death has a sting, and which was originally in it, and that is sin; sin is the cause of death, it is what has given rise and being to it; it entered into the world by it, and is supported in its empire through it; it gives it its resistless power, which reaches to all sorts of persons, young and old, rich and poor, high and low, bond and free; it gives it all its bitterness, agonies, and miseries; and it is by that it does all the hurt and mischief it does; and it may fitly be compared to a sting, for its poisonous and venomous nature: *and the strength of sin is the law*; not that the law of God is sinful, or encourages sin: it forbids it under the severest penalty; but was there no law there would be no sin, nor imputation of it: sin is a transgression of the law: moreover, the strength of sin, its evil nature, and all the dreadful aggravations of it, and sad consequences upon it, are discovered and made known by the law; and also the strength of it is drawn out by it, through the corruption of human nature; which is irritated and provoked the more to sin, through the law's prohibition of it; and this is not the fault of the law, but is owing to the vitiosity of nature; which the more it is forbidden any thing, the more desirous it is of it; to which may be added, that sin is the more exceeding sinful, being committed against a known law, and that of the great lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy; whose legislative power and authority are slighted and trampled upon by it, which makes the transgression the more heinous; it is the law which binds sin upon a man's conscience, accuses him of it, pronounces him guilty, curses, condemns, and adjudges him to death for it.

Ver. 57. *But thanks be to God which giveth us the victory*, &c.] Over sin the sting of death, over the law the strength of sin, and over death and the grave; and which will be the ground and foundation of the above triumphant song in the resurrection-morn, as it is now at this present time of praise and thankfulness to God: and it is all *through our Lord Jesus*: he has got the victory over sin; he has put it away by the sacrifice of himself; he has finished and made an end of it; for though it reigns over his people before conversion, and dwells in them after it, yet in consequence of his atonement for it, it loses its governing power through the spirit and grace of God in regeneration, and entirely its damning power over them, and in the resurrection-morn will not be so much as in being in them; the view of which now fills them with joy, thanksgiving, and triumph. Christ has obtained a victory over the law; he has stopped its mouth, and answered all its demands; he has been made under, and subject to it; he has obeyed its precepts, and bore its penalty, and has delivered his from the curse and condemnation of it, so that they have nothing to fear from it; it is dead to them, and they to that: he has also abolished death by dying and rising again, so as that it shall have no more dominion over him; and he has abolished it as a penal evil to his saints; and though they die, they shall not always remain under the power of death, they shall live again, and with him for ever: he has conquered the grave by rising out of it himself, and living for evermore, having the keys of the grave in his hands; and will at the last day oblige it to give up its dead, when his victory over this, with respect to his people, will be abundantly manifest: now this victory, in all its branches, is *given* by God to believers; they are made to share in all the victories of Christ their head, and are more than conquerors through him; but this is not by merit, but by gift, the gift of God the father, who gives his son, and all things with him that are his; and this gift is a distinguishing one; it is given to us, and not to others; and which therefore calls aloud for praise and thankfulness. The title of the *ninth* psalm may be rendered, *to the conqueror over death*, or *that is the author of victory over death*, *even to the son, a psalm of David*.

Ver. 58. *Therefore my beloved brethren*, &c.] This is the conclusion of the whole, and contains the use the apostle makes of the above doctrine, addressing the saints at Corinth in the most tender and affectionate manner; owning the spiritual relation they stood in to him, and expressing the great love he had for them; which filled him with a concern for them, that they might be both sound in principle, and right in practice, and continue so: *be ye steadfast, unmoveable*; in all the doctrines of the Gospel, and particularly in this of the resurrection of the dead, which he had been labouring throughout the whole chapter: *always abounding in the work of the Lord*; going on in it, being more and more in the practice of it; either in the work of the ministry, which some of them were in, to which the Lord had called them, and for which he had fitted

[t] Apud Pocock. Not. Miscellan. ad Port. Mosis, p. 69, 70.

[u] Lex. Heb. in rad. דבר.

and qualified them, and in which his glory was greatly concerned, and therefore called his work; or any other work, even all good works, which the Lord commands, requires, calls his people to, and strengthens them to perform: which when they do they may be said to abound, and to be fruitful in every good work: and for their encouragement 'tis added, *forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord;* the labour of such who were in the ministry was not in vain, but was by the Lord made useful for the conversion of sinners, and the edification of saints, who would be their joy, and crown of rejoicing another day; and which must be no small encouragement to labour; and labour in any kind of good work has here its usefulness: it is profitable unto men, and though not meritorious of eternal life, yet the good works of the saints will follow them; Christ will not forget their work and labour of love which they have shewn to his name and people, but will take notice of them as fruits of his own grace, and bestow his rewards upon them, though not in a way of debt, but of grace; which the doctrine of the resurrection assures of, and encourages to hope for; and so must be a friend to the practice of good works, as the contrary doctrine must be an obstruction to them.

CHAP. XVI.

THIS chapter concludes the epistle, with some directions to the Corinthians concerning a collection for the poor saints; with some intimations of himself, Timothy, and Apollos coming to them, and giving them a visit; with exhortations to watchfulness, constancy, courage, and charity; with recommendations of some persons to them mentioned by name; with divers salutations of them by himself and others; and with his good wishes for them. He urges them to make a collection for the poor saints, from the example of the churches of Galatia, according to his order, ver. 1. He points out the time when he would have it made, on the first day of the week; and the persons that should contribute to it, every member of the church; and the act of distribution, by laying up in store; and the manner, measure, and rule of doing it, according as they were blessed in Providence with temporal things; and the end of it, that there might be no collections to make when the apostle should come among them, ver. 2. and this, when made, and being ready at his coming, he proposes to send to Jerusalem, by persons approved of and recommended by them, ver. 3. and that he would also go along with them, should it be thought fit and proper, ver. 4. He signifies his resolution of coming and paying them a visit, when he should pass through Macedonia, ver. 5. when he had some thoughts of tarrying with them for a while, at least throughout the winter season, ver. 6. in all which he submits to the will of God, ver. 7. The reason why he could not come as yet was, because he had determined to stay at Ephesus till Pentecost, where he now was, ver. 8. and what prevailed upon him to stay there was, because there was an opportunity of preaching the Gospel with a prospect of success; and there were many enemies to hinder it all they could, and therefore the apostle's presence seemed necessary, ver. 9. He intimates, that Timothy would come to them shortly, and exhorts them to take care of him, and carry it respectfully to him; giving this as a reason, because he was engaged in the same work of the Lord he himself was, ver. 10. He enjoins them, that whilst he should continue with them they would not despise him on account of his youth; and when he should depart from them, to conduct him in peace to him who was in expectation of him, along with other brethren, ver. 11. and then he excuses Apollos not coming to them at present; and observes, that it was not for want of entreaty in him, but for want of will in Apollos, who notwithstanding would come when a convenient time should offer, ver. 12. Next follow several exhortations to be upon their watch and guard, to be steadfast in the doctrine, grace, and profession of faith, and to behave themselves like men of a truly Christian spirit and courage, and to do every thing in their church-state in the exercise of the grace of love, ver. 13, 14. and then he recommends unto them the family of Stephanas, and exhorts them to have them in respect and reverence, and be subject to such, and particularly that family; partly because they were the first-fruits of his ministry, in those parts; and partly because they had given up themselves to the ministry of the saints, ver. 15, 16. as also because the coming of Stephanas to him, together with two other persons, named Fortunatus and Achaicus, had made him glad; supplied what was lacking in them; had refreshed his spirit and theirs; and therefore should be took notice of, and respectfully used, ver. 17, 18. And then follow various salutations, first of the churches of Asia in general, then of Aquila and Priscilla, and the church in their house, ver. 19. Next of all the brethren at Ephesus, or that were with the apostle, ver. 20. and last of all of the apostle himself, ver. 21. And the chapter is closed with several wishes of different sorts, and which respect different persons; those that love not Christ, and live and die so, he wishes they may be accursed at the coming of the Lord, as they will be; and which is mentioned to deter professors of religion from every thing that looked like want of love to Christ, whom they professed, ver. 22. as for others, even as many as loved Christ, and which he hoped of them all, he wishes the grace of Christ might be with them, ver. 23. and gives his love to them all, without any distinction; and which is to be understood not of a natural, but spiritual affection, it being in Christ, and for his sake, ver. 24.

Ver. 1. *Now concerning the collection for the saints,* &c.] Not at Corinth, but at Jerusalem, as appears from ver. 3. for the poor saints there, who were reduced to poverty, either through the spoiling of their goods by their persecuting countrymen; or through the selling of their possessions, and putting their substance into one common stock, which was now exhausted, partly by their living upon it, and partly by the expending of it for the enlargement of the interest of

Christ, and the spread of his Gospel among the Gentiles; so that it was but fit and reasonable that they should assist them in their necessitous circumstances: wherefore the apostle, after he had gone through the various subjects he thought fit to write upon, relating both to doctrine and practice, proceeds to give some orders, directions, and instructions, concerning this matter. *As I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so also do ye.* The churches of Galatia were those he wrote an epistle to, which bears their name, and in which he takes notice of the request of the apostles at Jerusalem to him, that he would remember the poor as he travelled through the Gentile countries, and which, no doubt, he mentions, as a hint unto them to collect for them. Gal. ii. 10. though the order he here speaks of was doubtless given them when he passed through the region of Galatia, Acts xvi. 6. and xviii. 23. This he observes by way of example to the church at Corinth, and to shew them, that what he ordered them was no other than what he enjoined other churches, and which they were ready to come into, as these in Galatia, and also in Macedonia; and designs this as a spur unto them, that if the Galatians, who were a more rude and uncultivated people, being now called by grace, were ready to such a good work, they who were a more polite people, and used to civility, humanity, and tenderness, would not be backward to it.

Ver. 2. *Upon the first* day *of the week*, &c.] In an ancient copy of Beza's, and in some others, 'tis added, *the Lord's day.* Upon some one first day of the week, or more, if there was a necessity for it, until the collection was finished; though the Syriac and Arabic versions render it, *every first day:* but this is not the apostle's intention, that a collection should be made every first day, but only on some one day, or as long as it was necessary: for at the close of the verse he gives this reason for it, *that there be no gatherings when I come:* whereas, if this collection was to have been every first day, and to have been always continued, it must have been when he was present, as well as when absent; but this was only designed for a certain time, and on a certain account: the reason of his fixing upon the first day of the week was, because on this day the disciples of Christ, and the primitive churches, met together for divine worship, to hear the word, and observe the ordinances of Christ; see John xx. 19, 26. Acts xx. 7. and was a very fit reason for such a work, when their hearts were warmed with the presence of God and Christ, with the grace of the spirit, and the doctrines of the Gospel, and their affections were knit to one another, and to all the saints: and so we find from the accounts of Justin Martyr[w], and of Tertullian[x], that it was usual for the primitive churches in the age following that of the apostles, after the worship of God was over, to collect money for widows and orphans, and for saints in distress, such as were banished into distant parts, or condemned to the mines; and this practice was very agreeable to the customs of the apostle's countrymen, the Jews, from whence he might take this, who used to collect for, and distribute to the poor on their sabbath[y]. "The alms'-dish was every day, but the alms'-chest "from evening of the sabbath to the evening of the "sabbath." It was collected and distributed then, as their commentators say[z]. *Let every one of you lay by him in store, as* God *hath prospered him.* The persons who are to contribute are *every one*, of every sex, age, state, and condition, male and female, young and old, servants and masters, the meaner as well as the richer sort; the poor widow threw in her mite into the treasury as well as the rich men: the act of communication or distribution is signified by *laying by him in store*; for this is not to be understood of separating a part of his substance from the rest, and laying it up בביתה, *in his own house*, as the Syriac version renders it, or the putting it in his pocket in order to give it; though both these acts may be necessary, as preparatory to the work: but it intends the very act itself: for communicating to the poor is laying up in store a good foundation for the time to come; 'tis a laying up treasure in heaven, and riches there, which will never corrupt: the manner in which this is to be done, and the measure of it, *as God hath prospered him*; according to the success he has in his worldly business, and the increase of his worldly substance, and which is the way to have it enlarged. The Jews have a saying[a], "if a "man observes his provisions to be straitened, let "him do alms of them, how much more if they are "large." The Vulgate Latin version renders, it, *laying up what pleases him well*; and the Arabic version, *what through liberality he pleases, and shall be convenient for him*; for this ought to be a free-will offering, as a matter of bounty and generosity, and not of covetousness, or of force and necessity, but as a man of himself has purposed in his own heart, and which he does with cheerfulness and freedom. *That there be no gatherings when I come;* who had other work, and greater service to do among them; besides, he was desirous of having this collection over and ready when he came, that he might directly send it away to Jerusalem, knowing the pressing necessities of the saints there.

Ver. 3. *And when I come*, &c.] To Corinth, as he intended very quickly: *whomsoever you shall approve by your letters:* that is, such persons as this church should approve, and choose, and fix upon as proper persons to go with their collection; which approbation and choice they would signify by letters to the church, and principal men of it in Jerusalem, giving them a character as men of probity and faithfulness: *them will I send.* The Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions join the phrase, *by letters*, to this clause; according to which reading the sense is, such as the church should choose for this service, the apostle would send with letters of commendation from him, to the elders and church at Jerusalem, recommending them as brethren in the Lord, and to be had in respect, and treated in a Christian manner by them: to which their being messengers from such a church, and having letters from

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[w] Apolog. 2. p. 98, 99.
[x] Apolog. c. 39.
[y] T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 8. 2. Maimon. Hilch. Mattanot Aniyim, c. 9. sect. 6.
[z] Maimon. R. Sampson & Bartenora in Misn. Peah, c. 8. sect. 7.
[a] T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 7. 1.

so great an apostle; besides, the business they should come about would entitle them to, which was *to bring your liberality, or grace, unto Jerusalem*; meaning the money collected for the poor saints there; which he calls *grace*, because it was owing to the goodness of God, that they were in a capacity to contribute to others, and to the grace of God that they had a heart to do it; and because it was in a free and gracious manner, and in the exercise of grace, of faith in Christ, and love to the saints, that they did it, and with a view to the glory of the grace of God, of which this was a fruit and evidence.

Ver. 4. *And if it be meet that I go also*, &c.] If it should be convenient for me to go, or it should be thought proper and expedient that I should go; or, as the Syriac version renders it, *if this work should be worthy that I should go*; and the Arabic version, *if the thing should be worthy to go with me*; that is, their beneficence; if so large a collection should be made, that it will be worthy of an apostle to go along with it, hereby artfully pressing them to a good collection: *they shall go with me*; that is, those brethren whom the church shall approve and send; for he would not go alone, nor propose it, to remove all suspicion of converting any money to his own use.

Ver. 5. *Now I will come unto you*, &c.] Which he again assures them of, as being his real intention and design; though some had given out that he would not come to them any more, and hoped they should never see him more; see ch. iv. 18, 19. *When I shall pass through Macedonia*; hereby fixing the time when he intended to visit them after he had gone through that country, and had received their collections for the saints at Jerusalem, which the churches there so generously made, and pressed him to the ministring of, of which he speaks in his next epistle. *For I do pass through Macedonia*: not that he was then passing through Macedonia, or was in it, and so at Philippi, from whence this epistle is said to be written, as the subscription at the end of it expresses, for he was now at Ephesus; see ver. 8. and from thence was this epistle written; he was not in Macedonia till some time after, see 2 Cor. ii. 12, 13. but the sense is, that he should take his tour through Macedonia; and so the Vulgate Latin version renders it, *for I shall pass through Macedonia*; and so coming into Greece, he intended to come to Corinth, and stay some time with them.

Ver. 6. *And it may be that I will abide*, &c.] He could not be certain what calls in Providence he might have to some other places, where his presence would be necessary: *yea, and winter with you*: stay all winter with them, for the space of three months, as we read he did in Greece, Acts xx. 1, 2, 3. *That ye may bring me on my journey whithersoever I go*; both by accompanying him in person themselves, in token of honour and respect, and by providing things necessary for his journey; see Acts xv. 3. and xxi. 5.

Ver. 7. *For I will not see you now by the way*, &c.] Just to look upon them, and be gone, be like a wayfaring man that tarries but for a night: *but I trust to tarry a while with you*; the whole winter season: *if the Lord permit*; submitting all to the will of God, at whose sovereign disposal he always was, and at whose beck and command he desired to be, and to do nothing, or be any where, but what was agreeable to the will of God.

Ver. 8. *But I will tarry at Ephesus till Pentecost.*] The feast of weeks, or of harvest, which was fifty days from the passover; see the note on Acts ii. 1. which though abrogated at the death of Christ, was observed by the Jews, and is mentioned by the apostle, not as a festival that the Christians were obliged to regard, or did regard, but as pointing out the time he intended to stay at Ephesus: and we elsewhere read, that he was greatly desirous of being at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, Acts xx. 16. not to keep it, but because there would then be abundance of people from all parts there, to whom he should have an opportunity of preaching the Gospel.

Ver. 9. *For a great door*, &c.] Meaning an opportunity of ministering the word at Ephesus, a very populous city, and where he might have hope great good would be done. Some think that by this fair opportunity, or hopeful prospect, he means the populousness of the city; others, the conversion of some great men in it, which had made way for the introduction of the Gospel there: but it seems rather to intend the desire that there appeared in many persons here to have the Gospel preached unto them; they flocked unto it; their hearts were opened to attend to it, and great numbers believed; and the apostle found a door of utterance in himself, and a door of entrance in them, which were reasons with him to tarry here. *And effectual is opened to me*; not by him, but to him: this door was opened by him who has the key of David, that opens, and no man shuts; and the door of faith being opened by him, it was *effectual* to the quickening of sinners dead in trespasses and sins, to the enlightening of blind eyes, unstopping of deaf ears, and softening hard hearts; to the turning of souls from the power of Satan to God, to the quickening, comforting, and establishing of saints, and indeed to salvation to all that believe; which is the case when the word comes, not in word only, but in power; then it works effectually in them that believe; and since there was an opportunity of preaching the Gospel with such good effect, the apostle was desirous of making use of it: *and* there are *many adversaries*; as there always are where the Gospel is preached, and especially with success, when sinners are converted, and saints are edified and comforted. The adversary Satan roars, and the posse of devils under him are employed one way or another to obstruct the Gospel if possible; false teachers are raised up to oppose it, and profane men are instigated by him to persecute the preachers and professors of it: so it was at Ephesus, the Jews disputed against it, and spoke evil of it; Demetrius the silversmith, and those of his craft, rose up in a tumultuous manner, crying, great is Diana of the Ephesians, stirring up the people against the apostle, and his companions: all which he had some fore-views of, and found to be true by experience, as may be seen in Acts xix. and which, though to another man would have been a reason to have departed, was a reason with him to stay; to bear his testimony to the Gospel, to appear in the defence of it, against the disputers of this world, and to strengthen and establish the minds of weak believers in it, who

might have been in some danger through so many adversaries; wherefore he saw and judged that his presence was necessary, and that it was proper for him to stay the time he mentions.

Ver. 10. *Now if Timotheus come*, &c.] The apostle had sent him already, as appears from ch. iv. 17. and he was now gone from him; but whether he might not be prevented by unforeseen incidents in his journey, he could not say; and therefore speaks cautiously of his coming; from whence 'tis evident, that this epistle was not sent by Timothy, as the subscription to it suggests. *See that he may be with you without fear*: should he come to them, the apostle desires they would take care of him, that he might be safe and secure from enemies of every sort, of which there were many at Corinth; who, as they were of a malignant disposition to him, would use a disciple of his ill: and these were not only, or so much, infidels and profane sinners, but false teachers, and the factions under them, and especially they of the circumcision. *For he worketh the work of the Lord, as I also* do; which is a reason why they should be careful of him, that nobody molest him, and put him into fear; since though he was not in so high an office as the apostle, yet he was called to the same work of the ministry, was engaged in the same service of Christ, and was zealous in promoting the same common cause, interest, and kingdom of the Redeemer, and faithfully preached the same Gospel as the apostle did; and therefore would doubtless meet with the same enemies, and be in the same danger.

Ver. 11. *Let no man therefore despise him*, &c.] On account of his youth; see 1 Tim. iv. 12. or neglect to take care of him, which would be to despise him, since he was employed in such an honourable work, equally as the apostle himself: hence it is manifest, that as the lives of Gospel ministers ought to be defended and secured by those to whom they minister, their persons ought to be treated with esteem and respect. *But conduct him forth in peace*: when he takes his leave, wish him all happiness and prosperity, accompany him some part of the way in his journey, and provide things necessary for him; all which used to be done to such who laboured in the word and doctrine, and were counted worthy of double honour; and such an one Timothy was judged by the apostle to be: *that he may come unto me*; at Ephesus, where he now was, in peace and safety, and relate to him the state and condition of the church; their steadfastness in the faith, their care of him, and the respect they had shewn him; all which would be grateful to the apostle: *for I look for him with the brethren*: that is, either the brethren that were with the apostle were in earnest expectation of him, together with himself; and so the Ethiopic version reads, *for our brethren with me have expected* him; or else that he looked for him along with the brethren, that either went with him, or should come with him from Corinth, being sent by the church.

Ver. 12. *As touching our brother Apollos*, &c.] Who was a senior man to Timothy, an eloquent preacher, one who had been at Corinth, and was well known to the saints there, and greatly approved by many of them; wherefore the apostle excuses it, that he should send the one, and not the other, and shews that it was no fault of his: for, says he, *I greatly desired him to come unto you with the brethren*: who seem to be Timotheus and Erastus, see Acts xix. 22. He greatly importuned him to go along with them, knowing how acceptable he would be among them, and hoping he might be of great use to them in composing their differences, and rectifying their disorders. *But his will was not at all to come at this time*; or *it was not the will*: that is, of God, as some supply it, for him to come now; or he had no mind himself, nor could he be persuaded; he had reasons to himself why he judged it not proper to come at present: however, for their encouragement it is added, *but he will come when he shall have convenient time*; he is not averse to coming, but some things at present hinder him; when he has a suitable opportunity he'll make use of it.

Ver. 13. *Watch ye*, &c.] The apostle in the mean while, before he closes his epistle, thinks fit to give some proper and pertinent exhortations, which might be of general use to this church; and first exhorts them to watchfulness, not for the coming of Apollos, and a convenient season for that; but over themselves, over their hearts, thoughts, affections, words, actions, and their whole conversations; and over one another, that they go not into bad principles, and evil practices; and also against sin in general, every appearance, and the first motions of it, and particularly unbelief; and against Satan, and his temptations, who is an indefatigable enemy, and whose wiles, devices, and stratagems are many and cunning; and against the world, its charms and snares; and likewise against false teachers, who lie in wait to deceive, and therefore to be guarded against; many of which were among these Corinthians, and made this exhortation very necessary. It became them likewise to watch daily at wisdom's gates, to wait constantly upon God in the word and ordinances, and especially to watch unto prayer, and in it, and after it; to all which 'tis necessary that they should be awake, and not asleep, to which the wise as well as foolish virgins are subject; that they should be sober, and not be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and the cares of this life; and that they be in their proper station, on their watch-tower, keeping a good look-out, and being ready armed, to attack an enemy when descried. Many are the reasons why the saints should be upon their watch and guard; as because they have many eyes upon them; the eyes of the omniscient God are upon them, who sees and takes notice of all their actions; the eyes of angels are upon them, and even in their solemn assemblies; the eyes of saints are upon them, though watching for their good; and the eyes of evil men for their halting; and the eyes of devils are upon them, waiting an opportunity to do them hurt and mischief, if possible. Moreover, unwatchfulness exposes to many evils, temptations, and snares; to which may be added, as an inducement to watchfulness, the uncertainty of Christ's coming either at death, or to judgment. *Stand fast in the faith*; which is proper to those that are watchful; for men asleep can't well stand. This exhortation may respect either standing in the grace of faith, in opposition to doubting and unbelief, and design a continuance in the exercise of it, notwithstand-

ing all the corruptions of nature, and the various sins and infirmities of life, the frequent temptations of Satan, and the many afflictions and trials in the world, which may occasion diffidence and distrust; for standing in this grace, and in such a constant exercise of it, greatly glorifies God, is what is well-pleasing in his sight; and in this way saints have communion with God, peace and comfort in their souls, and much spiritual joy and pleasure: it is the grace by which they stand, and therefore should stand in it, and by which they overcome the world. Or else it may intend standing in the doctrine of faith, in opposition to a departure from it, or a giving up any part of it, or wavering about it; it becomes saints to be steadfast in it, and abide by it, whoever is against it; let them be ever so many, or ever so wise and learned, and whatever may be said against it, as that it is a novel one, a licentious one, and a set of irrational principles, and whatever is the opposition that is made against it, though bonds and afflictions, reproach and persecution in every shape attend it, yet none of these things should move them from it. Perhaps that particular doctrine of faith, the resurrection of the dead, may be greatly regarded. Moreover, standing in the profession of faith, both of the grace and doctrine of faith, may be intended: for as this is to be made, it is to be held fast, and stood fast in, without wavering, by all true believers, who have great encouragement so to do from the person and grace of Christ, and from the love and faithfulness of God, and the many gracious promises he has made. Wherefore, *quit yourselves like men, be strong*; a like phrase is often used by the Septuagint interpreters, as in Deut. xxxi. 6, 23. Jos. i. 6, 7, 9, 18. and x. 25. 2 Sam. x. 12. 1 Chron. xxii. 13. and xxviii. 20. 2 Chron. xxxii. 7. and Dan. x. 19. from whence the apostle seems to have taken it. It answers to the Hebrew word התאששו, in Isa. xlvi. 8. *Quit you like men*; like men of wisdom and understanding; be not like children for non-proficiency, instability, and weakness; see ch. xiv. 20. act the part of men; believe not every spirit; be not carried and tossed about with every wind of doctrine; search the Scriptures, and try every doctrine by them; and having found what is truth abide by it, and be proficients in it, instructing and establishing yourselves and others. In which sense the Jews use this phrase, saying[b], "in a place "where there are no men, השתדל להיות איש, *study "to be a man*, or to shew thyself a man;" which one of their commentators[c] explains thus; "use and "accustom thyself to obtain excellent things, and "afterwards when there are no wise men to teach, "then do thou teach thyself." And another[d] after this manner; "*in the place where there is no man* to sit "at the head and teach doctrines," do thou. Or *play the man*, as in 2 Sam. x. 12. act like men of valour and courage, stand fast, keep your ground, and contend earnestly for the faith; be valiant for the truth on earth; fight the good fight of faith: it is a good cause believers are engaged in; they have a good Captain and Commander at the head of them; they are provided with good weapons, may be sure of victory, and of having the crown of righteousness, life, and glory: wherefore *be strong*: that is, *for the faith*: so the Targumist on Jer. ix. 3. renders the phrase, *they are not valiant for the truth*, לא להימנותא תקיפי, *they are not strong for the faith*: *be strong*; not in themselves, but in the Lord, and in the power of his might; in the grace that is in Christ Jesus; believe in him, look to him for strength as well as righteousness; trust in his power, whose arm is not shortened; depend on his grace, which is always sufficient; take heart, be of good courage, and fear no enemy; see Josh. i. 6. which seems to be particularly referred to here.

Ver. 14. *Let all your things be done with charity.*] Signifying, that the whole of their obedience to Christ, their observation of, and subjection to all his ordinances and commands, should spring from, and be done in love to him; and that the whole of their conduct and behaviour towards one another ought to be with charity, which bears all things, and covers a multitude of sins; and that all their church-affairs, their business at church-meetings, should be transacted, not with strife and vain glory, but in peace, and with mutual affection, with a concern for the good of each other, and of the whole body, and for the glory of God; for without charity or love, and the exercise of this grace, it signifies little what men either have or do; and such an exhortation was the more necessary to this church, since it was so full of factions, contentions, and divisions.

Ver. 15. *I beseech you, brethren*, &c.] Entreat or exhort you as brethren in the Lord; this entreaty or exhortation is to submission to fellow-helpers and labourers of the ministry, more particularly expressed in the following verse, after the apostle has given a character of the household of Stephanas, who are principally intended, and which contains reasons and arguments why they should be submitted to; and which account stands in the following parenthesis, *ye know the house of Stephanas*; a person of note at Corinth, whom the apostle had baptized, together with his family, 1 Cor. i. 16. The Vulgate Latin version, and some copies, add, *and of Fortunatus and Achaicus*, persons mentioned along with Stephanas, in ver. 17. *that it is the first-fruits of Achaia*: this family was one of the first in the regions of Achaia, of which Corinth was the metropolis, that believed in Christ; these were some of the first instances of conversion, and who received the first-fruits of the spirit in these parts, and by the grace of God had been enabled to persevere hitherto, and were worthy of respect: the same he says of Epenetus, in Rom. xvi. 5. *and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints*; that is, either to minister to the wants of poor saints, whether out of their own substance, or the churches' stock, being deacons, or to minister to the saints by preaching the Gospel; which good work they desired, willingly gave up themselves to, and cheerfully engaged in, and took the oversight and care of the flock, not by constraint, but willingly; not that they thrust themselves into an office, or came into it in an irregular way, but being called into it in an orderly manner by

[b] Misn. Pirke Abot, c. 2. sect. 5. Vid. T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 63. 1.
[c] Maimon. in Misn. ib.
[d] Bartenora in Misn. Beracot, fol. 63. 1.

the church, and invested with it, they applied to the execution of it with great heartiness, diligence, and zeal, and so were very deserving of due respect, as next mentioned.

Ver. 16. *That ye submit yourselves to such,* &c.] To persons of such a character, and in such an office; if in ministering to poor saints, by assisting them, and by putting into their hands, and putting it in their power to discharge their work fully, in which they were so heartily concerned; and if in the work of the ministry of the word, by attending their ministrations, receiving the truths delivered by them with faith and love, so far as they appeared to be agreeably to the word of God; hearkening to their admonitions, counsels and advice, regarding their censures and reproofs by the authority of the church, and in their name, and by subjection to the laws of Christ's house, as put in execution by them, see Heb. xiii. 17. *and to every one that helpeth with us:* in any form, whether by relieving the poor, or by preaching the Gospel: *and laboureth;* in the Lord's vineyard, in the word and doctrine, for the good of souls, and the glory of Christ: for such are worthy of double honour, and ought to be valued and esteemed for their works' sake, and submitted to in every thing that is according to the rules of the Gospel.

Ver 17. *I am glad of the coming of Stephanas, and Fortunatus, and Achaicus,* &c.] Who very probably were those of the household of Chloe, mentioned in ch. i. 11. who came either of their own accord, or were sent as messengers from the church at Corinth to the apostle; who was glad to see them, one of them being baptized by him, and perhaps all of them converted under his ministry: however, they were believers in Christ, if not ministers of the Gospel, which seems very probable. *For that which was lacking on your part they have supplied;* which is not to be understood of their supplying him with money, in which the Corinthians had been deficient; for as he had never taken any thing of them, he was determined he never would; see 2 Cor. xi. 7, 8, 9, 10. and xii. 13, 14. but either of their presence which supplied the want of theirs, the apostle had been for some time greatly desirous of: or whereas they had been greatly wanting in sending him an account of the state of the church, and how things stood with them, these brethren greatly supplied that defect, by giving him a very particular account of their church-affairs.

Ver. 18. *For they have refreshed my spirit,* &c.] By their coming and presence; the very sight of them gave him joy and pleasure, and more so their Christian discourse and conversation, and especially the account they brought of this church; for though there were many things in it which were very disagreeable, and were the occasion of this epistle, yet there were others related, which were exceedingly pleasing to the apostle, and revived his spirit, which had been greatly depressed by what he might have heard of them from another quarter, and through fear that it was worse with them than it really was; for by these brethren he understood, that there were many in the church that had great grace, and large gifts bestowed on them, so that they came behind none in these things; and were steadfast in the faith of the Gospel, and with vigour opposed the false teachers; and in all things sought the welfare of the church, and the interest of Christ: and this was good news to the apostle, and which exhilarated his spirit: and he adds, *and yours;* his spirit and theirs, in divine things, being the same; they were of one heart and soul; they had the same love, and were of one accord, and of one mind; so that what was grateful to the one, was so to the other: or his sense is, that when these brethren should return, and acquaint the church how the spirit of the apostle was revived, and refreshed with the narrative they gave him of the affairs of the church, their spirits would be also refreshed too. Dr. Hammond thinks that this phrase is taken out of the Greek translation of Zech. vi. 8. *have quieted my spirit,* which the Septuagint interpret by *ἀνέπαυσαν τὸν θυμόν μου, they stilled,* or *caused my wrath to cease;* and in the same way Jarchi, Aben Ezra, and Kimchi explain the words; but the apostle's phrase is nearer to the original itself of that text, הניחו את רוחי, *they have stilled,* or *caused my spirit to rest;* and is the very same phrase the Syriac version uses here; and which the Chaldee paraphrase renders thus, עבידו ית רעותי, *they have done my will;* that which was agreeable and well-pleasing to God; and so these brethren by their coming and company, and news they brought, did that which was grateful and satisfactory to the apostle: and the phrase of the spirit of man having rest from another, is often used in the Rabbinical writings, for having satisfaction in them, and approving of them; so they say,[s], "שרוח "הבריות נוחה הימנו, that every one *from whom the "spirit of men have rest,* the spirit of God has rest; "and every one from whom the spirit of man has no "rest, the spirit of God has no rest:" and which their commentators[t] explain thus, "whoever is beloved "below, 'tis manifest that he is beloved above:" *therefore acknowledge ye them that are such;* as these men; know them, have an affection for them, shew respect to them, highly esteem of them for their works' sake; see 1 Thess. v. 12, 13.

Ver. 19. *The churches of Asia salute you,* &c.] The Syriac version renders it, *all* the churches. This shews, that this epistle was not written from Philippi, as the subscription to it attests, for then he would rather have said, the churches of Macedonia salute you, but at Ephesus, where he now was; see ver. 8. and this is the more confirmed, by the following salutation of Aquila and Priscilla, who 'tis plain from Acts xviii. 18, 19, 26. were with the apostle at Ephesus: *Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord:* Aquila was a Jew of Pontus, and Priscilla was his wife, who came from Italy, all Jews being obliged to depart from Rome, by the order of Claudius Cæsar. These came to Corinth, where they met with the apostle; and being of the same occupation, staid and wrought with him; and when he went from thence to Ephesus, accompanied him thither; see Acts xviii. 2, 3, 18, 19. wherefore having personal knowledge of the members of this church, through their stay with the apostle there, for the space of a year and a half, send their Christian

[s] Pirke Abot, c. 3. sect. 10.

[t] Jarchi & Bartenora in Pirke Abot, c. 3. sect. 10.

salutations to them, with great affection and respect: *with the church that is in their house*; their family consisting of believers, and being kept in such good decorum, and employed daily in singing, praying, expounding, and conferring together about divine things, looked like a little church; and it may be that at certain times the principal members of the church at Ephesus met in their house for religious worship, and to consider and debate about the affairs of the church; and very likely as they were of the same occupation with the apostle, he himself dwelt here; and which might be the more an occasion of the church assembling here at times; and the Vulgate Latin version adds, *with whom also I lodge*.

Ver. 20. *All the brethren greet you*, &c.] Either the brethren, the members of the church at Ephesus; or the apostle's brethren in the ministry, that were along with him, as Sosthenes and others; or the brethren that were come to him from Corinth, namely Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus: *greet ye one another with an holy kiss*; see the note on Rom. xvi. 16.

Ver. 21. *The salutation of me Paul with mine own hand*.] The apostle had an *amanuensis*, that wrote the epistle for him; but to prevent counterfeits, and that the church to whom he wrote might be assured of the genuineness of the epistle, that it was truly his own, he wrote with his own hand his common salutation; see 2 Thess. iii. 17, 18. and which is not in the following words, but what is expressed in ver. 23.

Ver. 22. *If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ*, &c.] The Vulgate Latin, and the Syriac and Ethiopic versions, read *our Lord*. The apostle here does not so much mean profane and unregenerate sinners, who are destitute of love to Christ, from ignorance of him; nor such who, from the same principle, might persecute him in his members, for such are to be even prayed for, and wished well unto; and oftentimes such are called by grace, and become true and sincere lovers of Christ; and the apostle himself was an instance of it: some think the Jews are intended, who were the mortal enemies of Christ; hated his name and person, his Gospel and interest, and maliciously persecuted the same; they called Jesus accursed, and therefore deserved an anathema to be pronounced on them; it was prophesied of them, that their name should be left for a curse; and it was threatened to them, in case of non-repentance, upon the coming of John the Baptist, in the spirit of Elijah, that the Lord would come and smite their land with a curse; which had its accomplishment in the destruction of Jerusalem; see Isa. lxv. 15. Mal. iv. 6. others think the Gnostics are intended, one of whose tenets was, that it was lawful not to confess Christ in a time of persecution, in order to save themselves; and such might be truly said not to love our Lord Jesus, and on whom such an anathema as after mentioned might rightly be denounced: though it should seem rather, that some persons in this church, or that infested it, are referred to as the false teachers, and those who sided with them, who made factions and divisions in the church of Christ; allowed themselves in the commission of fornication and incest, and such like impurities; had no regard to the peace of the consciences of weak brethren, but laid stumbling-blocks in their way; behaved in a very irreverent manner at the Lord's table, and gave in to very pernicious errors and heresies, particularly denying the resurrection of the dead; and by their many bad principles and practices plainly shewed that they did not in deed and in truth love our Lord Jesus: wherefore of every such an one the apostle says, *let him be anathema*. The word *anathema*, answers to the Hebrew חרם, and is rendered by it here in the Syriac version; and signifies any thing separated and devoted to holy uses; and so it is used by the Septuagint, in Lev. xxvii. 28. and in the New Testament, Luke xxi. 5. and which, if alienated to any other purposes, entailed a curse on persons; hence it is often translated *accursed*, as in Rom. ix. 3. 1 Cor. xii. 3. Gal. i. 8, 9. and here it signifies, that such persons that love not the Lord Jesus, should be rejected by the saints, and separated from their communion; and so the Arabic version renders it, *let him be separated*; that is, from the church; let him be cast out of it, and cut off from it; as, so living and dying without love to Christ, he will be accursed by him at the last day, and will have that awful sentence denounced on him, *go ye cursed*. The apostle adds another word, about which there is some difficulty, *maranatha*; some make this to be the same with *anathema*; the one being the Syriac, the other the Greek word, as *Abba*, *father*; and think that *maranatha* is put for מחרמתא, *maharamatha*; others think that it is the same with מחרונאתא, *maharonatha*, which signifies *from wrath to come*; and being joined with the other word, intends an anathematizing or devoting persons to wrath to come: others take it to be the last, and worse sort of excommunication among the Jews; and observe, that the first sort was called נדוי, *Niddui*, which was a separation from company and conversation, to which reference may be had in Luke vi. 22. the second sort was called חרם, *Cherem*, to which *anathema* answers, and was a separation, attended with curses and imprecations; and a third sort was called שמתא, *Shammatha*, and is thought to answer to *maranatha*, giving the etymology of it, as if it was, שם אתא, *the name*, i. e. *God cometh*, as *maranatha* read as two words, signify *our Lord cometh*: but this is not the etymology the Jews give of *Shammatha*[g]; they ask, "what is *Shammatha*? says Rab, "שם מיתה, *there is death*; and Samuel says, שממה "יהיה, *desolation shall be*:" but of the other etymology there is no mention made among them; nor is ever the word *maranatha* used by them for excommunication; the sense of which certainly is, *our Lord cometh*: and the Ethiopic version, joining it with the former word, renders the whole thus, *let him be anathema in the coming of our Lord*, which seems to be pretty much the sense of the apostle: it is best to consider this word, or rather these two words, *maran atha*, *our Lord cometh*, as added by the apostle, to put persons in mind of the coming of Christ, either at the destruction of Jerusalem, to take vengeance on the Jews, who did not love, but hated him, and maliciously persecuted him, and his; or of the second coming of Christ to judgment, when all the wicked of the earth

[g] T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 17. 1.

shall be accursed by him, and all such that love him not will be bid to depart from him.

Ver. 23. *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.*] This is the apostle's salutation in all his epistles, and is a token of the truth and genuineness of them; see the note on Rom. xvi. 20. and is a wish for a supply of all grace from Christ, and an increase of it in the saints; that they may have the communications of it to them, to quicken, invigorate, and draw forth into exercise the grace they have received, and to enable and assist them in the discharge of every duty.

Ver. 24. *My love be with you all*, &c.] Meaning either that he desired that he might be loved by them, as they were by him, and might always have a place in their hearts and affections, as they had in his; or that his love, which extended to all of them without exception, to rich and poor, greater or lesser believers, might be always acceptable to them; and which he now commended to them, and saluted them with, from his very heart: and that it might not be thought to be a carnal affection, or on account of any outward things, he adds, *in Christ Jesus;* he loved them for Christ's sake, because they were his, had his grace bestowed on them, his image instamped upon them, and his spirit put within them; and concludes as usual, with an *Amen;* both by way of request, and for the sake of confirmation; desiring that so it might be, and believing that so it would be. The following subscription is added, not by the apostle, but by some other hand since. *The first* epistle *to the Corinthians was written from Philippi, by Stephanas, and Fortunatus, and Achaicus, and Timotheus;* but, as has been already observed, this epistle was not written from Philippi, but from Ephesus, where the apostle now was, as appears from ver. 8. nor was it sent by Timotheus, for he was sent out before the writing of this epistle, see ch. iv. 17. and the apostle puts an *if* upon his coming to them, in ch. xvi. 10. which he would scarcely have done, if he had sent this letter by him; though very probably it was sent by the other three, who came from Corinth, at their return thither.

THE SECOND EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO

THE CORINTHIANS.

THIS epistle, according to the subscription at the end of it, was written from Philippi of Macedonia; and though the subscriptions annexed to the epistles are not always to be depended on, yet it seems very likely that this was written from thence; for the apostle not finding Titus at Troas, as he expected, went into Macedonia, where he met with him, and had an account from him of the success of his *first* epistle; of the state and condition of the church, and of the temper and disposition of mind in which the members of it were, and which gave him great satisfaction; upon which he immediately wrote this second epistle, and sent it by the same person to them; see ch. ii. 12, 13. and vii. 5, 6, 7. and viii. 6, 16, 17, 18. It is very probable it might be written the year after the former; and so it is placed by Dr. Lightfoot in the year 56, as the former is in the year 55; though some place this in the year 60, and the other in 59. The occasion of this epistle was partly to excuse his not coming to them according to promise, and to vindicate himself from the charge of unfaithfulness, levity, and inconstancy on that account; and partly, since what he had wrote about the incestuous person, had had a good effect both upon him and them, to direct them to take off the censure that had been laid upon him, and restore him to their communion, and comfort him; likewise to stir them up to finish the collection for the poor saints they had begun; as also to defend himself against the calumnies of the false teachers, who were very industrious to sink his character and credit in this church; which he does by observing the doctrines of the Gospel he preached, which were far more glorious than, and abundantly preferable to, the ministration of the law of Moses, which those men desired to be teachers of; as likewise the success of his ministry in every place; the many sufferings he had underwent for the sake of Christ, and his Gospel; the high favours and privileges he had received of the Lord, as well as the signs, wonders, and miracles done by him in proof of his apostleship; and in which are interspersed many things useful and instructive.

CHAP. I.

THIS chapter contains the inscription of the epistle, the salutation of the persons to whom it is written, the preface to it, and the first part of it, in which is the apostle's defence of himself from the charge of fickleness and inconstancy. The inscription is in ver. 1. in which an account is given of the person, the writer of this epistle, by his name Paul, and by his office, an apostle of Jesus Christ, which is ascribed to the will of God as the spring and cause of it; and with himself he joins Timothy, whom he calls a brother: also an account is given of the persons to whom the epistle is inscribed, who are both the church at Corinth, and all the saints throughout the region of Achaia, of which Corinth was the chief city: the salutation, and which is common to all the epistles of the Apostle Paul, is in ver. 2. and the preface begins ver. 3. with a thanksgiving to God, who is described by the relation he stands in to Christ, as his father, by the manifold mercies and blessings he is the author and donor of, and by the consolation he administers; an instance of which is given, ver. 4. in the apostle and his companions, who had been comforted by him; the end of which was, that they might be instruments of comforting others in like troubles with the same consolations; the great goodness of God in which is illustrated by proportioning their consolation by Christ to their sufferings for him, ver. 5. and the end both of their afflictions and their comforts is repeated and explained; and by a dilemma it is shewn, that both were for the good of the saints at Corinth, ver. 6. and a strong assurance is given, that as they shared in sufferings for Christ, they would partake of consolation by him as they had done, ver. 7. Next the apostle, in proof of what he had said, gives an instance of the trouble he had been in, and of the comfort and deliverance he had received, which he would not have the Corinthians ignorant of: he mentions the place where it was, in Asia, and gives an account of the nature of the affliction, how great it was; it was out of measure, above the strength of man, and induced despair of life, ver. 8. so that the apostle, and those that were with him in it, expected nothing but death, and were under the sentence of it in their own apprehensions; the end of God in suffering which, was to take them off of all self-confidence, and to engage their trust in God, to which the consideration of his power in raising the dead is a strong argument, ver. 9. And indeed this deliverance, which God wrought, for the apostle, and his friends, was a deliverance as it were from death, and a very great one; and which had this effect upon them, the designed and desired end, trust and confidence in God for future deliverance, having had an experience of past and present, ver. 10. which deliverance the apostle acknowledges, was owing to the prayers of the Corinthians, as a means or helping cause of it; and which favour was bestowed thereby for this end, that as it came by the means of many, thanks might be returned by many for it, ver. 11. And the reason why the apostle, and his fellow-ministers, had such an interest in the prayers of the Corinthians, was their agreeable conversation in the world, and particularly at Corinth, which their consciences bore witness to, and they could reflect upon with pleasure; it being through the grace of God with great simplicity and sincerity, and not with carnal craft and subtlety: or this is mentioned by the apostle to remove the charge of levity, and to vindicate himself and others from it, ver. 12. which he next enters upon, premising that the constant course of their lives was such as before described, and which there was no reason to doubt would always continue such; for the truth of which he appeals to what they had seen, and owned to be in them, ver. 13. and that it was acknowledged, at least in part, that the apostles were their rejoicing, or of whom they boasted as to their conduct and conversation, even as they were persuaded they would be matter of rejoicing in the day of Christ to them, ver. 14. And then the apostle acknowledges his intention and promise of coming to them, which was in confidence of their value for him, and of their being real Christians and persevering ones; and for this end, that he might establish them in the grace which they had received, ver. 15. and also, after he had passed by them into Macedonia, and was returned from thence to them again, that he might be helped on by them in his journey to Jerusalem, with the collection for the poor saints there, ver. 16. But then he denies that he used levity, or carnal policy and purposes, or was guilty of any contradiction; all which he expresses by certain interrogations, ver. 17. which he confirms by the ministration of the Gospel among them, which was all of apiece, without contradiction for the truth of which he calls God to witness; and so argues from the uniformity of his ministry, to the constancy of his word of promise, ver. 18. Which argument he amplifies and enlarges on, by observing the subject-matter of the Gospel ministry, which is Jesus Christ the son of God; and which, though preached by different ministers, himself, Sylvanus, and Timothy, yet was the same, had no contrariety in it, as preached by the one, and by the other, ver. 19. and therefore there was no reason to conclude that he was fickle and inconstant in his promise to them, when he was so invariable in his ministry among them: besides, as all the promises of God are sure and certain, being made by the God of truth, and being in Christ, and the performance of them being for the glory of God by the saints: so the promises of every good man, in imitation of God and Christ, are firmly and constantly observed, as much as can be by frail and finite creatures, ver. 20. and that the apostle, and his fellow-ministers, were not so fickle and changeable as they were represented, neither in their principles, nor in their practices, the apostle takes notice of some blessings of grace, which they enjoyed in common with other saints, and with the Corinthians; such as stability in Christ, the unction of divine grace, the seal and earnest of the spirit in their hearts; all which they

had from God, and which kept them close to God, and preserved them in his grace, and from a fickle variable temper of mind, and from changeableness either in doctrine or conduct, ver. 21, 22. And then the apostle proceeds to give the true reason why he had not as yet come to Corinth, according to his promise, which was on their account, and not his own, that they might not come under that severe discipline and correction, which their faults required; and for the truth of this he calls God to witness, ver. 23. But lest it should be objected that this was assuming a dominion over them, a lording it over God's heritage, he observes, that he and his fellow-ministers did not pretend to have dominion over their faith, only to be helpers of their joy, ver. 24.

Ver. 1. *Paul an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, &c.*] The inscription of this epistle is pretty much the same with that of the former; only whereas here he styles himself an apostle of Jesus Christ, there he says he was *called* to be one: for he did not assume that character and office without the call of Christ, and will of God; and which he chooses to mention, in opposition to the false apostles, who had neither. Likewise, in the inscription of the former epistle Sosthenes is joined with him; in this Timothy, whom he calls *our brother*, not so much on account of his being a partaker of the same grace, as for his being a minister of the same Gospel: and he the rather mentions him, because he had sent him to them, to know their state, and was now returned to him with an account of it, and who joined and agreed with him in the substance of this epistle. Moreover, the former epistle is directed as *unto the church of God which is at Corinth*; so to all that call upon the name of Christ in every place; and this is directed also to the same church, together *with all the saints which are in all Achaia*: which was a very considerable part of Greece, and of which Corinth was the metropolis: and the apostle's intention in directing it in this form was, that copies of this letter might be sent to them, who equally, with this church, stood in need of the reproofs, exhortations, and instructions which are in it.

Ver. 2. *Grace be to you*, &c.] This salutation is the same with that in the former epistle, and is common to all his epistles; see the note on Rom. i. 7.

Ver. 3. *Blessed be God*, &c.] This is an ascription of praise and glory to God, for he can only be blessed of men, by their praising and glorifying him, or by ascribing honour and blessing to him: and in this form of blessing him he is described, first by his relation to Christ, *even the father of our Lord Jesus Christ*: whose son Christ is, not by creation, as angels and men, nor by adoption, as saints, but in such a way of filiation, as no creatures are, or possibly can be: he is his only-begotten son, his own proper son, his natural and eternal son, is of the same nature with him, and equal to him in perfections, power, and glory. This is rightly prefaced by the apostle to the other following characters, since there's no mercy nor comfort administered to the sons of men but through the Lord Jesus Christ, the son of God, and Saviour of sinners. And next he is described by his attribute of mercy, and the effects of it, or by his merciful disposition to his creatures, *the father of mercies*. The Jews frequently address God in their prayers* under the title or character of, אב הרחמים, *father of mercies*. The plural number is used, partly to shew that God is exceeding merciful; he delights in shewing mercy to poor miserable creatures, and is rich and plenteous in the exercise of it: nothing is more common in the Talmudic writings, than to call him רחמנא, *the merciful*, and this is partly to express the multitude of his tender mercies, of which he is the *father*, author, and giver, both in a temporal, and spiritual sense; for there are not only innumerable providential mercies which the people of God share in, and partake of, but also a multitude of spiritual mercies. Such as redemption by Christ, pardon of sin through his blood, regeneration by his spirit, supplies of grace out of his fulness, and the word and ordinances; all which are owing to the mercy of God, which they have abundant reason to be thankful to him, and bless him for, being altogether unworthy and undeserving of them. God is also described by his work of comforting the saints, *and the God of all comfort*: most rightly is this character given him, for there's no solid comfort but what comes from him; there's none to be had in, and from the creatures; and whatever is had through them it is from him: and all spiritual comfort is of him; whatever consolation the saints enjoy they have it from God, the father of Christ, and who is their covenant God and father in Christ; and the consolation they have from him through Christ in a covenant way is not small, and for which they have great reason to bless the Lord, as the apostle here does; for it is from him that Christ, the consolation of Israel, and the Spirit, the Comforter, come, and whatever is enjoyed by the Gospel.

Ver. 4. *Who comforteth us in all our tribulation*, &c.] The apostle in this verse gives a reason of the former thanksgiving, and at the same time confirms the above character of God, as *the God of all comfort*, by his own experience, and that of his fellow-ministers; who, though they had been in great tribulation and affliction for the sake of Christ, and his Gospel, yet were not left destitute of divine help and support under their trials; but had much consolation and sweet refreshment administered to them by the presence of God with them, the application of his promises to them, the shedding abroad of his love in them, and the fellowship and communion they enjoyed with Father, Son, and Spirit. The end of this, or why God was pleased to comfort them in such a manner, was not so much on their own account; though it shewed that they were loved, and not hated and rejected of God, but for the good of others: *that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God*: many are the troubles and afflictions of the saints in this life, but it is the will of God that they should be comforted; and the persons he employs and makes use of in this way are his ministering servants, whose principal work and business it is to speak comfortably to the people of God; see Isa. xl. 1, 2. and that they may be able to do so, that they may be fitted and furnished for so good a work,

* Seder Tephillot, fol. 53. 2. Ed. Basil. fol. 77. 1. & passim, Ed. Amstelod. Sepher Shaare Zion, fol. 54. 1. Vid. Kabbala Denudata, par. 1. p. 7.

they are blessed with a rich experience of divine consolation in themselves, under the various troubles and exercises they are attended with in the course of their ministry; and such persons are, of all others, the fittest, and indeed the only proper persons to speak a word in season to weary souls.

Ver. 5. *For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us,* &c.] By *the sufferings of Christ* are not meant those which he suffered in his own person for the sake, and in the room and stead of his people, the fruits and effects of which abound to them, and in them; but those which he suffers in his members, or which they suffer for his sake; and which are said to *abound in* them, because of the variety and greatness of them: though not as if they were more or greater than what Christ suffered in his soul and body, when he was made sin and a curse for his people: yet notwithstanding the abundance of them, such is the goodness and grace of God, that he proportions comforts to them; as their afflictions increase, so do their comforts; as their sufferings for the sake of Christ, and his Gospel, are more and greater, *so,* says he, *our consolation aboundeth by Christ;* meaning, either that consolation which they felt and enjoyed in their own souls, under all their tribulations, which abundantly answered to them, and which they ascribe to Christ, from and by whom it comes to them; or else that consolation, which, by preaching Christ, abounded to the relief of others who were in distress and trouble.

Ver. 6. *And whether we be afflicted it is for your consolation,* &c.] The apostle repeats and explains the end of both his comforts and his troubles, and shews, by a dilemma, a strong way of arguing, that the afflictions and consolations, the adversity and prosperity of him, and the other ministers of the Gospel, were for the good of the saints: and it is as if he should say, when you see us continue to preach the Gospel with so much boldness and cheerfulness, amidst so many reproaches, afflictions, and persecutions, you must be the more established in the faith, and confirmed in the truth of the Gospel; and this can't fail of ministering much peace, satisfaction, and comfort to your minds. This animates you to hold fast the rejoicing of your hope, and the profession of your faith firm unto the end; and with the greater cheerfulness and pleasure meet with, and endure afflictions yourselves for the sake of Christ, and his Gospel: nay, he says, that the afflictions of Christ's ministers were not only for their consolation, but also for their *salvation, which is effectual,* or is effectually wrought *in,* or by *the enduring,* patient bearing, *of the same sufferings which we also suffer.* Not that the afflictions of the saints, or of others, and their patient enduring of them, are the cause of their salvation; for Christ is only the efficient cause, he is the sole author of spiritual and eternal salvation; but these are means the spirit of God makes use of, as he does of the word and ordinances, to bring the saints to a satisfaction as to their interest in it, and are the ordinary way in which they are brought to the possession of it. *Or whether we be comforted it is for your consolation and salvation:* for whatsoever comfort God is pleased to communicate to us, it is not kept in our breasts, and for our own use, but we immediately and readily impart it to you, that you may share with us the advantage of it, and be comforted together with us; that your faith in the doctrine of salvation may be established, your hope of it increased, and that you may be more comfortably assured you are in the way to it, and shall enjoy it.

Ver. 7. *For our hope of you is steadfast,* &c.] We have long ago entertained hopes of you, that the good work of God is begun upon your souls, and will be carried on, and that you will hold on in the profession of your faith unto the end, and not be moved by the afflictions you see in us, or endure in yourselves; and so will pass on cheerfully in your Christian race, in the midst of all your troubles, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God, you may expect to be possessed of; and this hope, for or concerning you, continues with us firm and immovable. *Knowing,* which may refer either to the Corinthians; so the Arabic version, *be ye knowing,* or *know ye;* you may, or should know; this you may assure yourselves of: or to the apostle and other ministers; so the Syriac version, ידעינן, *we know,* we are persuaded of the truth of this, *that as you are partakers of the sufferings;* that is, of Christ, and the same which we also suffer for him: *so shall ye be;* or rather, *so you are also of the consolation;* for the apostle seems to respect not future happiness and glory, in which, as there will be no afflictions and troubles, so no comfort under them, but present consolation, which the saints enjoy here as a pledge and earnest of that fulness of joy which they shall have with Christ for evermore.

Ver. 8. *For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble,* &c.] The apostle was very desirous that the Corinthians might be thoroughly acquainted with the trouble that had lately befallen them; partly because it would clearly appear from hence what reason he had to give thanks to God as he had done; and partly, that they might be encouraged to trust in God, when in the utmost extremity; but chiefly in order to remove a charge brought against him by the false apostles; who, because he had promised to come to Corinth, and as yet had not come, accused him of lightness and inconstancy, in as much as he had not kept his promise. Now to shew that it was not owing to any such temper and disposition of mind in him, he would have them know, that though he sincerely intended a journey to them, yet was hindered from pursuing it, by a very great affliction which befell him: the place where this sore trouble came upon him, is expressed to be *in* Asia: some have thought it refers to all the troubles he met with in Asia, for the space of three years, whereby he was detained longer than he expected; but it seems as though some single affliction is here particularly designed: many interpreters have been of opinion, that the tumult raised by Demetrius at Ephesus is here meant, when Paul and his companions were in great danger of their lives, Acts xix. but this uproar being but for a day, could not be a reason why, as yet, he had not come to Corinth: it seems rather to be some other very sore affliction, and which lasted longer, that is not recorded in the Acts of the Apostles: the greatness of this trouble is set forth in very strong expressions, as *that we were pressed out of measure.* The affliction was as an heavy burden upon them, too heavy to bear; it was exceeding heavy, καθ' ὑπερβολὴν, even to an *hyperbole,* beyond expression; and

above strength, that is, above human strength, the strength of nature; and so the Syriac renders it, מן חילן, *above our strength*; but not above the strength of grace, or that spiritual strength communicated to them, by which they were supported under it: the apostle adds, *insomuch that we despaired even of life*; they were at the utmost loss, and in the greatest perplexity how to escape the danger of life; they greatly doubted of it; they saw no probability nor possibility, humanly speaking, of preserving it.

Ver. 9. *But we had the sentence of death in ourselves*, &c.] By the *sentence of death* is meant, not any decree of heaven, or appointment of God that they should die: nor any sentence of condemnation and death passed on them by the civil magistrate; but an opinion or persuasion in their own breasts, that they should die; so far were they from any hopes of life, that they looked upon themselves as dead men, as the Egyptians did, when their first-born were slain, and said, *we be all dead men*, Exod. xii. 33. and to this extremity they were suffered to be brought by the wise counsel of God, for the following purposes, to learn to lay aside all self-trust and confidence; *that we should not trust in ourselves*; in our strength, wisdom, and policy, to make our escape, and preserve our lives; and also to teach and encourage them to trust in God alone, and depend on his arm, on his almighty power: *but in God which raiseth the dead*; who will raise the dead at the last day, and so is able to deliver persons when they are in the most distressed condition, and in their own opinion as dead men.

Ver. 10. *Who delivered us from so great a death*, &c.] Accordingly, being enabled to trust in God, when all human hope and helps failed, to believe in hope against hope, then the Lord appeared for them, and delivered them from this heavy affliction; which, because by reason of it they were not only in danger of death, and threatened with, but were even under the sentence of it, is therefore called *a death*, and *so great* an one, see ch. xi. 23. The apostle expresses the continuance of the mercy, *and doth deliver*; which shews that they were still exposed to deaths and dangers, but were wonderfully preserved by the power of God, which gave great encouragement to them to hope and believe that God would still preserve them for further usefulness. The Alexandrian copy leaves out this clause, and so does the Syriac version. *In whom we trust that he will yet deliver us*; all the three tenses, past, present, and future, are mentioned, which shews that an abiding sense of past and present deliverances serves greatly to animate faith in expectation of future ones.

Ver. 11. *You also helping together by prayer for us*, &c.] Though the apostle ascribes their deliverance solely to God, as the author and efficient cause of it; yet he takes notice of the prayers of the saints for them, as helping causes or means of their obtaining it. It was a very laudable practice in the churches, and worthy of imitation, to pray for the ministers of the Gospel, and especially when under affliction and persecution; see Acts xii. 5. and the prayers of those righteous ones were heard by God, and often effectual for the deliverance of them, as they were in the present case: for *by the means of many persons*, who wrestled together in prayer with God, *the gift* of deliverance from so great a death, which the apostle looked upon as a wonderful mercy, χαρισμα, *a free-grace gift*, was *bestowed upon* them, which was granted for this end, *that thanks may be given by many on our behalf*; which is but reasonable, and ought to be observed; for since many were concerned in asking for, and obtaining the mercy, they ought to join in thanksgiving for it: and the apostle's view in this is to stir them up to a joint acknowledgment of the deliverance with them, which better became them than to side with the false apostles in their charge against him.

Ver. 12. *For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience*, &c.] This rejoicing or glorying of the apostle's in the testimony of their consciences, to the goodness of their hearts, actions, conduct, and behaviour, was not before God, and in his sight, but before men, who were ready to accuse their good conversation in Christ: nor are these words to be considered as they generally are by interpreters, as if it was the testimony of a good conscience, which was the ground of their faith and confidence, that God would deliver them, and was an helping cause, together with the prayers of the saints, of their present deliverance. They refer to the charge exhibited against the apostle, that he had falsified his word in not coming to Corinth according to his promise; under which charge he could sit easy, having a witness within him, which was better than a thousand others, that *we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-wards*: the Corinthians, of which they themselves must be conscious: *in simplicity*; in opposition to double-mindedness; they did not say one thing, and mean another, and act contrary to both: their heart and mouth went together, and their conduct agreed with both; what they promised they meant to perform; and where there was a want of performance, it was owing to intervening providences, which hindered, and not to any deceitfulness in them: the conscience of the apostle bore him witness, that he behaved in the simplicity and singleness of his heart; and also *in godly sincerity*, or *in the sincerity of God*; that is, such as God requires, gives, and approves of, and which will stand in his sight, will bear his examination, and to which he gives his testimony; and that his conduct was *not* influenced *with fleshly wisdom*; he used no artful sophistical methods to impose upon, and delude persons, for any sinister ends, or worldly advantage: *but by the grace of God*; which was bestowed upon him, implanted in him, and which taught him to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this world.

Ver. 13. *For we write none other things to you*, &c.] The things we write unto you concerning our conduct and behaviour, are no other *than what you read*; not in our letters to you, but in our lives and conversations, when we were among you, and which you must own and *acknowledge* to be just and right; we can appeal to you, that what we say, and are obliged to say of ourselves, in our own defence, is what, upon a recollection, you will easily remember to have seen and observed: *and I trust*; or *hope*, through the grace of God, we shall be enabled so to walk, as that *you shall acknowledge even to the end*; that our conversations are as become the Gospel of Christ, and are clear of that hy-

pocrisy and deceit our adversaries would insinuate concerning us.

Ver. 14. *As also you have acknowledged us in part, &c.*] This may refer either to the thing known and acknowledged, namely, the integrity of the apostle's conversation, and others; which though they did not know thoroughly and perfectly, yet did in part, and that so far as that they might acquit them from the charge brought against them; or to the persons who knew this, as that there were some in the church of Corinth, a part of them, though not all, who knew and had acknowledged them to be upright and sincere ministers of the word, and had declared that they had reason to rejoice and bless God that ever they heard them: and *that we are your rejoicing*: or *glorying in*, or *unto the day of the Lord Jesus*: when he shall come to judge the world in righteousness, then they should before him, angels and men, rejoice and glory in this, that they had been blessed with such sincere and faithful ministers, who sought not any worldly advantage, but the glory of Christ, and the salvation of souls: *even as*, adds the apostle, *ye also are ours*; we do now, and so we shall then, rejoice and glory in this, that our labour among you was not in vain, but was blessed for your conversion and edification.

Ver. 15. *And in this confidence I was minded, &c.*] Being fully persuaded of your affection for me, as having been instrumental in the conversion of many of you, and of your esteem of me as a faithful and upright minister of the word, and of your being my rejoicing in the day of Christ, I was desirous, and had determined, and so promised, *to come to you before*; when I sent my first epistle to you, or before now, or before I went into Macedonia; and what I now say was the sincere intention of my mind; I thought really to have done what I had such an inclination to: and my view in it was, *that you might have a second benefit*; the meaning of which according to some is, first by his letter to them, and then by his presence with them; or as others, one benefit when he should pass by them to Macedonia, and a second, when he should return to them from thence, according to the following verse; or rather, as the first benefit which they received from him, and under his ministry, was their conversion, so this second benefit may design their edification, and establishment in the faith, their growth in grace, and improvement in spiritual knowledge.

Ver. 16. *And to pass by you into Macedonia, &c.*] It was his first intention and determination to have come first to Corinth, and then to Macedonia, to have took this city in his way thither; which was an argument of his love to them, and his great desire to see them; since he might have gone, as he did, a nearer way to Macedonia, than by Corinth: *and to come again out of Macedonia to you*: when he had gone through that, and done his business there unto the Corinthians; and after some stay with them, *of you to be brought on my way towards Judea*; where he intended to go, with the collections he had made for the poor saints at Jerusalem, in the several churches in Asia; but though this was his first resolution, which he had signified either by letter, or messengers, yet he afterwards changed his mind, for some reasons within himself; it may be, having heard some things disagreeable of them, which he thought more convenient to acquaint them with in an epistle first, and to try what effect that would have upon them, before he came in person: that he changed his mind, appears from the former epistle, ch. xvi. 5. where he says, *I will come unto you, when I shall pass through Macedonia*; and upon this account it is he excuses and vindicates himself in the following verse.

Ver. 17. *When I was therefore thus minded, did I use lightness? &c.*] When I had thus determined to come to you, and had signified the same by writing, or messengers, did I use lightness in my resolutions and promises? did I act rashly, unadvisedly, and without consideration? did I promise certainly that I would come, without annexing any condition to it? did I not say, I would come to you shortly, *if the Lord will?* see 1 Cor. iv. 19. *Or the things that I purpose, do I purpose according to the flesh?* do I consult myself? my own interest and advantage? do I seek the gratification of any carnal affection, as covetousness, ambition, or vain glory? &c. what sinister end could have been obtained, if I had come as I purposed, or is answered by my not coming? or when I have purposed any thing, have I resolved upon it in my own strength? have I thought it lay in my own power to effect it? *that with me there should be yea, yea, and nay, nay?* as if I could make my *yea* continue *yea*, and my *nay*, *nay?* when all actions are weighed by God, and all events are at his dispose; man appoints, and God disappoints; and who can help these things? or thus, has there appeared such contradictions in my words, and such inconstancy in my conduct, that my *yeas* are *nays*, and my *nays yeas?* that I say one thing at one time, and another at another time, or both in the same breath? that I should say one thing, and mean another, on purpose to deceive, and change my mind and conduct without any reason?

Ver. 18. *But as God is true, &c.*] It seems that the false apostles had insinuated, that as the apostle had not kept his word in coming to them as he had promised, that he was not to be depended upon in his ministry; that he might as well contradict himself, and deceive others in the one, as well as in the other: wherefore he appeals to God in a very solemn manner, calls him to witness to the truth of his doctrine; for these words may be considered as the form of an oath; or he argues from the truth and faithfulness of God, to the certainty and invariableness of the word preached, who is so true and faithful as that he will never suffer his word to be yea and nay: for when the apostle says, that *our word towards you was not yea and nay*, he does not mean his word of promise to come to Corinth; but the word of his preaching, the doctrine of the Gospel, which was not uncertain, changeable, sometimes one thing, and sometimes another, and contradictory to itself. And by this the apostle would intimate, that since he was faithful and upright, uniform, consistent, and all of a piece in preaching the Gospel to them; so they ought to believe, that he was sincere in his resolutions and promises to come and see them, though as yet he had been hindered, and had not been able to perform them.

Ver. 19. *For the son of God, Jesus Christ, &c.*] The apostle having asserted that the Gospel preached by them was not yea and nay, variable and different, or what was affirmed at one time was denied at another,

proceeds to point out the subject of the Gospel ministry, *the son of God, Jesus Christ*: that Christ is *the son of God*: this article he began his ministry with, Acts ix. 20. and all the apostles affirmed the same thing; and which is of the greatest moment and importance, and ought to be abode by, insisted on, and frequently inculcated; as that he is the eternal son of God, existed as such from everlasting, is of the same nature, and has the same perfections with his father; and therefore is able to destroy the works of the devil, for which he was manifested in the flesh, and every way equal to the business of redemption, which he has finished; and having passed into the heavens under this character, is a powerful advocate with the father; and which renders him a sure foundation for the church, and a proper object of faith: that the son of God is Christ, anointed to bear and execute the office of a mediator in the several parts and branches of it; a prophet to teach his people, a priest to make atonement and intercession for them, and a King to govern and protect them: and that the son, who is become the Lord's Christ, is Jesus, a Saviour; and that salvation is alone by him, to which he was appointed from eternity, and was sent in the fulness of time to effect it; and by his obedience, sufferings, and death, is become the author of it, and is the only able, willing, and suitable Saviour for poor sinners. This is the principal subject and strain of the Gospel ministry; and which makes it good news, and glad tidings to lost perishing sinners. The agreement between the faithful ministers of the Gospel is here plainly hinted, *who was preached among you by us, even by me, and Sylvanus and Timotheus*. These ministers being mentioned by the apostle with himself, shews his humility in putting them on a level with himself; and his modesty and candour in not monopolizing the Gospel to himself, but allowing others to be preachers of it as well as he: and his design herein seems to be for the confirmation of the Gospel, and to shew that he was not singular and alone, and could not be blamed by them, without blaming others; and chiefly to express the harmony and unanimity of Gospel preachers. The prophets of the Old Testament, and the apostles of the New, agreed in all the doctrines and truths of the Gospel; so did the apostles themselves; and so all faithful dispensers of the word have in all different times and places agreed, and still do agree; which serves greatly to corroborate the truth of the Gospel. The Gospel being faithfully preached by these persons, *was not yea and nay*: it had no contradiction in it; each part agreed together, was entirely harmonious, and consistent. Their doctrine was, that Christ is the son of God, truly and properly God; that he took upon him the office of a Mediator, and executes it; that he is the only Saviour of sinners; that God has chosen a certain number of men in Christ before the foundation of the world, has made a covenant with them in Christ, and blessed them in him; that Christ has redeemed them by his blood; that these are regenerated by the spirit and grace of Christ, are justified by his righteousness, and shall finally persevere, and be partakers of eternal life; which is all of a piece, and in it no yea and nay. Yea-and-nay doctrines are particular election, the possibility of the salvation of the non-elect, the salvability of all men, and universal redemption; justification by faith, and, as it were, by the works of the law; conversion, partly by grace, and partly by the will of man; preparatory works, offers, and days of grace; and final perseverance made a doubt of: but such is not the true ministry of Christ and his apostles, *but in him was yea*; the Gospel, as in Christ, and as it comes from him, and has been preached by his apostles, and faithful ministers, is all of a piece; its constant and invariable strain, and by which it may be known and distinguished, is, to display the free, rich, and sovereign grace of God, to magnify and exalt the person and offices of Christ, to debase the creature, and to engage persons to the performance of good works, on Gospel principles, and by Gospel motives, and for right ends. The apostle using those words, *yea and nay*, conforms to the language of the Jews, his countrymen, who to magnify their doctors and Rabbins, and to raise their credit, say such things of them; "*yea, yea*, are the words of the house or school of "Shammai; הן הן, *yea, yea*, are the words of the school "of Hillell [g]." And in another place [h]; "the receiving "and giving, or the dealings of a disciple of a wise "man, are in truth and faithfulness. He says, על לאו "לאו ועל הן הן, *concerning nay, nay, and concerning yea, yea*." But what is here said better agrees with the principles and practices of the disciples and followers of Christ.

Ver. 20. *For all the promises of God in him are yea*, &c.] This is a reason or argument proving what is before said, that *in* Christ *was yea*, since *all the promises of God in him are yea*; and shews, that God has made many promises to his people: mention is here made of *promises*, and of *all* the promises; or, as the words may be rendered, *as many promises of God*. There are some which concern the temporal good of the saints; as that they shall not want any good thing; and though they shall be attended with afflictions, these shall work for their good, and they shall be supported under them. Others concern their spiritual good; some of which relate to God himself, that he will be their God, which includes his everlasting love, his gracious presence, and divine protection. Others relate to Christ as their surety and Saviour, by whom they are, and shall be justified and pardoned, in whom they are adopted, and by whom they shall be saved with an everlasting salvation: and others relate to the spirit of God, as a spirit of illumination, faith, comfort, strength, and assistance, and to supplies of grace by him from Christ: and others concern everlasting life and happiness; and are all of them very ancient, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began; are exceeding great and precious, suited to the various cases of God's people; are free and unconditional, immutable and irrevocable, and will all of them have their certain accomplishment. These promises are all *in* Christ; with and in whom could they be but in him, since he only existed when they were made, which was from everlasting? with and in whom should they be of right, but in him with whom the covenant, which contains these promises, were made, and who undertook the accomplish-

[g] T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 20. 1.

[h] Maimon. Hilch. Deyot, c. 5. sect. 13.

ment of them? where could they be safe and secure but in him, in whose hands are the persons, grace, and glory of his people? not in Adam, nor in angels, nor in themselves, only in him. Moreover, these promises are *in him yea, and in him amen*: they are like the Gospel which exhibits them, consistent, and all of a piece; like the covenant which contains them, and is ordered in all things, and sure; and like the author of them, whose faithfulness and loving-kindness to his in Christ shall never fail; and like Christ himself, in whom they are, who is *the amen, the true and faithful witness, the same to-day, yesterday, and for ever*; by whose blood, the covenant, and all the promises of it, are ratified and confirmed, and in whom, who is the truth of them, they are all fulfilled. And these are *unto the glory of God by us*: these serve to illustrate and advance the glory of God, when they are preached *by us*, and held forth by us in the Gospel, just as they are in Christ, free, absolute, and unconditional; and when they are received *by us* as believers in Christ; for the stronger we are in the faith of the promises, the more glory we give to God; faith by laying hold on, and embracing the promises, glorifies the veracity, faithfulness, power, and grace of God. The Syriac version puts the *Amen* into this last clause, and reads it thus, *therefore by him we give Amen to the glory of God*.

Ver. 21. *Now he which stablisheth us with you*, &c.] *Two* things are in this verse ascribed to God. *First*, the establishing of the saints in Christ; in which may be observed, that the people of God are in a firm, settled, established state and condition; they are encircled in the arms of everlasting love; they are secure of the favour of God; they are engraven on his hands, and set as a seal on his heart, from whence they can never be removed; they are taken into his family by adopting grace; and will never be turned out; they are in a state of justification, and shall never enter into condemnation; they are regenerated and sanctified by the spirit of God, and shall never finally and totally fall from that grace they have received. This their establishment is *in* Christ, and in no other. They had no stability in Adam, nor have they any in themselves; their standing is alone in him; the unchangeable love and favour of God, which is their grand security, is in Christ; the covenant of grace, in which is all their salvation, is made and stands fast with him; their persons, with all their grace and glory, are put into his hands, and made his care and charge, and there they are safe. They are espoused unto him, made one with him, incorporated into him, and are built upon him the rock of ages, where they are so established, that hell and earth can't shake them, so as to remove and unsettle them from this foundation: one and all of them, and all together, are established in him, *us with you*: all the elect of God are alike, and together in Christ, and have the same place and standing in his love, power, and care; they make up one body, of which Christ is the head, and not one of them shall be lost, whether they be Jews or Gentiles, ministers or private believers: for so this phrase may be interpreted, *us* Jews *with you* Gentiles, or *us* ministers *with you* believers. This work of establishing the saints in Christ is wholly the Lord's act; he *is God* that does it; which does not contradict the word and ordinances being means of establishment; nor does it hinder or discourage persons making use of means for their stability; for the apostle here is not speaking so much of the stability of hearts, frames, and exercise of grace, as of state; though a firm, steady, and stable assurance of interest in Christ, is what God gives by his spirit. The apostle's view seems to be this, that whatever steadfastness and stability the saints have, whether ministers or people, they ought to ascribe it entirely to God, Father, Son, and Spirit. *Secondly*, the anointing of them: *he hath anointed us*; which is to be understood either of the unction of ministers, with the gifts of the spirit for ministerial service; or rather of the anointing of private Christians with the grace of the spirit, compared to oil or ointment, in allusion to the anointing oil under the law, by which the tabernacle, and its vessels, Aaron, and his sons, were anointed, who were typical of the saints and priests of God under the Gospel; or to the lamp-oil in the candlestick, which was pure, and for light; or to oil in common, for its sweet smell, refreshing nature, and for its usefulness for ornament and healing. This also is the Lord's work, and not man's; this unction comes from the God of all grace, through Christ, by the Spirit.

Ver. 22. *Who hath also sealed us*, &c.] *Two* things more are here attributed to God; *first*, the sealing of his people. The use of seals is various, as to denote property in things, to distinguish one thing from another, to shew esteem and affection for persons or things, and for security and protection, and to hide and conceal; all which might be applied to sealing, as expressive of the grace of God to his people, in claiming a property in them, distinguishing them from the rest of the world, setting his affections on them, securing and protecting their persons, and hiding them under the shadow of his wings: but sometimes a seal is used to certify, make sure, or assure the truth of a thing; see John iii. 33. 1. Cor. ix. 3. Jer. xxxiii. 10. in which sense the word *sealing* is used here, and intends that assurance which God gives his people of their interest in his love, and the covenant of grace; of their election of God, and redemption by Christ; of their interest in Christ, and union with him; of their justification by him, and adoption through him; of the truth of grace in their hearts, their perseverance in it, and sure and certain enjoyment of eternal glory. The persons thus sealed are not carnal and unconverted persons, only believers in Christ, and these, after they commence such; the seal by which they are sealed, is not any of the ordinances, as circumcision under the Old Testament, or baptism, or the Lord's supper under the New; for these are no seals, nor are they ever so called; but the spirit of God himself, as the Holy Spirit of promise; for the same who, in the next clause, is called the *earnest*, is the seal; see Eph. i. 13. *Secondly*, the giving of the earnest of the spirit: *and given the earnest of the spirit in our hearts*; by *the spirit* is meant, not the gifts and graces of the spirit merely, but the spirit of God and Christ himself; who was concerned in the creation of the world, in inditing the Scriptures, in forming and filling the human nature of Christ, and in his resurrection from the dead; he himself is given as an *earnest*; the word ἀῤῥαβων, here used, and in ch. v. 5. Eph. i. 14. is the

Hebrew word ערבון, and comes from ערב, which signifies *to become a surety, to give a pledge*; and is used for a *pledge* in covenants and bargains, both in Scipture, see Gen. xxxviii. 17, 18, 20. and in Jewish writings [*]; which is given as an earnest, and in part of what it is a pledge of, and is never returned: the spirit of God is an earnest or pledge of the heavenly inheritance, which is not only prepared for us, and promised to us, and Christ is in the possession of in our nature, in our room and stead, and as our representative; but the spirit of God also is sent down *into our hearts* as a pledge of it; where he dwells as in his temple, supplies us with all grace, witnesses to us our sonship, and assures us of the heavenly glory: and as such he is *given*; and an unmerited free-grace gift he is; for him to be given in this manner, and for such a purpose, is a wonderful display of the love of the Father, and of the Son, and is a surprising instance of his grace and condescension of the Spirit, and for which we should be abundantly thankful.

Ver. 23. *Moreover, I call God for a record upon my soul*, &c.] The apostle having asserted his stability, both as a minister and a Christian, which, with others, he had from God, appeals to him in the most solemn manner, in full form of an oath, for the truth of what he was about to say; and is all one as if he had said, I swear by the living God, the searcher of all hearts; I call upon him to attest what I say, and bear witness to my soul, that it is true, *that to spare you, I came not as yet unto Corinth*; however fickle, unstable, and inconstant, it may be insinuated to you I am, or you may take me to be, I do assure you in the name and presence of God, that the true reason of my not coming to you hitherto, since I gave you reason to expect me, was, that I might not be burdensome or chargeable to you; or I have delayed coming to you, hoping for a reformation among you, that when I do come, I may not come with a rod, and severely chastise you for the many disorders among you; that I might not use sharpness according to the power God has given me, in an extraordinary way, as an apostle, to punish for offences committed. Hence we learn, that an oath is a solemn appeal to God, and may be lawfully made in cases of moment and importance, as this of the apostle's was; whose character was traduced, and with which was connected the usefulness of his ministry; and it being an affair that could not be determined in any other way, and an oath being for confirmation, and to put an end to strife, he makes one in this serious and awful manner.

Ver. 24. *Not for that we have dominion*, &c.] Since he had spoke of *sparing* of them, lest it should be thought that he and his fellow-ministers assumed to themselves any tyrannical power over the churches, or lorded it over God's heritage, these words are subjoined: in which there is something denied of the ministers of the Gospel, as that they *have not dominion over your faith*; by which may be meant both the grace and doctrine of faith: they cannot give or produce in the heart the grace of faith; that is the gift of God; of which Christ is not only the object, but the author; it is of the operation of the spirit, and the effect of almighty power; it flows entirely from the free grace of God; all that ministers can do is to propose the object of faith, and, by arguments taken from the word of God, encourage souls to believe in the object proposed, and so are, through a divine blessing on their ministrations, instruments by which some believe; but they themselves can't command faith in any; nor can they increase or add unto it where it is; this also is the Lord's work; nor have they any dominion over the doctrine of faith; they are to deliver nothing to the people but what is contained in the Scriptures, and the people are obliged to believe no more than what they find there; no alteration is to be made in the rule and doctrine of faith; ministers have no power to make and impose new articles of faith, though they may require and insist upon an assent to those truths which they deliver, according to the word of God. Likewise, something is asserted of them, *but are helpers of your joy*. *Joy* is a grace wrought in the soul by the spirit of God, of which Christ is the object; it goes along with faith, and as that improves, so does this; it is often interrupted by the corruptions of the heart, the temptations of Satan, and divine desertions, and so is in this life imperfect; though it may be increased, as it sometimes is, and that by the ministration of the Gospel; for as the ministers of it are the means and instruments of that joy which is first felt in conversion, so likewise of increasing it by their comfortable doctrines and instructions; for their ministry is, and is often blessed, for the furtherance and joy of faith. A reason of which is given, *for by faith ye stand*; and so are not subject to men, nor to any tyrannical government of ours; nor have we any thing to charge you with concerning your faith: which may design the grace of faith, and express its use in the perseverance of the saints, who stand not upon their faith, but *by it*; and by it, not as a cause but as a means of their perseverance; by which they rely on the power and faithfulness of God, lean upon Christ, and walk on in him, live upon him, continually receive from him, and in his strength stand against the temptations of Satan, and snares of the world: and it may also denote the strength and continuance of faith; a man may be said to stand by it, when he strongly believes his interest in God, in his love, and the covenant of his grace, his interest in Christ, and salvation by him; is satisfied about the truth of grace on his soul, makes no demur upon the promises, nor hesitates about the doctrines of grace, or his future happiness, but rejoices in hope of the glory of God; as also, when he continues in the exercise of faith, notwithstanding the corruptions of his nature, the temptations of Satan, the hidings of God's face, and the many afflictions and trials he meets with in the world. Moreover, this passage may be applied to the doctrine of faith, in and by which the saints may be said to stand, in opposition to any wavering or hesitation about it, to a cowardly spirit in giving way in the least to the adversaries of it, or to a departing from it; which by no means should be done, though a greater number is on the other side, and they be the rich and learned; though the doctrines of it are disa-

* Midrash Megillath Esther, fol. 94. 2. Maimon. Hilch. Mechira, c. 7. sect. 1. & c. 11. sect. 4.

greeable to the carnal reason of man, are loaded with reproach, and followed with the rage, malice, and persecutions of men: or these words may relate to a profession of faith: care should be used in taking up a profession of faith; where the true grace of God is, it ought to be done; when it is made, it ought to be stood in, and abode by; and it is the honour of saints to stand in it, and to it, and hold it fast.

CHAP. II.

THE apostle, in this chapter, goes on to give reasons of his not coming, as yet, to Corinth; and removes the charge of severity, which some might think him guilty of, in what he had written in his former epistle concerning the incestuous person, who having repented of his sin, he would now have comforted, and the censure laid on him by the church taken off; after which he gives an account of the success of the Gospel in several parts, of its power and purity, and of the faithful dispensation of it by himself and others: in ver. 1. he assigns this as a reason why he had determined with himself not to come to Corinth as yet, and why he deferred his coming, that when he came he might not be sorrowful himself, nor make others sorrowful, which necessarily involve each other; for if he made others sorrowful by his sharp rebukes, which as things had been he could not but in faithfulness give, he must be in sorrow himself, since there would be none to make him cheerful, but such whom he made sorrowful, ver. 2. wherefore to meet together under such circumstances must be uncomfortable; and hence he chose to put off his coming until things took another turn; and this was the reason of his writing with so much seeming severity concerning the incestuous person, in the former epistle, to bring him and them to repentance, and so prevent that sorrow which he otherwise must have had, had he in person come to them whilst they were unconcerned about that affair; and that he might have that joy, which he was confident of every one was desirous he should have, ver. 3. and he was so far from being of a cruel and uncompassionate disposition, that it was with an aching heart, and with flowing eyes, that he wrote that letter to them; nor was it written with that view merely to grieve them, but to let them know the tender and affectionate concern he had for their welfare, ver. 4. Besides, this affair of the incestuous person was not only matter of grief to the apostle, but to them all; or he was not the only person he was grieved with, but with them all, and therefore it was necessary to use greater severity and roughness, ver. 5. However, inasmuch as the end he had in view was answered, the humbling of the delinquent, and bringing him to repentance, nothing more was to be done, the punishment of excommunication was sufficient, ver. 6. and that ought now to be removed, and the man forgiven, and comforted, lest he should be overwhelmed with sorrow, and be reduced to despair, ver. 7. Wherefore the apostle entreats them to give some fresh assurances of their love to the repenting brother, and signify it by their hearty reception of him into communion again, ver. 8. in doing which they would give proof of their obedience to him the apostle, which was an end he had in writing to them before, concerning the excommunication of the same person, ver. 9. and which he urges them to from his own example, who was ready to join with them in forgiving him, out of love to them, and in the name of Christ, ver. 10. and the rather it became them to do so, lest Satan should get an advantage of them, and establish a bad principle and practice among them, that such as fall into sin, though they repent, should not be restored to the communion of the church, of whose devices in different forms and shapes, to do mischief to the churches of Christ, and particular believers, the apostle and others were not ignorant, ver. 11. Moreover, what had took up his time, and had prevented him from coming to Corinth as yet, was his being called to, and employed in the preaching of the Gospel elsewhere, particularly at Troas, where he was the rather inclined to stay, and there was a necessity of it, because there was a door opened for it, ver. 12. and yet not finding Titus, there, as he expected, he was uneasy, and departed thence into Macedonia, in quest of him, ver. 13. where, as in other places, he preached the Gospel with success, which he ascribes to God, and gives him thanks for it, ver. 14. which success he illustrates by dividing the persons to whom he preached the Gospel, into two classes, they that are saved, and they that perish, ver. 15. on whom it had different effects, diffusing death, and adding death to death in the one, and communicating life, and adding life to life in the other: and lest he should be thought to arrogate too much to himself, and other ministers of the word, of whom he speaks, he acknowledges his and their insufficiency to preach the Gospel, and make it effectual; and that all fitness for it, and all the virtue and efficacy of it, were from the Lord, ver. 16. and then gives the reason why he, and the rest of the faithful ministers of the Gospel, were a sweet savour to Christ, as he had asserted, because they did not, as others, corrupt this box of ointment, but faithfully and sincerely poured it out, without mixing and adulterating it; and this they did as being in the view of the omniscient God, to whom they could appeal for their integrity and honesty, ver. 17.

Ver. 1. *But I determined with myself, &c.*] The apostle having removed the charge of levity and inconstancy brought against him, goes on to excuse his delay in coming to them, and to soften the severity, which some thought too much, he had used in his former epistle: he determined with himself, he took up a resolution within his own breast some time ago, says he, *that I would not come again to you in heaviness;* that he would not come with sorrow and heaviness, bewailing their sins unrepented of, and by sharp reproofs and censures, which in such a case would be necessary, be the cause of grief and trouble to them; wherefore he determined to wait their repentance and amendment before he came again. The word *again*, may be connected with the phrase *in*

heaviness: and the sense be, that in his former epistle, which was a sort of coming to them, he made them heavy and sorry, by sharply rebuking them for some disorders that were among them: and since it has been a settled point with him, that he would not come in heaviness again: or with the word *come*: and then the meaning is, as his first coming among them was to the joy of their souls, so it was a determined case with him, that his second coming should not be with grief, either to them or himself, or both; and this is the true reason why he had deferred it so long.

Ver. 2. *For if I make you sorry*, &c.] That is, should he come among them, and be the means of fresh grief and sorrow: *who is he then that maketh me glad?* such was his love and affection for them, and sympathy with them, that should they be grieved, he should grieve also; they were the only persons he could take any delight in at Corinth; wherefore should they be in heaviness, he would be so too, and then what pleasure would he have in being among them? since not a man of them would be in a condition and capacity to make him cheerful: *but the same which is made sorry by me.* The Ethiopic version without any authority reads this clause, *except he whom I have made glad*; but the apostle is to be understood either of some particular man, the incestuous person, who had been made sorry, by that awful punishment of being delivered up to Satan, inflicted on him; or else the singular number being put for the plural collectively, is to be understood of all the members of the church at Corinth, who had been greatly grieved by the sharp reproofs he had given them; and therefore unless this trouble was removed, he could not expect to have much comfort and pleasure with them.

Ver. 3. *And I wrote this same unto you*, &c.] Not what he had written in the preceding verse, or in ch. i. 23. where he says, that his not coming to them as yet was *to spare* them; but what he had written to them in his former epistle, concerning the excommunication of the incestuous man, which had so much grieved both him and them; and this the apostle chose rather to order by writing, than in person; hoping to hear of their repentance and amendment, before he came among them: *lest*, says he, *when I came*, or should come, *I should have sorrow from them of whom I ought to rejoice*: some copies and the Complutensian edition read, *sorrow upon sorrow*; and so does the Vulgate Latin version, which seems to be transcribed from Phil. ii. 27. that is, he took this method of sending a reproving letter, in order to bring them to a sense and acknowledgment of sin; lest should he come in person, some would have been a grief and trouble to him, having fallen into sin unrepented of; who ought to have been matter of rejoicing to him, as being the seals of his apostleship, and his work in the Lord: and this step he was the more encouraged to take, through the confidence he had of them, *having confidence in you all*: being fully persuaded of their affection for him, and opinion of him: *that my joy is the joy of you all*: that their joy and grief were mutual and common; that what he rejoiced in, they did likewise; and what was displeasing to him was displeasing to them; and therefore upon the first hint given, he took care to remove the occasion of such displeasure, that their mutual comfort might take place; assuring them, and of which they might be assured, that it was no joy to him to grieve them; he could have none when theirs was gone; his ultimate view in writing to them in the manner he had, was not to grieve, but to bring them to repentance and reformation, which issued in the mutual joy of him and them.

Ver. 4. *For out of much affliction and anguish of heart*, &c.] Being greatly pressed in his spirit, and grieved at his heart, for the abominable iniquities among them, which they seemed to take no notice of, and to be unconcerned about, yea, rather to be puffed up with: *I wrote to you with many tears*; as signs and expressions of, and by which were vented, the inward anguish and distress of his soul; and the letter he sent to them in some measure bore witness to it: which was written, *not that you should be grieved*; that is, not merely for the sake of grieving of them, in which he took no pleasure; not but that the apostle designed and desired to affect their minds with a holy grief and godly sorrow for sin, and hereby their amendment; but his chief view was, next to their spiritual good, and God's glory, to express the greatness of his love to them: as he says, *that ye might know the love which I have more abundantly unto you*: as his love was very vehement towards them, he was desirous they should know it, and how exceeding abundant it was; and that it was even greater towards them, than to others; and he thought he could not give a greater proof and evidence of it, than by reproving them faithfully, and that sharply too, as the necessity of the case required.

Ver. 5. *But if any have caused grief*, &c.] The incestuous person is here manifestly designed, though he is not named, who had been the cause and occasion of much grief and sorrow, both to himself and others; for the apostle is not to be understood, as though he doubted whether he had caused grief or no, but rather takes it for granted, as a certain point; *if*, seeing, or although he has caused grief: *he hath not grieved me but in part*; or in some measure; as it has reflected dishonour on God and his ways, truths and ordinances; and has brought trouble upon himself, and the church of which he is a member; for the apostle now rejoiced, that he was truly humbled for his sin, and sincerely, and in an evangelical manner, repented of it; his grief was over, and it was as if it was not; and the offence he took was now wholly removed: besides, though this man did grieve him, it was but in part; he was not the sole cause of his grief; they also greatly added to it by their unconcernedness for him, and negligence in reproving him, though he takes notice only of this single man: *that I may not overcharge you all*; bear hard upon them, aggravate their sin, and increase their trouble: or thus, that man has not grieved me only, but in some measure all of you; for the phrase *all you*, may be considered, not in connection with the word *overcharge*, but with the word *grieved*; and the reading and sense of the whole be this, *he hath not grieved me, but in part, or in some measure*; or as the Syriac reads it, בציר קליל לכלכן, *almost all of you*: but this, as if he should say, I do but just mention, would not dwell upon it, *that I may not overcharge* him, or be thought to be overbearing, or should aggravate his sin and sorrow: for,

Ver. 6. *Sufficient to such a man is this punishment*, &c.] By *this punishment* is meant, the excommunication of the incestuous person, or the censure that was laid upon him by the church: for this *was inflicted by many*; not by the pastor only, or by the elders or more eminent persons in the church, but by the multitude, by the whole congregation, at least ὑπὸ τῶν πλειόνων, *by the more*; the greater, or major part; and not by one, or a few only: in inflicting this punishment, or laying on this censure in the public manner they did, they were certainly right, and to be commended; but inasmuch as there appeared signs of true repentance, it was sufficient, it had answered the purpose for which it was inflicted, and therefore it was high time to remove it: from whence we learn, that in case of gross enormities, there ought to be a public excommunication; and that this is to be done by the vote, and with the consent of the whole church, or the major part of it; and that in process of time, when the person thus dealt with has given the church satisfaction as to the truth and genuineness of his repentance, the censure ought to be taken off, and he be cordially received into the communion of the church again. This *punishment*, or *rebuke*, ἐπιτιμία, *by many*, is the same which the Jews call* התוכחה ברבים, *a reproof by many*; which is given by many, or in the presence of many.

Ver. 7. *So that contariwise ye ought rather to forgive him*, &c.] On the other hand, so far the apostle suggests they should be from inflicting any other punishment on him, or by any means adding to, and increasing what was inflicted, that they ought to forgive him his offence, by taking off the censure from him, which had been sufficient for the purpose, and had continued on him a sufficient time: *and comfort him*; by restoring him to the communion of the church, and to an enjoyment of all the privileges and ordinances of the house of God: and this was necessary to be done, *lest perhaps such an one should be swallowed up with over-much sorrow*; be overwhelmed with trouble, ingulphed in despair, and so become unfit for the exercise of grace, and discharge of duty: to prevent therefore such dangerous and pernicious consequences, it is incumbent on the churches of Christ, as soon as ever they observe that censures have answered the end in bringing persons to a sense and acknowledgment of sin and amendment of life, to remove them, and restore such to fellowship.

Ver. 8. *Wherefore I beseech you*, &c.] Or exhort you: *that ye would confirm your love towards him*; express your love to him in the most kind and tender manner, shew the same, and as strong love to him as you did before, and as if he had never offended; receive him as a brother in the most affectionate manner, and embrace him with the most endearing expressions of respect and friendship; and let your reception of him in this kind and friendly way be with the full consent, and by the joint vote and suffrage of the whole church, for so the word translated *confirm* signifies; for as the ejection of a person out of a church must be done by the decree and vote of the church, or it is not authentic, so the reception of a person into it must be in like manner; and since this was to be done by the suffrage of the church, the apostle beseeches and exhorts them to do it.

Ver. 9. *For to this end also did I write*, &c.] Or *I have written*, both in this and in his former epistle to them, and in both with this view, *that I might know the proof of you*; that he might try, prove, and know them: *whether ye be obedient in all things*; he wrote unto them in his former epistle, to put away that wicked man from them; which he did not do, merely to reproach the man, and fix a brand of infamy on him; nor merely to grieve and afflict their minds; nor only to shew his own power and authority, which he as an apostle had received from Christ, but to make trial of their obedience; and he had had a proof of it in their rejection of him; and now he writes unto them, that since this man was truly humbled for his sin, and had repentance unto life not to be repented of, that they would as cheerfully receive him, and restore him to his place; that as the apostle had a proof of their obedience in the one, he might also have in the other, and so in all things: hence it appears, that though it belongs to the whole church, and that only, to reject or receive members, yet as ministers of the Gospel are set over the churches, to govern, guide, direct, and go before in matters of discipline; so whatever they propose, according to the rule of God's word, ought to be carefully attended to and obeyed.

Ver. 10. *To whom ye forgive any thing, I forgive also*, &c.] This may extend to the forgiveness of any person, in any case; either in time past, or at the present time, or in time to come; though it has a particular respect to the forgiveness of the incestuous man, which the apostle had determined in his own mind, and was very ready to come into, and very desirous to join with the church in, as they had joined with him in the excommunication of him; and in order to engage them in such a temper and disposition, he tells them it was on their account he did it: *for if I forgave any thing, to whom I forgave it, for your sakes forgave I it*; which is as if he should say, whenever I have forgiven any offender, as I now do forgive this man, I always do it for your sake; either at your request, or in confidence of this, that you yourselves have forgiven; or for your good, peace, and welfare: and besides, what I do of this kind, I do it *in the person of Christ*; in his sight and presence, who knows that what I do this way, I do it sincerely, and with my whole heart and soul: or rather I do it in his name, and by his authority; and since I forgive this man for your sakes, and in the name of Christ, you ought to do so likewise.

Ver. 11. *Lest Satan should get an advantage of us*, &c.] Or make gain of us, or we should be circumvented by him; a metaphor taken from covetous persons, who take every occasion, and make use of every advantage to circumvent and deceive persons in trading with them: Satan gets an advantage of the churches, when church-discipline is brought into neglect and contempt, or turned into tyranny; or when he can draw off any person from a church, or keep him out of it: wherefore the apostle's argument is, that since the incestuous person had true repentance for his sin,

* R. Elisha in Adderet, c. 3. apud Trigland. de Sect. Karaeorum, p. 166.

he ought to be forgiven, comforted, and received into the church: lest by too great severity, and a too long continuance of the censure on him, he should be either plunged into despair, or be drawn into a denial of the faith, or into an open scandalous course of wickedness; and so the church entirely lose a member, that might, by the proper use of discipline, have been an useful one, and Satan gain one: *for we are not ignorant of his devices;* and cunning stratagems; some of his crafty contrivances and designs are known, though not all of them; and this particularly, that he sometimes transforms himself into an angel of light, and under pretence of shewing a just indignation against sin, and keeping up a strict and righteous discipline, destroys souls, ruins churches, and brings religion into contempt. This was one of his devices in former times, that persons who fell into any gross sin after baptism, and a profession of religion, were never to be restored and received into the communion of the church again, let their repentance be ever so sincere. This cruel and inexorable spirit, under the shew of strict religion and discipline, is what the apostle here would caution against, as one of the wiles of Satan.

Ver. 12. *Furthermore, when I came to Troas,* &c.] The apostle proceeds, in this latter part of the chapter, to take notice of and remove the charge of ostentation and insincerity in preaching the Gospel, and hints at other reasons of his not coming to Corinth; particularly that he took a journey to Troas, expecting to meet with Titus there, who was to give him an account of the affairs of the church at Corinth, which he was desirous of knowing before he went thither; but missing of Titus, is uneasy, and goes for Macedonia; though he was first detained awhile at Troas, having a good opportunity of preaching the Gospel there, with a prospect of success. Troas was a city of the lesser Asia near the Hellespont, formerly called Troy; of Paul's being at this place more than once, see 2 Tim. iv. 13. Acts xvi. 7, 8. and xx. 6. and of this place see the note on Acts xvi. 8. and of the church there, see the note on Acts xx. 7. Hither he came, *to preach Christ's Gospel;* that Gospel, of which Christ is both the author and subject; and is no other than the good news and glad tidings of peace, pardon, righteousness, life, and salvation, by a crucified Jesus; this was his work and business; his heart was in it, he took delight in this service, and it was what he pursued in every place wherever he came; and in this place he had much encouragement; for he adds, *and a door was opened unto me of the Lord;* such an one as was opened to him at Ephesus, 1 Cor. xvi. 9. he had a good opportunity of preaching the Gospel to many souls, many were inclined to attend his ministry, from whence he conceived great hopes of doing good; a door of utterance was given to him to preach the Gospel boldly and freely, and a door of entrance for the Gospel to pass into their hearts: all which was not of men, *but of the Lord;* who has the key of David, who opens and no man shuts, shuts and no man opens.

Ver. 13. *I had no rest in my spirit,* &c.] Though there was such a door opened to preach the Gospel, and such an opportunity of doing good, yet he was greatly distressed in his mind, very restless and uneasy in his spirit, and could not be satisfied to stay; which shews, that though he was so great a man, he was but a man, and of like passions with others: and the occasion of this dissatisfaction and uneasiness was, *because,* says he, *I found not Titus my brother;* whom he so styles, not merely because he was a fellow-Christian, but because he was a fellow-labourer in the Gospel; and by calling him so, puts an honour upon him, and expresses his affection for him; now not finding him as he expected, he grew uneasy: not that he wanted him as an interpreter for him, or his assistance in preaching the Gospel at Troas, where so many were inclined to hear the word; but because he was exceedingly desirous of knowing from him the state of affairs in the church at Corinth; so that this whole account is given, to shew his affectionate concern for, and care of that church: which he goes on with, saying, *but taking my leave of them;* the disciples at Troas, and ordering and prescribing, as the word here used signifies, how things should be managed for the best after his departure; for as there was a door opened for the ministry of the word, it can't be thought he would leave it thus, without fixing proper persons to go on with the work, and proper directions how to conduct themselves: and very likely he ordained Carpus to be their elder, bishop, or overseer: and having done this, he *went into Macedonia;* in quest of Titus, whom he so earnestly desired to see, and by whose coming to him he was greatly refreshed and comforted; see ch. vii. 5, 6, 7.

Ver. 14. *Now thanks be unto God,* &c.] The apostle having mentioned the door that was opened for him at Troas, to preach the Gospel with success, calls to mind the great and manifold appearances of God for him and his fellow-ministers, in blessing their labours to the conversion of many souls; which causes him to break forth into thanksgiving to God, on this account: what he takes notice of, and is thankful to God for is, that he *always causeth us to triumph in Christ;* not only had done so, but continued to do so; some versions ascribe this act of triumph to God, as his act, reading the passage thus, *now thanks be unto God, who triumphs over us,* or *by us in Christ;* who has conquered us by his grace, and made use of us as instruments for the conversion of sinners; and so first triumphed over us, having subdued us to himself, and then over others by us, in whose hearts the arrows of his word have been sharp and powerful; so the word is used for the person's own act of triumph spoken of, Col. ii. 15. but here it signifies, as words do in the Hebrew conjugation *Hiphil,* which most commonly denotes an effect upon another, or which is caused and produced in another, and is rightly rendered, *which causeth us to triumph;* and refers not to the triumph of faith, common with the apostles to other believers; though this is in Christ, in his righteousness, death, resurrection, ascension, session at God's right hand, and intercession; and is what God causes, and to whom thanks is to be given for it: but this is a triumph peculiar to ministers of the Gospel, who are made to triumph over men and devils, over the world, the reproaches, persecutions, smiles, and flatteries of it; over wicked men, by silencing them, stopping the mouths of gainsayers, refuting false teachers, and preserving the

Gospel pure, in spite of all opposition: and by being made useful to the turning of many souls from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God: and this is *in Christ*; 'tis owing to the victory he has got; 'tis by his strength, 'tis in his name, for his sake, and because of his glory herein concerned: and *always* wherever the ministers of Christ are called to labour, and wherever the Gospel is purely and powerfully preached by them, some good is done; and they are made to triumph over hell and earth, over sin, Satan, and the world; and for all this, thanks is due to God; for he it is that causes them to triumph, or they never could; as will easily appear, if we consider what poor weak instruments they themselves are: what opposition is made against them: what wonderful things are done by them: by what means they triumph, by the preaching of the cross, and that in the midst of the greatest pressures and afflictions. Thanks are also given to God, that he *maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place*; by *his knowledge* is meant, either the knowledge of God, who causes the ministers of the Gospel to triumph; or the knowledge of Christ, in whom they triumph; or rather of both, of the knowledge of God in Christ; and designs the Gospel, which is the means thereof: and which is said to have a *savour* in it, and denotes the acceptableness of it to sensible souls; and the good name, fame, and credit, which Christ has by the faithful ministration of it; and is an allusion to Cant. i. 3. Now this, God is said to *make manifest*; it was hid before, hid in himself, and to the sons of men; it was like a box of ointment shut, but now opened by the preaching of the word, which diffuses a fragrant smell; and therefore he is said to make it manifest *by us*; the ministers of the Gospel, who openly, boldly, and faithfully preach it; and *by manifestation of the truth*; spread the savour of it, and that *in every place*, where they come; their commission being at large, to go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature.

Ver. 15. *For we are unto God a sweet savour*, &c.] Here a reason is given, why the savour of the knowledge of God in Christ is made manifest by the ministers of the Gospel, because they themselves are *a sweet savour*: not that they are so in themselves, for they have the same corrupt hearts and natures, and complain of them as other men; but as having the gifts and graces of the spirit of God, comparable to fragrant and sweet-smelling ointments, Cant. i. 3. and iv. 10. by which they are enabled to preach the savoury doctrines of the Gospel, and to adorn and recommend them by their exemplary lives and conversations: the allusion is to Aaron and the priests under the law, who were anointed with the anointing oil, which was poured upon their heads, ran down upon their beards, and descended to the skirts of their garments, so that they were all over a perfume, a sweet smell and savour; and so are the ministers of the word, being anointed with that, which the other was typical of. They are said to be a sweet savour *of Christ*, because they have their gifts, grace, and Gospel from him, and he is the subject of their ministry; so that this sweet savour of theirs, is not properly theirs, but his, whose person, blood, righteousness, sacrifice, grace, and the fulness of it, as held forth in the Gospel ministry, are sweet and savoury to believers. Moreover, it is *unto God* they are such a savour, not unto men, mere carnal men, for with them they are the filth of the world, and the off-scouring of all things; but they are grateful and well-pleasing to the Lord, as their ministrations make for, and shew forth his honour and glory: and this they are *in them that are saved*, who are chosen by God unto salvation, for whom Christ has wrought it out, to whom it is applied by the spirit of God, who are heirs of it, and are kept unto it, and for it, by the power of God, and shall certainly enjoy it: yea, they are a sweet savour *in them that perish*, all mankind are, through sin, in a perishing condition: some of them shall never perish, but are, and shall be saved with an everlasting salvation: others will perish in their sins, to which they are abandoned; and in what sense the ministers of the Gospel are a savour in these is shewn in the following verse.

Ver. 16. *To the one we are the savour of death unto death*, &c.] Who are for death, or appointed to it; see Jer. xliii. 11. What the apostle says of the Gospel, and Gospel ministers, the Jews his countrymen used frequently to say of the law, and to which he seems to refer; "saith Rabba[f], to them that go on "the right hand of it, (the law,) it is סמא דחיי, *the "savour of life*; but to them that go on the left hand "of it, it is סמא דמותא, *the savour of death*." Again[g], "every one that studies in the law for the sake of it, "to him it becomes סם חיים, *the savour of life*, according to Prov. iii. 18. and viii. 35. but every one "that studies in the law, not for the sake of it, to him "it becomes סם המות, *the savour of death*:" once more[h], "if a man is worthy or righteous, to him the "law becomes סם חיים, *the savour of life*: but if he "is not righteous, it becomes to him סם מיתה, *the "savour of death*:" and this they not only say of the written law, but also of their oral law[i], and are not contented with those general descriptions of persons to whom the law is so, but particularly mention the Gentiles; "the words of the law (say they[k]) are "סם חיים, *the savour of life*, to the Israelites; "and סם המות, *the savour of death*, to the nations of "the world:" that the law should be the savour of death, since it is the ministration of it, and can't give life, see Gal. iii. 21. is no wonder; but that the Gospel and the ministers of that, should be the savour of death unto death, may seem strange, but so it is. These preach up salvation by the death of Christ, and so are the sweet *savour of the death* of Christ; but this being despised and rejected by the sons of men, is *unto the death*, and issues in the eternal death of the despisers and rejecters of it; likewise this doctrine preached by them, strikes with death all a man's wisdom, righteousness, and holiness, and declares that life and salvation are only by Christ and his righte-

[f] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 88. 2.
[g] Taanith, fol. 7. 1.
[h] Yoma, fol 72. 2.
[i] Zohar in Gen. fol. 19. 3.
[k] Vajikra Rabba, fol. 147. 1. Debarim Rabba, fol. 232. 2. Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 9. 4.

ousness; and besides, is attended with persecution and death, and therefore is foolishness to them that perish; and so becomes *the savour of death unto death:* a savour, but not a sweet savour, nor the sweet savour of Christ; a sweet savour indeed to God, whose justice, holiness, power, and wisdom, are displayed in the death and righteous destruction of sinners, but not to them: *to the other, the savour of life unto life:* those who are ordained to eternal life. The Gospel preached by Christ's faithful ministers is the means of quickening souls, and giving them *spiritual life:* and of supporting and maintaining that life, and of nourishing them up unto *eternal life;* and so becomes *the savour of life* spiritual, *unto life* eternal. The Alexandrian copy, and some others, and so the Ethiopic version, read both clauses, *from death to death*, and *from life to life:* with which compare Rom. i. 17. 2 Cor. iii. 18. and then the meaning may be, either as Grotius observes, that the ill report of the Gospel from men dead in sin, brings death to those who give credit to it; and the good report of it from God, the author of life, to which may be added from ministers, who are alive in a spiritual sense, is the means of life to others: or they are the means of adding death to death, death eternal, to death spiritual, or moral; death for sin, to death in sin, the Gospel being despised; and of increasing spiritual life, the comforts of it; and of adding eternal life to spiritual life: upon the whole of which, the apostle makes this exclamation, *and who is sufficient for these things;* the meaning of which is either, who is able to search and find out the reason of this different influence of the Gospel ministry upon the souls of men? no man can do it; it must be ascribed to the sovereign will and pleasure of God, who hides the Gospel from some, and reveals it to others; or who is sufficient for the preaching of the Gospel? no man is sufficient of himself, very insufficient in the best sense, and none so but by the grace of God, and gifts of his spirit; or who is sufficient to give success to the Gospel when preached? none can do this; Paul may plant, and Apollos water, but 'tis God alone that gives the increase.

Ver. 17. *For we are not as many*, &c.] The apostle here removes from himself, and other ministers of the Gospel, a character which belonged not to them, but to the false apostles; who are described by their number *many;* there were great swarms of false teachers in the early times of Christianity; see 1 John ii. 18. and iv. 1. some copies read, *as the rest;* and so the Syriac and Arabic versions; and also by their quality, *which corrupt the word of God;* by *the word of God*, may be meant the Scriptures in general, which are from God, contain his will, and which he uses for the good of men, and his own glory, and may be corrupted by false glosses, and human mixtures, and by adding to them, or taking from them; or the Gospel in particular, which is the word of truth, of faith, righteousness, reconciliation, and salvation, and which was corrupted by these false teachers, by making merchandise of it; they huckstered the word of God, made gain of it, sought merely their own worldly interest and advantage in it, and so mixed it with their own vain philosophy, to please the carnal ears and hearts of men; the blended law and Gospel, grace and works, in the business of salvation; they did, as pedling merchants do, mix good and bad commodities together, and then vend them for sound ware; or as vintners, who mix their wine with water, and sell it for neat wine. The Septuagint interpreters on Isa. ii. 22. translate the last clause of that verse thus, οι καπηλοι σου μισγουσι τον οινον υδατι, *thy vintners mix wine with water;* which may be understood in a moral or spiritual sense; so did these men mix, and hereby corrupt the Gospel, the word of God; and so the Syriac version reads the words דמזגין, *who mix the word of God:* now the apostle says, they did not do so; they delivered out the word pure and unmixed, without any corruption or adulteration: *but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God*, says he, *speak we in Christ;* they spoke *in Christ*, in the name of Christ, of or concerning him, and him only, and freely, fully, and plainly, as God's free gift, and the only way of salvation without the works of men: and they spoke, *as of sincerity;* what they delivered was the sincere milk of the word; the manner in which they did it was sincere, with all integrity and faithfulness; and so were their views, which were not their own profit and applause, but the glory of God and the good of souls; they spoke in Christ, and with all sincerity, *as of God:* by whom they were called and sent forth to speak in his name, and from whom they received the Gospel, and gifts, and abilities to preach it; and all this they did, *in the sight of God*, as the searcher of hearts, and to whom they knew they must give an account of their ministry another day.

CHAP. III.

IN this chapter the apostle clears himself from the charge of arrogance and self-commendation, and ascribes both the virtue and efficacy of his ministry, and his qualifications for it, to the Lord; and forms a comparison between the ministration of the Gospel, and the ministration of the law, shewing the preferableness of the one to the other; and consequently how much more happy and comfortable the state and condition of the saints under the Gospel dispensation is, than under the legal one: on account of what the apostle had said in the latter part of the preceding chapter, concerning the excellency, usefulness, and success of the Gospel ministry, he foresaw an objection would arise; that he and his fellow-ministers were proud and arrogant, and commended themselves, which was unseemly, and not agreeably to the character they bore; which objection he obviates, ver. 1. by putting some questions, signifying that they were not guilty of vain boasting: nor did they need any commendations of their own, or others, nor any letters to recommend them, either from Corinth to other places, or thither: a practice which, he suggests, the false teachers made use of; and in ver. 2. he gives

the reason why they did not stand in need of such letters, because the members of the church at Corinth were their epistle or letter, declaring to all men the efficacy and success of their ministry among men; but lest he should be charged with arrogating to himself and others, he declares, ver. 3. that though the Corinthians were their epistle, yet not so much theirs as Christ's; Christ was the author and subject, they only were instruments; the writing was not human, but the writing of the spirit of God; and that not upon outward tables, such as the law was written upon, but upon the tables of men's hearts, which only God can reach; however, that they had been useful, successful, and instrumental in the conversion of souls, through the ministry of the word, that he was confident of, ver. 4. though the sufficiency and ability to think, study, and preach, were not of themselves, and still less to make the word effectual for conversion and comfort, but of God, ver. 5. wherefore he ascribes all fitness, worthiness, and ability to preach the Gospel, to the grace and power of God, by which they were made ministers of it; and hence he takes occasion to commend the excellency of the Gospel ministry above that of the law, which he does by observing their different names and effects; the Gospel is the New Testament or covenant, or an exhibition of the covenant of grace in a new form; the law is the Old Testament, or covenant, which is vanished away; which, though not expressed here, is in ver. 14. the Gospel is spirit, the law the letter; the one gives life, and the other kills, ver. 6. wherefore the apostle argues from the one to the other, that if there was a glory in the one which was only a ministration of death, as the law was, ver. 7. then the Gospel, which was a ministration of spiritual things, and of the spirit of God himself, must be more glorious, ver. 8. and if that was glorious which was a ministration of condemnation, as the law was to guilty sinners; much more glorious must be the Gospel, which is a ministration of the righteousness of Christ, for the justification of them, ver. 9. yea, such is the surpassing glory of the Gospel to the law, that even the glory of the law is quite lost in that of the Gospel, and appears to have none in comparison of that, ver. 10. to which he adds another argument, taken from the abolition of the one, and the continuance of the other; that if there was a glory in that which is abolished, there must be a greater in that which continues, ver. 11. and from hence the apostle proceeds to take notice of another difference between the law and the Gospel, the clearness of the one, and the obscurity of the other; the former is signified by the plainness of speech used by the preachers of it, ver. 12. and the latter by the veil which was over Moses's face, when he delivered the law to the children of Israel; the end of which they could not look to, and which is a further proof of the obscurity of it, ver. 13. as well as of the darkness of their minds; which still continues with the Jews in reading the law, and will do until it is taken away by Christ, ver. 14. and that there is such a veil of darkness upon the hearts of the Jews, when reading the law of Moses; and that this continues to this day, is again asserted, ver. 15. and an intimation given that there will be a conversion of them to the Lord, and then it will be removed from them, ver. 16. and who that Lord is to whom they shall be turned, and by whom they shall have freedom from darkness and bondage, is declared, ver. 17. and the happy condition of the saints under the Gospel dispensation, through the bright and clear light of it, is observed, ver. 18. in which the Gospel is compared to a glass; the saints are represented as without a veil looking into it; through which an object is beheld, the glory of the Lord; the effect of which is a transformation of them into the same image by degrees; the author of which grace is the spirit of the Lord.

Ver. 1. *Do we begin again to commend ourselves?* &c.] The apostle having asserted that he and his fellow-ministers always triumphed in Christ, and made manifest the savour of his knowledge in every place; were a sweet savour of Christ to God, did not corrupt the word of God, as some did, but sincerely and faithfully preached Christ; some might insinuate from hence, that he was guilty of arrogance and vain glory; wherefore to remove such a charge, or prevent its being brought, he asks, *do we begin again to commend ourselves?* we do not; what we say, we say honestly, sincerely, in the simplicity of our hearts, without any view to our own glory and applause among men, or for any worldly profit and advantage, or to ingratiate ourselves into your affections; we have no such views: some read these words without an interrogation, *we do begin again to commend ourselves;* as we have done already, in this and the former epistles; and as it is but just and right that we should vindicate our characters, support our good name and reputation, and secure and maintain our credit, which some would maliciously deprive us of: *though we have no need, as some others, of epistles of commendation to you, or letters of commendation from you;* our persons, characters, and usefulness are too well known, to require commendatory letters from others to you, or from you to others. The false apostles are here struck at, whose practice it was to get letters of commendation from place to place; which they carried about and made use of for their temporal advantage, having nothing truly good and excellent in them to recommend them to others. The apostle does not hereby condemn letters of recommendation, which in proper cases may be very lawfully given, and a good use be made of them; only that he and other Gospel ministers were so well known, as to stand in no need of them.

Ver. 2. *Ye are our epistle,* &c.] Here a reason is given why they stood in no need of letters of commendation, to or from the church at Corinth, because that church was their living epistle, and which was much preferable to any written one. The apostle calls them their epistle in the same sense, as they are said to be his *work in the Lord,* and *the seal of* his *apostleship,* 1 Cor. ix. 1, 2. they were so as persons regenerated by the spirit and grace of God, in whose conversion he was an instrument; now it was the work of conversion in them, which was the epistle said to be *written in our hearts;* some think it should be read, *in your hearts;* and so the Ethiopic version reads it; and it looks as if it should be so read, from the following verse, and from the nature of the thing itself; for the conversion of the Corinthians was not written in the heart of the apostle, but in their own; and this was so very notorious and remarkable, that it was *known and read of all men;* every one could read, and was obliged to acknowledge

the hand-writing; it was so clear a case, what hand the apostle, as an instrument, had in the turning of these persons from idols to serve the living God; and which was so full a proof of the divinity, efficacy, truth, and sincerity of his doctrine, that he needed no letters from any to recommend him.

Ver. 3. *Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared*, &c.] But lest it should be thought that the apostle attributed too much to himself, by saying that the Corinthians were *our epistle*; here he says, they were *manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us*; so that the apostles and ministers of the word were only amanuenses, Christ was the author and dictator; yea, he himself is the very matter, sum, substance, and subject of the epistle; he is formed in the hearts of his people in conversion, his image is instamped, his grace is implanted, his word, his Gospel dwells richly, his laws and ordinances are written here; he also is the exemplar, believers are but copies of him, in grace and duty, in sufferings, in the likeness of his death and resurrection: and they are *manifestly declared* to be so, by the impresses of Christ's grace upon them; by the fairness of the copy; by the style and language of the epistle; by their likeness to Christ; by their having not the form only, but the power of godliness; and by their lives and conversations: now in writing these epistles, the ministers of the Gospel are only instruments, *ministered by us*. They are made use of to shew the sinner the black characters which are written upon him; and that what is written in him, and to be read by him, by the light of nature is not sufficient for salvation; they are employed as instruments in drawing the rough-draught of grace in conversion, and in writing the copy over again, fairer and fairer; being the happy means blessed by God, for the building up of souls in faith and holiness, in spiritual knowledge and comfort. These epistles are *not written with ink*; of nature's power, or of rhetorical eloquence and moral suasion; *but with the spirit of the living God*: every grace that is implanted in the soul is wrought there by the spirit of God; or he it is that draws every line, and writes every word and letter; he begins, he carries on and finishes the work of grace on the soul; and that as *the spirit of the living God*: hence saints become the living epistles of Christ; and every letter and stroke of his making, is a living disposition of the soul in likeness to him; and such are written among the living in Jerusalem, and shall live and abide for ever as the epistles of Christ: again, the subjects of these epistles, or that on which they are written, are *not tables of stone*; such as the law was written upon, on Mount Sinai: of these tables there were the first and second; the first were the work of God himself, the latter were hewed by Moses, at the command of God, Exod. xxxii. 16. and xxxiv. 1. the former being broken when he came down from the mount, which by the Jewish writers are said to be miraculously made, and not by the means and artifice of men [l]; yea, that they were made before the creation of the world [m], and which, they commonly say, were made of sapphire; see the note on ver. 7. these, as the latter, were two stones, which, Jarchi says [n], were of an equal bigness; and were, as Abarbinel says [o], in the form of small tables, such as children are taught to write upon, and therefore are so called: some pretend to give the dimensions of them, and say [p], that they were six hands long, and as many broad, and three thick; nay, even the weight of them, which is said [q] to be the weight of forty *seahs*, and look upon it as a miracle that Moses should be able to carry them: on these stones were written the ten commands; and the common opinion of the Jewish writers is, that five were written on one table, and five on the other; this is the opinion of Josephus [r], Philo [s], and the Talmudic writers [t]; and the tables are said to be written on both sides, Exod. xxxii. 15. Some think that the engraving of the letters perforated and went through the tables, so that, in a miraculous manner, the letters were legible on both sides; others think, only the right and left hand of the tables are meant, on which the laws were written, five on a side, and which folded up like the tables or pages of a book; though others are of opinion, that they were written upon, both behind and before, and that the law was written twice, both upon the fore part and back part of the tables, yea, others say four times; and some think the phrase only intends the literal and mystical, the external and internal sense of the law: however, certain it is, as the apostle here suggests, that the law was written on tables of stone, which may denote the firmness and stability of the law; not as in the hands of Moses, from whence the tables fell and were broken, but as in the hands of Christ, by whom they are fulfilled; or else the hardness of man's heart, his stupidity, ignorance of, and unsubjection to the law of God: *but fleshly tables of the heart*: alluding to Ezek. xxxvi. 26. and designs not carnal hearts, but such as are made soft and tender by the spirit of God. *The table of the heart* is a phrase to be met with in the books of the Old Testament; see Prov. iii. 3. and vii. 3. Jer. xvii. 1. and very frequently in the writings of the Jews [u].

Ver. 4. *And such trust have we*, &c.] This refers to what he had said in the latter end of the foregoing chapter, and the beginning of this; as that they made manifest the savoury knowledge of God and Christ everywhere, and were the sweet savour of Christ to many souls; were sufficient in some measure, through the grace of Christ, to preach the Gospel sincerely and faithfully, and were attended with success, had many seals of their ministry, and particularly the Corinthians were so many living epistles of commendations of the power and efficacy of their ministry; such confidence and firm persuasion of the truth of grace on your souls, and of our being the happy instruments of it, we have *through Christ*, the grace of Christ, *to God-ward*: who is the object of our confidence and hope, and the ground thereof.

[l] R. Levi ben Gersom in Pentateuch, fol. 113. 2.
[m] Zohar in Exod. fol. 25. 1.
[n] Jarchi in Exod. xxxi. 18.
[o] In Pentateuch, fol. 209. 2. & 211. 3.
[p] T. Hieros. Shekalim, fol. 49. 4. Shemot Rabba, c. 47. fol. 143. 2. Bartenora in Misn. Pirke Abot, c. 5. sect. 6.
[q] Targum Jon. in Exod. xxxi. 18. & in Deut. xxxiv. 12.
[r] Antiqu. l. 3. c. 5. sect. 8.
[s] De Decalogo, p. 761, 763.
[t] T. Hieros. Shekalim, fol. 49. 4. Shemot Rabba, sect. 47. fol. 142. 2. Zohar in Exod. fol. 25. 1.
[u] Vid. Targum Jon. in Deut. vi. 5. & in Cant. iv. 9.

Ver. 5. *Not that we are sufficient of ourselves,* &c.] Though we are sufficient for this work to which God has called us, and have such trust and confidence that he has blessed and owned us, and done such great things by us; yet we don't ascribe any thing to ourselves, to any power of ours, to any self-sufficiency in us: for *we are not sufficient of ourselves;* neither for the work of the ministry, nor for the conversion of sinners, nor for faith and hope in God, nor for any spiritual work whatever; not even *to think any thing as of ourselves;* any good thing, either for our own use and benefit, or for the advantage of others; we are not able of ourselves to meditate with judgment and affection upon the word of God, to study the Scriptures, to collect from them things fit for the ministry: and much less with freedom and boldness to speak of them to edification; and still less able to impress them upon the heart: for though you who are the epistle of Christ are ministered by us, yet not by any power and self-sufficiency of ours; *but our sufficiency is of God;* to think, to speak, and to act for his glory.

Ver. 6. *Who also hath made us able ministers,* &c.] This is an answer to the question in ch. ii. 16. *who is sufficient for these things?* no man is of himself; we are indeed sufficient for them, but not of ourselves; our sufficiency is of God, he hath made us able, or sufficient ministers: such ministers as are not of men's, but God's making, are sufficient ones; and none are sufficient but whom God makes so; and those he makes able and sufficient, by giving them spiritual gifts, fitting them for the ministry: and these are ministers *of the New Testament, or covenant;* the covenant of grace, of which Christ is the Mediator and surety; called *new*, not because newly made, for it was made with Christ from everlasting; nor newly revealed, for it was made known to Adam after his fall, and to all the Old-Testament patriarchs, and was exhibited under the legal dispensation, though but darkly, in types, shadows, sacrifices, *&c.* which therefore waxing old is vanished away; and the covenant of grace is now more clearly revealed under the Gospel dispensation, free from all the obscurity it before laboured under; and therefore is called *new*, as well as because it will always continue so, and never give way to another covenant: now the Gospel, and the ministry of it, is nothing else but an exhibition of the covenant of grace, its blessings and promises; and the work and business of those who are ministers of it is not to insist upon the covenant of works, the terms, conditions, obligations, promises, and threatenings of that covenant; but to open and explain the nature, promises, and blessings of the covenant of grace: for such who are fit and proper ministers, are ministers *not of the letter, but of the spirit;* which is to be understood, not of any difference between the books of the Old and the New Testament, for a faithful minister of the word may and will bring forth things new and old, out of the one as well as the other; nor of the literal and allegorical, or mystical sense of the Scriptures, as if the latter and not the former was only to be attended to; nor of the difference of communicating the Gospel by letters, and preaching it by word of mouth; since both methods may be used for the spread of it, as were by the apostles themselves; but of the difference there is between the law and the Gospel. The law is *the letter*, not merely because written in letters, for so likewise is the Gospel; but because it is a mere letter, hereby shewing what is to be done or avoided, without any efficacy in it, or communicating any to enable persons to obey its commands, to give life to its observers, or either to sanctify or justify any who are under it, or of the works of it; it is a mere letter, as observed by an unregenerate man, who only regards the externals of it, being unacquainted with its spirituality. The Gospel is *the spirit;* see John vi. 63. it contains spiritual things, and not things merely natural, moral, and civil, as does the law, but spiritual blessings and promises; it penetrates into the spirit and soul of man, and comes from, and is attended with the spirit of God. The law is *the letter that killeth*, by irritating and provoking to sin, the cause of death, which though not the design and natural tendency of the law, and therefore not to be blamed, yet so it is, through the corruption of human nature; and by convincing of sin when the sinner is killed, and is dead in his own apprehension; and by not only threatening with death, but by cursing, condemning, and punishing with it: *but* the Gospel is *the spirit*, which *giveth life;* it is a means in the hand of the spirit of God, of quickening dead sinners, of healing the deadly wounds of sin, of shewing the way of life by Christ, and of working faith in the soul, to look to him, and live upon him; it affords food for the support of the spiritual life, and revives souls under the most drooping circumstances. The apostle may allude to a distinction among the Jews, between the body and soul of the law; the words, they say, are גופא תורה, *the body of the law;* and the book of the law is the clothing; and besides these, there is נשמתא דאוריתא, *the soul of the law;* which wise men look into *.

Ver. 7. *But if the ministration of death,* &c.] The apostle having observed the difference between the law and the Gospel, the one being a killing letter, the other a quickening spirit, enlarges upon it, and more fully explains it; and proceeds to take notice of other things in which they differ; and to shew the superior glory and excellency of the one to the other; for that by *the ministration of death*, he means the law, as delivered to Moses on Mount Sinai, is clear from its being said to be *written and engraven in stones;* as that was by the finger of God himself: rightly does the apostle say, that it was both *written* and *engraven;* for the two tables of the law are expressly said to be *written with the finger of God*, Exod. xxxi. 18. meaning either the spirit of God, who is sometimes so called, Luke xi. 20. compared with Matt. xii. 28. or the power of God, which at once caused this writing to exist; and it is in so many words affirmed, that *the writing* was *the writing of God;* and not of man, nor of any creature, no not of an angel, Exod. xxxii. 16. yea, even the two tables which were hewn out by Moses, after the first were broken, were written upon by the Lord himself, and not Moses, Exod. xxxiv. 1. So that as the work of the tables was the work of God, and wonderfully made, the form of the letters, as Abarbinel * observes, were

* Zohar in Numb. fol. 69. 3.

* In loc.

miraculously made by him; for this law was ἐν γράμμασι, *in letters*, as the apostle here says; and as it was written in the Hebrew language, very likely it was in the same form of letters now in use with the Jews; though some have thought that the Samaritan letters are the original ones: moreover, the law was not only written, but *engraved*: for so it is said, that the writing was *graven upon the tables*, Exod. xxxii. 16. and though the word so rendered is no where else used but there, it is rightly rendered *graven*, as appears by the apostle in this place; and which may be confirmed by the Targumist on that, who renders it by חקיק, *engraven*; and by the Septuagint κεκολαμμένη, which signifies the same; and so in the book of Zohar[y], the letters are said to be אתגליפו, *engraven* on the tables: and that the tables were tables of stone, it is certain; they are often so called, Exod. xxiv. 12. and xxxi. 18. and xxxiv. 1. Deut. ix. 9, 10. and x. 1. wherefore the apostle very properly says, that the law was engraven *in stones*: but what stones these tables were made of cannot be said; the Jews, who affect to know every thing, will have them to be precious stones, but what they were they are not agreed in; for though they generally say[z] they were made of the sapphire stone, and sometimes say[a] they were hewed out of the sapphire of the glorious throne of God; yet at other times they call them *marble* tables[b]; and Aben Ezra[c] was of opinion, that the tables which Moses hewed were not of any precious stone, for he asks where should a precious stone of such bigness be found? though others pretend to say[d], that Moses in a miraculous manner was shewn a sapphire quarry in the midst of his tent, out of which he cut and hewed the stones; but very likely they were common ones; however, certain it is, that the tables of stone, as written and engraven by the Lord himself, *were made*, as the apostle here says, *in glory*, ἐγενήθη ἐν δόξῃ; and so Jarchi on Exod. xxxii. 16. *and the tables were the work of God*, says, this is to be understood literally ובכבודו, *and in* or *for his glory*; or by his glorious power he made them: now this law, though thus written and engraven, and glorious, it was *the ministration of death*: and is so called, because it threatened and punished the transgressors of it with a corporeal death; they that sinned against it died without mercy upon proper evidence and witnesses; every precept of it had this penalty annexed to it, in case of disobedience; as the having any other gods but one, making of graven images, taking the name of God in vain, the violation of the sabbath, dishonouring of parents, murder, adultery, theft, and covetousness; instances there are of each of these being punishable by this law with a bodily death: and besides, it is the ministration of eternal death, the wages of sin the transgression of the law; which is that wrath of God, a sense of which it is said to work; the curse it threatens with, and the second death or lake of fire it casts into: and may be said to be the *ministration* of it; as it shews persons they are deserving of it, pronounces the sentence of it on them, and will execute it upon them, if grace prevent not; now though it was the ministration of death, yet it *was glorious*. There were many things which made it so; but what the apostle here particularly takes notice of is the glory that was upon the face of Moses, when he received it and brought it from the Lord, which was very great; *so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses, for the glory of his countenance, which glory was to be done away*. The history of this may be read in Exod. xxxiv. 29, 30, 35. it was a real visible glory that was upon the skin of his face, so that it shone again; it is said, *the skin of his face shone*: and this shining of his face the apostle very properly calls *the glory of his countenance*; agreeably to the Septuagint version, which renders it, *the appearance of the skin, or colour of his face, was glorified*: and still nearer to the paraphrase of Onkelos, which is, *the splendour of the glory of his countenance was great*; and to the Targum of Jonathan, which also assigns the reason of it, and which seems to be the true one, *the splendour of the form of his countenance was glorious, because of the splendour of the glory of the majesty of God, at the time he talked with him*. The Vulgate Latin version has led many wrong, to paint Moses with two horns, rendering it, *his face was horned*, the Hebrew word having the signification of an horn in its derivative; because glory darted from him like horns, as rays of light do from the sun; see Hab. iii. 4. and this brightness and glory were so very great, and so dazzling, that Aaron and the people of Israel were afraid to come nigh; which Jarchi, a Jewish writer, imputed to their sin, and shame, and fear, having worshipped the calf; but our apostle ascribes it to the lustre of his countenance, which was such that they could not steadfastly look upon it; they saw it indeed, as it is said in Exod. xxxiv. 35. yet they could not look wistly at it, nor bear the splendour of it; though this was only a glory, which was to continue but a while; according to the opinion of Ambrose[e], this glory continued on Moses's countenance as long as he lived; but be it so, it at last was done away: now this glory was put there to bear a testimony to the divine authority of the law, that it came from God, and was to be received at the hands of Moses, with awful reverence as from God, and to make them afraid of violating a law which came with such majesty and glory; and also to command awe and respect from the Israelites to Moses, whom they were inclined at every turn to treat with contempt, and to let them see that he had communion with God, which this was the effect of: now this was a circumstance which rendered the law glorious, and was expressive of a real glory in it; *which*, though as this on Moses's face, *was to be done away*; wherefore the apostle argues;

Ver. 8. *How shall not the ministration of the spirit, &c.*] By *the ministration of the spirit*, is meant the Gospel; so called not only because it ministers spiritual things, as peace, pardon, righteousness and salvation, spiritual joy and comfort, and even spiritual life; but

[y] In Exod. fol. 35. 1.
[z] Zohar ib. Targum Jon. in Deut. xxxiv. 12.
[a] Targum in Cant. i. 11. Targum Jon. in Exod. xxxi. 18.
[b] Targum Jon. in Deut. ix. 9, 10.
[c] In Exod. xxxii. 15.
[d] Jarchi in Exod. xxxiv. 1. Pirke Eliezer, c. 46.
[e] Comment. in Psal. cxix. 125.

because it ministers the spirit of God himself, by whom it is not only dictated, and by him at first confirmed, and who qualifies persons for the preaching of it; but by it he conveys himself into the hearts of men, and makes it powerful for illumination, consolation, edification, and an increase of every grace; and therefore must be *rather glorious*, or much more glorious than the law, the ministration of death.

Ver. 9. *For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, &c.*] So the Jews call the law, for they say, אין כבוד אלא תורה, *there is no glory but the law* [f]; this is another head of opposition or difference between the law and the Gospel, from whence the superior glory of the one to the other is argued. The law is *the ministration of condemnation*; as sin is a transgression of the law, it accuses for it, convinces of it, pronounces guilty, and adjudges to death on account of it; which is the condemnation it ministers; and this it does to all Adam's posterity, and for his sin too; and to all the actual transgressors of it, to all unbelievers, to all that are under it; even to God's elect themselves, as considered in Adam, and in themselves as transgressors; and this it ministers to their consciences when convicted, though it is never executed on them, because of the suretyship-engagement and performances of Christ. The Gospel is *the ministration of righteousness*; not of a legal one, or a man's own, but of the righteousness of Christ, by which the law is honoured, justice is satisfied, and God's elect justified from all sin and condemnation; this being perfect, pure, and spotless, and for ever: the Gospel is *the ministration* of it, as it is a means of stripping a man of his own righteousness, of revealing Christ's to him, and of working faith in him, and encouraging him to lay hold upon it for himself; and thus it is not to righteous persons, but sinners, to all believers, to all the second Adam's posterity; now as *much more* as righteousness exceeds condemnation, and a justified state a condemned one, so *much more* does the Gospel *exceed* the law *in glory*.

Ver. 10. *For even that which was made glorious, &c.*] The apostle grants that there was a glory in the law: it *was made glorious*; it was glorious in the author of it, who is God; it was of his appointing and ordaining, agreeable to his nature, and a declaration of his will; his authority was instamped upon it, and it was written by himself, which cannot be said of any other law whatever; it was glorious in its promulgation, God himself appeared in great glory at the giving of it; Christ was then present; it was ordained by angels, and by them delivered into the hands of Moses, on whose face such a glory was left as could not be steadfastly looked upon; and it was attended with thunderings, lightnings, the sound of a trumpet, &c. it was glorious in the matter of it, it contained great and excellent things; the substance of it is love to God, and to our neighbour; and it was glorious in its properties, being, in its nature and substance, holy, just, good, spiritual, perfect, immutable, and eternal; but yet *had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth*. There is such an excelling glory in the Gospel, that the other is swallowed up and lost in it; it excels it in those things in which it was so glorious; in the author of it, which, though the same, yet with this difference; the law was given by God as a judge, the Gospel by him as a father, as the father of Christ, and of his people in him; the law is the birth of his holiness and righteousness, the Gospel of his wisdom, grace, and love; the law declares his will with respect to duty, the Gospel with respect to salvation; the authority of God is instamped on the law, but the Gospel is the image of Christ; the law was written by the finger of God, but the Gospel was hid in his heart, and came from thence: in the promulgation of it, through the long train of patriarchs and prophets, that went before it to usher it in; it was published by Christ, the son of God himself, confirmed by the gifts and miracles of the Holy Ghost, and in it is a greater display of the glory of God; it was attended with angels too, and a voice from heaven delightful and not terrible; and there was a glory on Christ's countenance, far exceeding that of Moses's: in the matter of it; which is the love, grace, and mercy of God; the Lord Jesus Christ, in all the glories and fulness of his person and offices; salvation by him, spiritual blessings, exceeding great and precious promises; neither of which are to be observed in the law: the ordinances of it vastly exceed the legal ones; and it has greatly the advantage of it in its effects on the souls of men, when accompanied by the spirit of God.

Ver. 11. *For if that which is done away, &c.*] Here another difference is pointed out, which subsists between the law and the Gospel, and proves that the one is more excellent and glorious than the other. The law is *that which is done away*; not merely the ceremonial law, or the judicial law, but the whole ministry of Moses, and particularly the law of the Decalogue: for the better understanding of this, distinguish between the matter and ministry of it; the ministry of it by Moses is done away, the matter of it so far as of a moral nature abides: distinguish between the law, as in the hands of Moses and of Christ; as in the hands of Moses it is broken to pieces and abolished, as in the hands of Christ, as King in his church, it remains: distinguish between precepts and precepts; some are mixed, being partly moral, and partly ceremonial, as the fourth and fifth commands, and others are not; what is ceremonial, or purely related to the Jews whilst in their civil policy, and in the land of Canaan, is done away; but what is purely moral, is, as to the matter of it, still obliging: distinguish between the law as a covenant of works, and as a rule of walk and conversation; as a covenant of works it is done away, as a rule of walk and conversation it still continues: distinguish between persons and persons; to them that are redeemed from it, it is done away; to them that are under it, it remains; and lastly, distinguish between a right and a wrong use of it; as to any use of it to justify us before God, by our obedience to it, it is done away; but as it may be of use to convince sinners of sin, and to direct saints in a course of righteousness, so it abides. The Gospel is *that which remaineth*; which denotes the continued efficacy, the incorruptibleness, the inexpugnableness, and duration of it; notwithstanding all the opposition of men and

[f] Raya Mehimna in Zohar in Lev. fol. 33. 4.

devils to it, still its blessings, promises, doctrines, ordinances, and effects continue; it remains in the Scriptures, in the church, in the hearts of believers, and in the world too, until all the elect of God are gathered in: now as things that remain are much more glorious than those which are done away, so the Gospel must be much more glorious than the law.

Ver. 12. *Seeing then that we have such hope*, &c.] Having this confidence, and being fully persuaded that God has made us able and sufficient ministers of the Gospel, has called and qualified us for such service; and since we have such a ministry committed to us, which so much exceeds in glory the ministry of Moses, a ministry not of death and condemnation, but of the spirit and of righteousness; not which is abolished and done away, but which does and will remain, maugre all the opposition of hell and earth: *we use great plainness of speech*: plain and intelligible words, not ambiguous ones: or *boldness*; we are not afraid of men nor devils; we are not terrified by menaces, stripes, imprisonment, and death itself: or *freedom of speech*: we speak out all our mind, which is the mind of Christ; we declare the whole counsel of God, hide and conceal nothing that may be profitable to the churches; we are not to be awed by the terror, or drawn by the flatteries of men to cover the truth; we speak it out plainly, clearly, with all evidence and perspicuity. The apostle from hence passes on to observe another difference between the law and the Gospel, namely, the obscurity of the one, and the clearness of the other.

Ver. 13. *And not as Moses, which put a veil over his face*, &c.] This he did, because there was such a glory upon his face when he came down from the mount, that the Israelites could not bear to look upon him; and also to take off that dread of him which was upon them, for they were afraid to come nigh him; and that so they might be able to hearken and attend to the words of the law, he delivered to them: the account of Moses's putting on this veil is in Exod. xxxiv. 33. where Onkelos renders it by בית אפי, *the house of the face*, or a *mask*; and Jarchi on the place says it was a *garment*, which he put before his face; and both the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem call it סודרא, *a linen cloth*: now this veil upon his face had a mystery in it; it was an emblem of the Gospel being veiled under the law, and of the darkness and obscurity of the law in the business of life and salvation; and also of the future blindness of the Jews, when the glory of the Gospel should break forth in the times of Christ and his apostles; and which was such, *that the children of Israel*, the Jews, as in the times of Moses, so in the times of Christ and his apostles, *could not steadfastly look to*; not upon the face of Moses, whose face was veiled; not that they might not look, but because they could not bear to look upon him: but they could not look *to the end of that which is abolished*: that is, to Christ, who is the end of the law, which is abrogated by him: to him they could not look, nor could they see him to be the fulfilling end of the law for righteousness; which being fulfilled, is done away by him; and this because of the blindness of their hearts, of which blindness the veil on Moses's face was typical: though the Alexandrian copy and the Vulgate Latin version read, *to the face of him which is abolished*.

Ver. 14. *But their minds were blinded*, &c.] This confirms the sense given of the foregoing verse, and shews, that not the Israelites only in Moses's time, but the Jews in the times of the Gospel, had their minds so blinded, that they could not behold the glory of the Gospel, nor Christ the end of the law; see Rom. xi. 7, 8, 25. *For until this day*, to this very time, remaineth *the same veil untaken away*; not the self-same veil that was on Moses's face, but the veil of blindness, darkness, and ignorance, upon the hearts of the Jews; *in the reading of the Old Testament*: the books of the Old Testament, which were used to be read in their synagogues every sabbath-day; the true spiritual meaning of which, as they respect Christ and the Gospel dispensation, they understood not; of which darkness, the veil on the face of Moses was a type and emblem: *which veil is done away in Christ*; can only be removed by Christ, by his spirit and grace, and through the light of the Gospel of Christ, shining into the heart; and so dispel that blindness and ignorance which is in the understanding; whereby the books of the Old Testament are understood, and appear to agree exactly with the Gospel of Christ, in the books of the New Testament.

Ver. 15. *But even unto this day, when Moses is read*, &c.] These words are an explanation of the former, and shew that by *the Old Testament* is designed, more especially, Moses, or the writings of Moses; which were frequently read, and preached upon in the Jewish synagogues; see Acts xiii. 15. and xv. 21. and that by *the veil untaken away*, is meant, *the veil upon their heart*: that is, the veil of blindness, ignorance of Christ, and the Gospel; of the prophecies of the Old Testament, and even of the law itself, its nature, use, and end; preferring the traditions of their fathers, before the written law of Moses.

Ver. 16. *Nevertheless, when it shall turn to the Lord*, &c.] The heart, upon which the veil now is; or the body of the Jewish nation, as in the latter day; when they *shall turn*, or *be turned*, by the spirit, power, and grace of God, *to the Lord* Jesus Christ, and look upon him whom they have pierced, and mourn, and embrace him as the true Messiah and only Saviour: *the veil shall be taken away*; the veil of blindness and ignorance, respecting themselves, case, state, and condition, and the way of salvation by Christ; the veil of unbelief, with regard to his person, offices, and grace, and of error in points of the greatest moment and importance; then all the darkness and obscurity that is upon the books of Moses and the prophets, and which is now upon their hearts in reading them, will be gone. The prophecies of the Old Testament will be seen in their proper light, and to be evidently fulfilled in Christ; the true nature, use, and end of the law, will be discovered; and both they and that will be freed from all darkness that now attends them. The Jews themselves acknowledge, that though the law is light, yet there is an obscurity in it, by reason of the several ways of interpreting it: and therefore, "he that studies in it, "has need to remove, מסוה אחר מסוה, *veil after veil*, "which is upon the face of it, in order to come at

"the light of it[g];" and intimate, that the veil on Moses's face was an emblem of this obscurity, which agrees with what the apostle hints in this context; and also own, that there is now upon them a veil of ignorance; and, say they[h], God has promised to remove, מכך הסכלות מעל שכלנו, perhaps it should be מכסה, *the veil of folly off of our understanding*, referring, as is thought, to Isa. xxv. 7.

Ver. 17. *Now the Lord is that spirit*, &c.] *The Lord*, to whom the heart is turned, when the veil is removed, is Jesus Christ; and he is *that spirit*, or *the spirit*; he, as God, is of a spiritual nature and essence; he is a spirit, as God is said to be, John iv. 24. he is the giver of the spirit of God, and the very life and spirit of the law, without whom as the end of it, 'tis a mere dead letter: or rather as by Moses in ver. 15. is meant, the law of Moses, so by the *Lord* here may be meant the Gospel of Christ: and this is *that spirit*, of which the apostles were made ministers, and is said to *give life*, ver. 6. *And where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty*; which may be understood of the third person in the Godhead; where he is as a spirit of illumination, there is freedom from former blindness and darkness; where he is as a spirit of regeneration and sanctification, there is freedom from the bondage of sin, and captivity of Satan; where he is as a comforter, there is freedom from the fear of hell, wrath, and damnation: where he is as a spirit of adoption, there is the freedom of children with a father; where he is as a spirit of prayer and supplication, there is liberty of access to God with boldness. Though rather the Gospel as attended with the spirit of God, in opposition to the law, is here designed; and which points out another difference between the law and the Gospel; where the law is, there is bondage, it genders to it; it has a natural tendency to it: quite contrary is this to what the Jews[i] say, who call the law, חירות, *liberty*: and say, "that he that "studies in the law, hath חירו מכלא, *freedom from* "*every* thing:" whereas it gives freedom in nothing, but leads into, and brings on persons a spirit of bondage; it exacts rigorous obedience, where there is no strength to perform; it holds men guilty, curses and condemns for non-obedience; so that such as are under it, and of the works of it, are always under a spirit of bondage; they obey not from love, but fear, as servants or slaves for wages, and derive all their peace and comfort from their obedience: but where the Gospel takes place under the influence of the spirit of God, there is liberty; not to sin, which is contrary to the Gospel, to the spirit of God in believers, and to the principle of grace wrought in their souls; but a liberty from the bondage and servitude of it: a liberty from the law's rigorous exaction, curse, and condemnation, and from the veil of former blindness and ignorance.

Ver. 18. *But we all with open face*, &c.] We are not like Moses, who had a veil on his face; nor like the Jews, who have one on their hearts: *but we all*; not ministers and preachers of the Gospel only, but all believers, whether Jews or Gentiles, greater or lesser believers, who are enlightened by the spirit of God, and are converted to Christ: *with open face*; which may regard the object beheld, the glory of Christ unveiled, that has no veil on it, as Moses had on his face, when he delivered the law; or the persons beholding, who are rid of Jewish darkness; the veil of the ceremonial law, and of natural darkness and blindness of mind; and so clearly and fully, comparatively speaking, *beholding as in a glass*; not of the law, but of the Gospel, and the ordinances of it; not with the eyes of their bodies, but with the eyes of their understandings, with the eye of faith; which sight is spiritual, delightful, and very endearing; throws a veil over all other objects, and makes souls long to be with Christ: the object beheld is *the glory of the Lord*; Jesus Christ: not the glory of his human nature, which lies in its union to the son of God, and in its names which it has by virtue of it; and in its being the curious workmanship of the spirit of God, and so is pure and holy, and free from all sin; and was outwardly beautiful and glorious, and is so at the right hand of God, where we see him by faith, crowned with glory and honour; and shall behold him with the eyes of our bodies, and which will be fashioned like to his glorious body; but this sight and change are not yet: rather the glory of his divine nature is meant, which is essential and underived, the same with his father's; is ineffable, and incomprehensible; it appears in the perfections he is possessed of, and in the worship given to him; it was manifested in the doctrines taught, and in the miracles wrought by him; there were some breakings forth of this glory in his state of humiliation, and were beheld by the apostles, and other believers, who saw his glory, as the glory of the only-begotten of the father. Though the glory of Christ as Mediator, being full of grace and truth, seems to be chiefly designed; this he has from God, and had it from everlasting; this he gives to his people, and is what makes him so glorious, lovely, and desirable in their eye: and whilst this delightful object is beheld by them, they are *changed into the same image*; there was a divine image in man, in his first creation; this image was defaced by sin, and a different one took place; now in regeneration another distinct from them both is instamped, and this is the image of Christ; he himself is formed in the soul, his grace is wrought there; so that 'tis no wonder there is a likeness between them; which lies in righteousness and holiness, and shews itself in acts of grace, and a discharge of duty. The gradual motion of the change into this image is expressed by this phrase, *from glory to glory*: not from the glory of the law to the glory of the Gospel; or from the glory of Moses to the glory of Christ; rather from the glory that is in Christ, to a glory derived in believers from him; or which seems most agreeable, from one degree of grace to another, grace here being signified by glory; or from glory begun here to glory perfect hereafter; when this image will be completed, both in soul and body; and the saints will be as perfectly like to Christ, as they are capable of, and see him as he is: now the efficient cause of all this, *is the spirit of the Lord*. 'Tis he that takes off the veil from the heart, that we may, with open face

[g] R. Abraham Seba in Tzeror Hammor, fol. 90. 2.
[h] Chobat Halebabot, par. 1. c. 2. apud L. Capell. in loc.

[i] Zohar in Gen. fol. 90. 1. & in Exod. fol. 72. 1. & in Numb. fol. 72. 3.

unveiled, behold all this glory; it is he that regenerates, instamps the image of Christ, and conforms the soul to his likeness; it is he that gradually carries on the work of grace upon the soul, increases faith, enlarges the views of the glory of Christ, and the spiritual light, knowledge, and experience of the saints, and will perfect all that which concerns them; will quicken their mortal bodies, and make them like to Christ; and will for ever rest as a spirit of glory on them, both in soul and body: some read these words, *by the Lord of the spirit*, and understand them of Christ, others read them, *by the Lord the spirit*, as they very well may be rendered; and so are a proof of the true and proper deity of the Holy Spirit, who is the one Jehovah with the Father and the Son. The ancient Jews owned this; "the spirit of the living God, (say* "they,) היינו הבורא, this is the Creator himself, from "him all spirits are produced; blessed be he, and "blessed be his name, because his name is he himself, "for his name is Jehovah."

CHAP. IV.

IN this chapter, the apostle declares the constancy, sincerity, and integrity of him, and his fellow-ministers, in preaching the Gospel; asserts the clearness and perspicuity of it; removes the charge of pride and arrogance from them; takes notice of the afflictions he and others endured, for the sake of the Gospel; what supports they had under them, and what comforts they enjoyed: in ver. 1. he observes, that seeing they were employed in such a ministry, as before described in the preceding chapter, though they met with troubles in it, they did not sink under them; the reason of which was, partly the excellency of the ministry, and partly the grace and mercy of God; and they were no less sincere than they were diligent; and were the reverse of the false teachers, who used dishonest methods, craftiness and deceit; these they disclaimed, and delivered out naked truth, with all simplicity and evidence, and as in the sight of God,in confirmation of which they could appeal to the consciences of all that heard them, ver. 2. and whereas the apostle had affirmed the plainness and clearness of the Gospel ministry, both in the preceding chapter, and in the foregoing verse, he foresaw that an objection would be raised against it, which he anticipates, ver. 3, 4. shewing, that though the Gospel was not spiritually discerned and savingly understood by some persons, yet this was not to be charged upon the Gospel, as if it was attended with darkness and obscurity; but it was owing to the unbelief of men, and the power of Satan over them, in blinding their minds; otherwise the Gospel in itself was light and glorious, in which Christ, the image of God, in a most resplendent manner appears; and those on whom Satan thus wrought were such as did not belong to God's elect, but were of the number of them that perish: moreover the integrity of the apostle and other ministers appeared in their preaching Christ, and not themselves; and in serving the churches in that way, for the sake of Christ; so that they were far from being chargeable with pride, vanity, and arrogance, ver. 5. and they readily acknowledged, that all the Gospel light they had was from that God, who spoke light out of darkness in the first creation, whereby they were qualified to communicate light to others, in the name of Christ, ver. 6. and though they had a treasure committed to their trust, and which they had within them, yet they freely owned they were but earthen vessels; and the reason why such treasure was put there was, that the power seen in the conversion of sinners by their ministry might appear to be not of themselves, but of the Lord, ver. 7. and then the apostle proceeds to give an account of the afflictions endured by them, and of the divine supports they had, by which they were preserved from being overwhelmed with them, ver. 8, 9. one end of which afflictions, and which are signified by bearing the dying of Jesus in their bodies, and by being exposed to death for his sake, was, that his life might be manifest in them, or his power in the upholding of them, ver. 10, 11. and herein lay the difference between them and the Corinthians; the one were in deaths oft, and in very great distresses, and the other in prosperous circumstances, ver. 12. but however, they had much consolation amidst their sorrows and troubles, and which they had partly through the spirit of faith, and in a way of believing; and who after the example of David, and having the same spirit as he had, believed and spake, ver. 13. and partly through the hope of the resurrection of the dead, to which they were encouraged by the resurrection of Christ, ver. 14. as also by considering what valuable ends were answered by their bearing afflictions for the sake of Christ, and preaching the Gospel, namely the good of the churches of Christ, and the glory of God, ver. 15. and besides, they had an experience of the daily renovation of the inward man, or of the carrying on of the work of grace upon their souls; and of an increase of grace, light, and joy in them; and this kept them from fainting, though their outward circumstances and outward man were but in a poor condition, ver. 16. but more especially what raised their spirits, and kept them from sinking under their afflictions, was the view they had of eternal glory and happiness, to which they had respect; and the comparison they were led to make between their present afflictions, and future glory, which their afflictions were working for them; as, that their afflictions were light, glory heavy; their afflictions were but for a moment, their weight of glory was for ever; their afflictions were seen and temporal, their glory unseen and eternal; or the things of this world, which they often needed, and yet did not regard, were visible and temporary things; but the things of another world they had their eye upon were invisible, only visible to faith, and would endure for ever.

* R. Moses Botril in Sepher Jetzirah, p. 40. Ed. Rittangel.

Ver. 1. *Therefore seeing we have this ministry,* &c.] The apostle having largely insisted on the difference between the law and the Gospel, the ministration of the one and of the other, proceeds to give an account of his own conduct, and that of his fellow apostles and ministers: *we,* says he, *faint not;* under all the reproaches cast upon us, persecutions raised against us, and tribulations that attend us; we don't sink in our spirits, or give out from the ministry; we go on cheerfully in our work, in the face of all opposition, encouraged by the consideration of the excellency of the ministry, which they had from the Lord, were put into, and continued in; which was so valuable in itself, and so useful in its effects; being the ministration of the spirit and of righteousness, having in it such an excelling glory to the law, and attended with so much light and liberty: to which he adds the consideration of the mercy of God they were partakers of, *as we have received mercy;* which may refer either to the grace and mercy of God, which they had received in conversion; a sense of which abiding upon them, so influenced their minds, to hold forth the riches of abounding grace and mercy to poor sinners in the Gospel, that nothing could deter them from it; or to the grace, favour, and good will of God, in making, supporting, and continuing them as ministers of the word; all which, they were sensible, was owing not to men, but God; not to their merit, but to his mercy; not to their worthiness, parts, learning, *&c.* but to his free gift, favour, and grace, by which only they were what they were, as preachers of the Gospel.

Ver. 2. *But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty,* &c.] Or *shame;* this is a further account of the conduct of the first ministers of the Gospel, and very worthy of our imitation, and in which the apostle strikes at the different manner of behaviour in the false apostles: this may respect both doctrine and practice; they abhorred and rejected every thing that was scandalous and reproachful to the Gospel of Christ; in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, they had their conversation in the world; they were open and above board, both in principle and practice; the same men in public, as in private; they used no art to cover their doctrines, or hide their conversations; every thing of this kind was detestable to them; whereas the false teachers took a great deal of pains to colour over both their sentiments and their lives; and *a shame it was to speak of the things that were done of them in secret,* Eph. v. 12. Moreover, they were *not walking in craftiness:* they used no sly and artful methods to please men, to gain applause from them, or make merchandise of them; they did not lie in wait to deceive, watching an opportunity to work upon credulous and incautious minds; they did not, by good words and fair speeches, deceive the hearts of the simple; nor put on different forms, or make different appearances, in order to suit themselves to the different tempers and tastes of men, as did the false apostles: *not handling the word of God deceitfully.* They did not corrupt it with human doctrines, or mix and blend it with philosophy, and vain deceit; they did not wrest the Scriptures to serve any carnal or worldly purpose; nor did they accommodate them to the lusts and passions of men; or conceal any part of truth, or keep back any thing which might be profitable to the churches: *but by the manifestation of the truth, commending themselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God;* that is, they with all plainness and evidence clearly preached the truth as it is in Jesus, presenting it to, and pressing it upon the consciences of men; where they left it, and to which they could appeal; and all this they did, in the sight and presence of the omniscient God, to whom they knew they must give an account of themselves and their ministry.

Ver. 3. *But if our Gospel be hid,* &c.] When the Gospel is called *ours,* the meaning is, not that ministers are the authors or subject of it; but it is so styled, because they are intrusted with it; it is preached by them; and is in opposition to another Gospel, the Gospel of the false apostles. Here an objection is obviated, which the apostle saw would be made against the clearness and perspicuity of the Gospel, asserted by him in the foregoing chapter; taken from some persons, who though they sat under the ministry of the word, were not enlightened by it, saw no glory nor excellency in it, nor were their minds in the least affected with it: to which he replies, saying, *if our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost.* But why should the apostle put an *if* upon its being hid? is it not hid? is it not *the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom?* To which may be answered, that it was hid in God from the beginning of the world; and in Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; and in the ceremonial law, which contained types and shadows of many things in it; and was hid from whole nations, and for whole ages formerly: but now God has made known the mystery of his will; Christ is manifest in the flesh; the ceremonial law is done away, and the Gospel is preached to Jews and Gentiles; so that it is hid to none, as to the outward ministration of it: and if the internal, spiritual, and saving knowledge and experience of it is hid from any, eventually and finally, it is *to them that are lost:* all mankind are in a lost and perishing condition through sin; though some will not be lost eternally, whom God has chosen, Christ has redeemed, and who by the Spirit are brought savingly to believe in Christ; but there are others, that will be lost for ever; and to these the Gospel is hid; and they are such, who are left to the native blindness of their minds, and are given up to a reprobate mind, to judicial darkness, and are suffered to be under the influence of the prince of darkness, as in the following verse; now such instances are no more an objection to the clearness and perspicuity of the Gospel, and the ministration of it, than men born blind, who never could, nor never will see light, are to the bright and clear shining of the sun at noon-day.

Ver. 4. *In whom the god of this world hath blinded,* &c.] The description of the persons to whom the Gospel is hid, is here further carried on; in which the character of Satan is given, who is here styled *the god of this world;* just as he is by Christ, *the prince of this world,* John xii. 31. and xiv. 30. not because he had any hand in the making of it, or has any concern in the government of it, or in the disposal of men or things

in it; but because of his influence over the worst, and greatest part of the world; which lies in wickedness, under the power of this wicked one, being led captive by him at his will; who have voluntarily given themselves up to him, and whose lusts they will do; and so declare themselves to be his children, and him their father, yea, their god: the influence he has over them is, he *hath blinded the minds of them that believe not.* The apostle here seems to refer to one of the devils, which the Jews[l] frequently speak of סמאל, *Samael;* who they say is the head of all the devils; a very malignant spirit, and who deceived our first parents; the word is compounded of אל, *god,* and סמא, *to blind:* him they call the angel of death, and say[m], that he hath אחשיך פני עלמא, *brought darkness upon the face of the world,* or the creatures, the Gentiles: agreeably to which the apostle calls the devil, *the god that hath blinded:* what he blinds in men, is *their mind:* the more excellent and knowing part of man; not the eyes of their bodies, but of their understandings; which shews the near access Satan has to the souls of men; he penetrates into their very hearts and minds, and has an influence there: the persons whose minds he blinds, are those *who believe not;* which distinguishes them from others that perish, who never enjoyed the Gospel, and therefore he says, *in,* or *among whom;* and from true believers, on whom Satan can have no such influence; and is a reason of these men's perishing, and of Satan's influence over them; and must be understood of reprobates, and final unbelievers: the influence he has over them is expressed by *blinding* them; which he does, by diverting them from hearing the Gospel, and by stirring up the enmity of their minds against it, and by increasing their natural darkness and blindness with respect to it. The end which Satan has in doing this is, *lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them:* here many things are hinted, in commendation of the Gospel, as that it is *the Gospel of Christ;* because he was not only the greatest and best preacher of it that ever was, but also is the author and subject of it; Christ is the sum and substance of the Gospel, the principal thing in it, or person that is spoken of therein; and then Christ who is the grand subject of the Gospel is described, in order to recommend it the more, as *the image of God.* The Jews[n] call the Messiah, צלם אל, *the image of God:* some copies, and the Complutensian edition, and the Arabic version, read, *the image of the invisible God,* as in Col. i. 15. So Christ is as the son of God, being the natural, substantial, essential, eternal, increated, and perfect image of his father; and so he is as man and Mediator: further, the Gospel is said to be the *glorious* Gospel of Chrirt, as it must needs be, since it so clearly and illustriously sets forth the glory of Christ; contains such glorious doctrines and promises in it, and is attended with such glorious effects, where it comes with power: add to all this, that *light* is attributed to it; the Jews[o] speak of the *light of the law,* and the law is called light; and say, that אין אור אלא תורה, *there is no light but the law;* but this may be more truly said of the Gospel, by which not only persons may be notionally enlightened, who never were made really partakers of the grace of God, but is the means of spiritual and saving illumination to thousands, when it is attended with the demonstration of the spirit: now all these excellent characters of the Gospel serve to enhance the spite and malice of Satan, in endeavouring all he can to hinder the bright shining of this glorious Gospel, to and upon any of the sons of men; and his reason for so doing is, because he knows, that should the Gospel shine unto them, the interest and glory of Christ would be advanced, and his own would decline.

Ver. 5. *For we preach not ourselves,* &c.] These words contain a reason why the apostles behaved themselves in the manner described, ver. 2. and serve to explain in what sense this inspired writer is to be understood, when he calls the Gospel *our Gospel,* ver. 3. and most clearly proves the Gospel to be a *a glorious* one, which he had asserted, ver. 4. since Christ, and not themselves, is the subject of it, *for we preach not ourselves.* They did not preach any doctrine of their own devising; they did not set up themselves as lords over the faith and consciences of men; nor was their view in preaching to set forth their learning, parts, and eloquence, or to amass wealth and riches to themselves; nor did they assert the purity of human nature, or the power of man to do any thing of himself that is spiritually good; or that justification and salvation are by works of righteousness done by men. To do any, or each, or all of these, as did the false apostles, is to preach a man's self: but so did not these faithful dispensers of the word, but they *preached Christ Jesus the Lord;* that is, the doctrines respecting the person, office, and grace of Christ; as that he is truly and properly God, the eternal and only-begotten son of God, God and man in one person, the only Mediator between God and man, and the Saviour and Redeemer of lost sinners; that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ, the true Messiah; and that this Christ is Jesus, a Saviour, the only able and willing one; and that this Jesus Christ is *Lord* of all, especially of the saints; not only as Creator, but as their head, husband, and Redeemer; that peace and reconciliation, pardon and righteousness, life and salvation, are only by him: and they also declared themselves the servants of the churches, *and ourselves your servants.* The apostle does not say they were the servants of Christ, though they were, and esteemed it their greatest honour to be so; for he had no need to observe this, since this is included in their preaching him as *Lord;* nor does he say they were the servants of men, or men-pleasers, for then they would not be the servants of Christ; but he asserts them to be the servants of the churches: and which must be understood, not with respect to things temporal, with which they had no concern; but with regard to things spiritual, particularly to the ministration of the word, and administration of ordinances: and this they professed to be, *for Jesus' sake;* either for the sake of preaching Christ

[l] Targum Jon. ben Uzziel in Gen. iii. 6. Zohar in Gen. fol. 27. 2. Vajikra Rabba, fol. 162. 3. Debarim Rabba, fol. 245. 3. Tzeror Hammor in Gen. fol. 6. 2. & 7. 2. Vid. Irenæum. adv. Hæres. l. 1. p. 126.
[m] Zohar in Gen. fol. 31. 1. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 93. 3.
[n] Zohar in Gen. fol. 31. 1.
[o] Targum in Job iii. 16. T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 7. 2. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 82. 4.

unto them; or because they were chosen and called by him to this service, and in which they were willing to continue, for the sake of his honour and interest.

Ver. 6. *For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness*, &c.] The causal particle *for*, shews these words to be also a reason of the foregoing; either why they so clearly beheld the glory of the Lord, ch. iii. 18. or why they renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, ch. iv. 2. or why their Gospel could not be hid, ver. 3. or why they did not preach themselves, but Christ, ver. 5. because *God* had *shined in* their *hearts*; and in this light, they saw the glory of Christ; could not bear any secret, hidden, scandalous practices; and held forth the word of light and life to others; and seeing so much of their own weakness, sinfulness, and unworthiness, dared not to preach themselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; in which may be observed the character of the true God, as opposed to Satan, the god of this world, who is said to *blind the minds* of men, ver. 6. whereas the true God is represented as the author of *light*, and as producing it by a word of *command*, and that *out* of mere *darkness*; respect is here had to the creation of all things at the beginning, when *darkness was upon the face of the deep—and God said, let there be light and there was light*, Gen. i. 2, 3. Now this character of God, as creating light in this wonderful manner, is prefaced to his giving spiritual light unto his people; because of the agreement there is between light corporeal and spiritual, in their nature and production; for as there was darkness upon the earth before there was light, so there is a natural darkness in the minds of men, before any spiritual light is infused into them; and as light was the first production out of the dark and unformed chaos, so light is the first thing that is struck into the soul in conversion; moreover, as light was the effect of almighty power, so is the spiritual illumination, or the opening of the eyes of the understandings of men, who are naturally born blind; and as light was a creation of that which was not before, so the work of grace on the soul is not an increase of, or an addition to, or an improvement of the light of nature, but it is a new light, created in the understanding; add to all this, that both corporeal and spiritual light are good, and both called *day*; the influence that God has over the hearts of men, and the effect he produces there are, he *hath shined in our hearts*. The hearts of men are like this dark terraqueous globe, having no light in them; God is as the sun, the fountain of light, which shines upon them and in them; so as to give them a true sight and sense of sin, and of their lost state and condition; so as to cause them to see the fulness and suitableness of Christ as a Saviour; so as to warm their affections, and draw out their desires after Christ, his ways, truths, ordinances, and people; and so as to give them light into the mysteries of the Gospel; particularly he so shines into the hearts of some, whom he makes ministers of the Gospel, as to give more light and knowledge into Gospel truths, than he does to others; and his end in doing this, is *to give*: that is, that his ministering servants may *give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ*; men must be first made light in, and by the Lord, or they'll never be fit and proper persons to hold forth the word of light, or to communicate light to others; God first shines into their hearts, and then they give light to others: by *the glory of God* is not meant the essential glory of God, or the perfections of his nature, though these are to be seen in the face, or person of Christ; but rather the glorious counsels of God, and scheme of salvation by Jesus Christ; or in other words, the glorious Gospel of God: and by *the knowledge* of it is designed, not a mere notional speculative knowledge of the Gospel, but an experimental one; a spiritual knowledge of the Gospel, of Christ in it, of God in Christ, and of an interest in God's salvation by Christ: now when the ministers of the word are said to *give the light* of this to men, or to enlighten them with this knowledge, it can't be thought that they are the efficient causes, for such are only Jehovah, Father, Son, and Spirit; but only that they are instrumental, and are means in the hands of God, of bringing persons to see the fellowship of this mystery: all which is done, *in the face of Jesus Christ*; this denotes the clearness and perspicuity of their ministry, and of that knowledge which is communicated by it; see ch. iii. 12. and also the authority by which they act; 'tis in the name and person of Christ, in which sense the phrase is used, ch. ii. 10.

Ver. 7. *But we have this treasure in earthen vessels*, &c.] This is a further commendation of the Gospel; and by which the apostle removes an objection against it, taken from the cross and persecutions that attend it, and the outward meanness of the ministers of it. The Gospel is called a *treasure*, for not grace, nor Christ, but the Gospel is here meant; which is so styled, because it contains rich truths, and an abundance of them; comparable to gold, silver, and precious stones, for the price of them, their antiquity, distance of place from whence they come, and their duration; because it has in it rich blessings, spiritual ones, the blessings of the new covenant, solid, substantial, and irreversible ones, and a fulness of them; and because it consists of exceeding great and precious promises, of more worth than thousands of gold and silver; free, absolute, and unconditional ones, which are yea and amen in Christ, and relate both to this, and the other world; and also because it exhibits and shews forth to us the riches of God and of Christ, of grace and of glory; which are unsearchable, substantial, satisfying, and durable: the repository, or cabinet, *in* which this treasure is, are *earthen vessels*; by which are meant, ministers of the word, who are so in themselves, in their own esteem, and in the esteem of others; probably the apostle might have in view Lam. iii. 2. The doctors and scholars among the Jews are compared hereunto; "says R. Eleazar [p], to "what is a disciple of a wise man like, in the esteem "of a man of the world? at first he is like to a golden "cup; when he has conversed with him, he is like to "a silver cup; and when he has received any profit by "him, he is like לקיתון של חרש, *to an earthen cup*,

[p] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 52. 2.

"which, when broken, can't be repaired again:" "the "law (say they) is not confirmed but by him, who "makes himself בכלי חרס, *as an earthen vessel* [q]:" "R. Joshua [r] was a great man in the king's palace, and "he was deformed; wherefore Cæsar's daughter said, "wisdom is beautiful בכלי מכוער, *in an ugly vessel*: "and he brought her a simile in proof of it from wine, "which is not kept in a silver vessel." The allusion is either to the earth itself, in which treasure lies, or is hid, and out of which it is dug; or to pots and vessels made of earth, into which treasure has been used to be put; or to earthen pitchers, in which lights or lamps were formerly carried; see Judg. vii. 16. where Gideon's three hundred men, are said to have empty pitchers, and lamps within the pitchers; they carried lamps with them to give them light, it being night when they went into the camp of Midian; and those they put into pitchers, that the Midianites might not perceive them afar off, as a Jewish commentator well observes [s]; in like manner the Gospel put into earthen vessels is a glorious light to some, whilst it is hidden to others: yea, even lamps themselves were no other than earthen vessels, in which light was put; for so says Maimonides [t], a lamp, a burning light, is כלי חרש, *an earthen vessel*, like a reed; and on the top of it is a little ear, which joins to it; and when it is made, a piece of old cloth is put upon the burning oil, and it continues in it; also an earthen vessel is made, in which there is a hollow place for to set the light in, and in it is gathered all that flows from the oil out of the light; and it is strengthened about the head of the candlestick, that the brass might not be hurt by the oil; and this vessel is called the house in which the light subsides, or the receptacle of the light; and which receptacle, another of the Misnic commentators says [u], is an earthen vessel, made to put the light in; and the lamp, he also says, is like an earthen platter, sharp-pointed below, &c. and this allusion well agrees with the context, in which the Gospel is represented as a glorious light, shining in darkness, ver. 4, 6. The Greek word οστρακινοις, the apostle uses, signifies also *shells of fishes*; and in like manner does Philo the Jew [w] compare the human body: "I am (says he) very little "concerned for this mortal body which is about me, "and cleaves to me οστρεου δικην, *like the shell of a fish*; "though it is hurt by every one." And the reference may be to pearls, which are said to have been found in such shells, particularly in oysters; and is designed to express, either the frail mortal bodies of the ministers of the Gospel, comparable to brittle shells; or baked earth; or rather the outward mean despicable condition of the apostles, and preachers of the word; being men of no figure in the world, for birth, learning, or outward grandeur; and being attended with sinful infirmities also, as other men; and more especially as they were labouring under reproaches, afflictions, and persecutions, for the sake of the Gospel; see Jer. xxxii. 14. The reason why it pleased God to put such a rich and valuable treasure into the hands of persons so mean and contemptible was, *that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us*: that is, that it might appear that the making of such persons ministers of the word was not of themselves, was not owing to their natural abilities, or to any diligence and industry, and acquirements of their own, or to any instructions they had received from others, but to the grace of God, and the effectual working of his power; and that the success which attended their ministrations in the conversion of sinners, and building up of saints, could only be ascribed to the exceeding greatness of divine power; and that the supporting of them in their work, under all the persecutions raised against them, and opposition made unto them, could be attributed to nothing else; of which power, instances are given in the following verses.

Ver. 8. *We are troubled on every side*, &c.] Or afflicted; εν παντι, either *in every place*, wherever we are, into whatsoever country, city, or town we enter, we are sure to meet with trouble, of one sort or another: for wherever we be, we are in the world, in which we must expect tribulation: or *always*, every day and hour we live, as in ver. 10, 11. we are never free from one trial or another: or *by every one*; by all sorts of persons, good and bad, professors and profane, open persecutors and false brethren; yea, some of the dear children of God, weak believers, give us trouble: or *with every sort* of trouble, inward and outward; trouble from the world, the flesh and the devil: *yet not distressed*; so as to have no hope, or see no way of escape; so as to have no manner of comfort, or manifestations of the love of God; or so as to be straitened in our own souls; for notwithstanding all our troubles, we have freedom at the throne of grace, and in our ministry; we can go with liberty to God, and preach the Gospel boldly to you: *we are perplexed*; and sometimes know not what to do, which way to take, what course to steer, or how we shall be relieved and supplied; we are sometimes at the utmost loss about things temporal, how we shall be provided for with food and raiment; nor are we without our perplexing thoughts, doubts, and fears, about spiritual affairs: *but not in despair*; of the Lord's appearing and working salvation, both in a temporal and spiritual sense.

Ver. 9. *Persecuted, but not forsaken*, &c.] Pursued from place to place, and followed with menaces, curses, and reproaches; laid hold on, proscribed, imprisoned, and threatened with the severest tortures, and death itself; but our God never leaves us nor forsakes us; though we are followed close by evil men, and left by our friends, we are not forsaken of God: *cast down* we sometimes are, as an *earthen vessel*; ver. 7, which may be cast out of a man's hands, in order to be dashed to pieces; or as a man in wrestling, see Eph. vi. 12. may be thrown to the ground by his antagonist, so we are sometimes foiled by sin, Satan, and the world: *but not destroyed*: we are still safe in the hands of Christ, and are kept by the power of

[q] Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 4. 2.
[r] Juchasin, fol. 55. 2.
[s] Laniado in Judg. vii. 16.
[t] In Misn. Celim, c. 2. sect. 8.
[u] Bartenora in ib.
[w] De Joseph. p. 536.

God; and, indeed, to what else can all this be ascribed? 'tis surprising that earthen vessels should bear and suffer so much, and not fall, or be dashed to pieces.

Ver. 10, 11. *Always bearing about in the body*, &c.] The Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, read, *in our body*; and the Syriac version, in this and the next clause, reads, *in our bodies*, and some copies in this read, *bodies*: continually carrying about with us, in these mortal bodies of ours, wherever we go, *the dying of the Lord Jesus*: by which is meant, not the doctrine of the sufferings and death of Christ, and of salvation by a crucified Saviour, which they bore and carried about with them in a ministerial way, wherever they came and preached, but the sufferings they themselves underwent: so called, because of the likeness there is between the sufferings of Christ, and theirs; as he was traduced as a wicked man, a deceiver, and a stirrer up of sedition, so were they; as he was persecuted, so were they; as he was liable to death, and at last was delivered up to it, so were they: and also because of the union and sympathy which were between them; Christ and they were one body and one spirit; so that what was endured by the members, the head had a fellow-feeling of, and sympathy with; and reckoned what was done to them, as done to himself: and besides, the sufferings they underwent, and death they were exposed unto, were for his sake, as it is explained in the next verse: *for we which live*: who are still in the land of the living, though it is almost a miracle we are, considering the circumstances we are in: *are always delivered*: that is, continually exposed *to death for Jesus' sake*: and the end of all these sufferings, which is expressed alike in both verses is, *that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body*, or *mortal flesh*: the meaning of which is, that it might appear that Jesus, though he died, is risen again from the dead, and lives at the father's right hand, and ever lives to make intercession for us; of which there is a full proof, inasmuch as we are supported by him under all the trials and sufferings we endure for his sake; for because he lives, we live also, amidst so many dangers and deaths, which attend us.

Ver. 12. *So then death worketh in us*, &c.] This is the conclusion of the foregoing account, or the inference deduced from it; either the death, or dying of Christ, that is, the sufferings of his body, the church, for his sake, *ενεργειται, is wrought in us*: fulfilled and perfected in us; see Col. i. 24. or rather a corporeal death has seized upon us; the seeds of death are in us; our flesh, our bodies are mortal, dying off apace; death has already attacked us, is working on our constitutions gradually, and unpinning our tabernacles, which in a short time will be wholly took down and laid in the dust: *but life in you*. Some understand these words as spoken ironically, like those in 1 Cor. iv. 8, 9. but the apostle seems not to be speaking in such a strain, but in the most serious manner, and about things solemn and awful; and his meaning is, ours is the sorrow, the trouble, the affliction, and death itself, yours is the gain, the joy, the pleasure, and life; what we get by preaching the Gospel are reproach, persecution, and death; but this Gospel we preach at such expense is the savour of life unto life to you, and is the means of maintaining spiritual life in your souls, and of nourishing you up unto eternal life; and which is no small encouragement to us to go on in our work with boldness and cheerfulness: or these words regard the different state and condition of the apostle, and other ministers, and of the Corinthians; the one were in adversity, and the other in prosperity.

Ver. 13. *We having the same spirit of faith*, &c.] By *faith* here is meant, not the doctrine, but the grace of faith; a believing in the doctrines of the Gospel, and in the person of Christ; an exercise of that grace upon the death and resurrection of Christ; and particularly a looking by faith in full expectation of the saints' resurrection from the dead, and eternal glory, together with a reliance on the power, faithfulness, and promises of God to support under the afflictions of this life. Now of this faith the spirit of God is the author; this is not of ourselves, of our own power, 'tis the free gift of God, and a valuable gift it is; it is of the operation of God, and the produce of his almighty power; and of this the spirit of God, in conversion, is the powerful operator: hence he is here called *the Spirit of faith*. So the *third* number in the Cabalistic tree of the Jews, the intelligence sanctifying, which answers to the third person in our doctrine of the Trinity, is called *, "אמונה אומן, "and אב האמונה, *the artificer of faith*, and *the author* or "*parent of faith*, because from its power faith flows." Which is the *same* in all saints; the spirit is the same in one as in another, and so is the faith which he is the author of; see 2 Pet. i. 1. Faith is the same in all the saints that have been from the beginning of the world, under the Old and New Testament dispensations; it was the same in all the churches in the apostle's time, in Rome as at Ephesus, in Ephesus as at Rome, and in Thessalonica as at Rome and Ephesus, and so in all the other churches; though it may be, the apostle may chiefly design the sameness of faith, and of the spirit, in him and his fellow-ministers, and in these Corinthians, though death was working in the one, and life in the other; which appeared in their free and bold ministration of the word, notwithstanding all they met with on account of it, in imitation and encouraged by the example of David, *according as it is written*, Psal. cxvi. 10. *I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak*: where there is true faith, and the true spirit of faith, there will be a speaking of, for, and in the name of Christ, as there ought to be: for as *with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, so with the mouth confession is made unto salvation*. This is true of believers in common, sooner or later, at one time or another; but more especially of the ministers of the word, who have a firm and well-grounded belief in the doctrines of the Gospel, and person of Christ; and therefore speak freely, and without any doubt and hesitation about these things, boldly, and without the fear of men, and sincerely and faithfully, as in the sight of God: hence they make Christ the main subject of their ministry, because they believe in him, and nothing can stop their mouths from speaking of him; faith, and a spirit of faith, fit for public work and service, and give freedom and boldness in the ministration of

* Sepher Jetzirah, Semit 3. p. 6

the Gospel, and are a great support under persecution for the sake of it.

Ver. 14. *Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus*, &c.] Besides having the same spirit of faith, mentioned in the preceding verse as a support under tribulation, the apostle proceeds in this, and some following verses, to take notice of other things which gave them relief under their pressures; such as the resurrection from the dead, all their afflictions being for the good of the churches and glory of God, the inward and comfortable experiences of the love and grace of God in the midst of them, and the end and issue of them, eternal glory. The former of these is observed here; *knowing*, being firmly persuaded, and fully assured, that *he which raised up the Lord Jesus*; by whom God the Father is more especially designed, though not to the exclusion of the Son and Spirit, who were jointly concerned in raising the dead body of our Lord: *shall raise us up also by Jesus*; which may regard the resurrection of all the saints by Christ, not as a mere instrument, but as a co-efficient cause with the Father and Spirit: this the apostle concludes from the power of God in raising up Christ from the dead; he that is able to do the one, is certainly of power to effect the other; and also from that union there is between Christ and his people; he is the head, they are his members; and because the head is raised, the members shall be likewise. Christ's resurrection is not only the pattern, but the pledge of the resurrection of the saints. Now this doctrine, as it was fully known, and firmly believed by the apostles, was of great use to bear them up under their outward troubles; for though they were so afflicted and persecuted, death was visibly working in them, and they might expect in a short time to be laid in the grave; yet this was their consolation, that they should be raised again immortal and glorious by Christ; some copies read, *with Jesus*, and so the Vulgate Latin version: *he shall present us with you*: that is, he will present us ministers, together with you the saints, and the rest of the elect of God; first, לותיה, *to himself*, as the Syriac version adds, and then to his father, in their full number, completely righteous and holy. These words indeed may be understood of a deliverance from temporal affliction, from that death they were labouring under, and exposed unto, and the sense be this; we firmly believe that he that raised up Christ from the dead, will deliver us from the present death of affliction, which will be a sort of resurrection from the dead, and will make us to stand by you, or in your presence; or, in other words, being thus delivered, we shall have an opportunity of visiting you, we have so long desired, and you have expected, which will be to your edification and comfort.

Ver. 15. *For all things are for your sakes*, &c.] This is a very large and comprehensive expression, and reaches to all the things of Christ, as well as of his ministers. The incarnation, obedience, death, and resurrection of Christ, are all for the sake of God's elect; and so the ministry of his apostles and servants, their gifts, graces, comforts, and experiences; and so likewise all their reproaches, afflictions, and persecutions; see ch. i. 6. These were endured for their sakes, and tended to their establishment in the faith; were for the furtherance of the Gospel, and of the faith and joy of saints; and this gave no small pleasure and relief to them under their sufferings, that they were of such use to others. Moreover, all their deliverances, when in any imminent danger, were for the sake of the churches: *that the abundant grace*; held forth in their ministrations, manifestly to be seen in supporting them under their troubles, and delivering them out of them: *might through the thanksgiving of many*; for such appearances of divine goodness, see ch. i. 11. *redound to the glory of God*; which is another thing that yielded them a pleasing satisfaction, in all their distresses for the sake of Christ, and his Gospel.

Ver. 16. *For which cause we faint not*, &c.] Since our afflictions are overruled for the good of others, and the glory of God, we are not discouraged by them; our spirits don't sink under the weight of them; we don't give out from the work of the ministry because of them, but go on cheerfully therein: and the more so, since *though our outward man perish*; our outward circumstances of life are very mean and despicable; we are oftentimes in a very distressed condition through hunger, thirst, nakedness, and want of the common necessaries of life; our bodies are almost worn out with fatigue, labour, and sorrow; our earthly tabernacles are tottering, and just ready to fall in pieces: *yet the inward man is renewed day by day*: that is, continually; it answers to יום יום, an Hebraism; see Esth. ii. 11. and iii. 4. the internal hidden man of the heart, the new man is in a prosperous condition; our souls are in good health; the work of God is comfortably carried on in us; we have sweet and repeated experiences of the love of God; we are growing in grace, and in the knowledge of Christ; and, like the palm-tree, the more weight is hung upon it, the more it thrives; and, like the children of Israel in Egypt, the more they were afflicted the more they grew.

Ver. 17. *For our light affliction*, &c.] The difference between the present and future state of the saints is here expressed, the disparity between them shewn, and the influence the one has upon the other. The present state is a state of *affliction*. Affliction is the common lot of the children of men, but more especially of the children of God, and is here designed by *our* affliction; for these, besides their soul-trouble, meet with such in the world, and from the men of it, others do not. Afflictions are appointed for them by their heavenly Father; provision is made for them, and support under them, in the covenant of grace; they are Christ's legacy to them, and by which they are conformed to him; they are always for their good, spiritual and eternal; and lie in their way to heaven, through which they must pass into the kingdom: now these their outward afflictions which are here meant, lie chiefly in the meanness of their outward circumstances; in poverty and distress, in disgrace, reproaches, and persecutions for their profession of Christ, and his truths: and in opposition to this their mean and despicable condition in the eyes of the world, their future state is signified by *glory*, as it often is in the word of God; and is of such a nature, that all the glories of this world, such as kingdoms, crowns, inheritances, possessions, riches, honour, and substance of every kind and degree, by all which the heavenly state is expressed, are but faint resemblances of it: it is the same glory Christ has entered

into, is possessed of for, and will give to all his people; 'twill chiefly lie in communion with Father, Son, and Spirit, with angels, and one another; there will be a visible glory upon the bodies of the saints, which will be fashioned like to the glorious body of Christ; and their souls will be blessed with perfect knowledge and holiness. Their affliction is represented as *light*: which though it is not in itself, but often very grievous and heavy to be borne, especially when any soul-trouble is added to it; yet is light, when the saint is supported by the arm of the Lord, indulged with his presence, and favoured with the discoveries of his love. The afflictions of God's people are light, when compared with their deserts, with the sufferings of Christ, the torments of the damned in hell, and the joys of heaven, which are here, by way of opposition thereunto, styled a *weight of glory*. The apostle has respect to the Hebrew word כבוד, which signifies both *weight* and *glory*, and is often used for riches, honour, and whatsoever is excellent, solid, and substantial: and here the phrase designs the weighty riches of glory, that massy crown of glory which fadeth not away, that bulky and more enduring substance, which Christ will cause them that love him to inherit. Again, the afflictions of the children of God are said to be *for a moment*; they are but for a while, and that a little while; at most they are but for the present time of life, and that is but as a vapour which appears for a little while, and then vanishes away; it is but as a moment, a point of time, in comparison of eternity: but the glory the saints are chosen and called unto, that weight of it which shall be put upon them is *eternal*; it will last for ever; it will know no end: hence 'tis called an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, an everlasting kingdom, everlasting habitations, an incorruptible inheritance, and a crown of glory that fadeth not away. Now the present affliction of the people of God has a considerable influence upon this; it is said here, that it *worketh for us* this glory. The Jews [y] introduce God speaking words much like these. "Saith the holy "blessed God, I have sent them chastisements in this "world, לחזק זרועתם לעולם הבא, *to strengthen their "arms for*, or *that their arms may lay hold upon the world "to come*." Now afflictions may be said to work eternal glory for the saints, not by way of merit, for they are not worthy to be compared with the glory to be revealed; there's no proportion between them; besides, the heavenly kingdom and glory was prepared from the foundation of the world, and is a free-grace gift of their heavenly Father; but they work as means of enjoying it, as the word and ordinances do; the spirit of God makes use of them, as of the other, to work up the saints for that self-same thing, glory: these are means of trying, exercising, and improving their graces, of weaning their hearts from this world, and drawing out their desires, hope, and expectation of another; they are the way in which believers walk to glory, and which at last issue and terminate in it; glory follows upon them, though it is not for them.

Ver. 18. *While we look not at the things which are seen*, &c.] These are the things of this world, such as riches, honours, pleasures, profits, *&c.* which are visible to, and strike the senses of a natural man, and are *temporal*, endure but for a time, are transitory, fleeting, and quickly gone. To *look* at these things is to desire them, set the affections on them, and to make the enjoyment of them a man's chief scope and aim; and when this is the case, afflictions can't be said to work for such, or to work them for an eternal weight of glory; but when believers have their eyes and hearts taken off of these things, they either look not at them, or with contempt upon them; *while*, and when they are in such frames of soul, afflictions are operating for their future good. Or by these things that are seen may be meant afflictions themselves, the cross, with all that belongs to it; which also are discernible by the outward senses, and are but for a time. Now a believer is not to stand looking and poring upon his afflictions; for while he does so, they work impatience, murmurings, repinings, unbelief, *&c.* but when and *while* he looks off of these to Christ, and to what he has done and suffered, and to the glories of another world, and to the recompense of reward, he not only finds himself supported under his present afflictions, which he does not so overlook as to despise; but he also finds his heart seeking after, and his affections set upon, and his faith, hope, and expectation raised in the views of things above, where Christ is: and so he is kept looking *at the things which are not seen*; by the corporeal eye, nor by the eye of carnal sense and reason; only by the eye of faith, which is *the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen*: and these things, the joys and glories of heaven, *are eternal*; will last for ever, will never end; all which is great encouragement to faith and patience under the present afflictive dispensations of Providence.

CHAP. V.

THE apostle, in this chapter, enlarges upon the saints' comfortable assurance, expectation, and desire of the heavenly glory; discourses of the diligence and industry of himself, and other Gospel ministers in preaching the word, with the reasons that induced them to it; and closes it with a commendation of the Gospel ministry from the important subject, sum, and substance of it. Having mentioned in the latter part of the preceding chapter, the eternal weight of glory, the afflictions of the saints are working for, and the invisible realities of that state they are looking to, here expresses the assurance that he and others had of their interest therein; and which he signifies by an edifice, and illustrates it by its opposition to the body, which he compares to an house and tabernacle; the one is man's, the other of God, and not made with hands; the

[y] R. Moses Kotsensis Mitzvot Torah, precept. affirm. 17.

one is earthly, the other in heaven; the one is to be, and will be dissolved, the other is eternal, ver. 1. and therefore it is no wonder that it should be so earnestly desired, as it is said to be in ver. 2. where the desire of it is signified by groaning, which supposes something distressing, and which makes uneasy; and by an earnest longing after deliverance and happiness, and which is explained by a desire to be clothed upon with the house from heaven; where the heavenly glory is not only, as before, compared to an house, but also to a garment, which all those that are clothed with the righteousness of Christ may justly expect to be arrayed with; for these will not be found naked nor remain so, ver. 3. which earnest desire after immortality and glory is more fully explained, ver. 4. in which not only the body, in its present state, is again compared to a tabernacle, and the saints represented as being distressed, and so groaning whilst in it; but the cause of this groaning is suggested, which is a burden they labour under, both of sin and affliction; and yet such is the natural inclination of man to remain in the body, and his unwillingness to part from it, that he does not desire to be stripped of that, but to have the robe of immortality put upon it, that so the present mortality that attends it might be wholly swallowed up in it: and that the saints had reason to believe there was such an happiness to be enjoyed, and that they had such an interest in it is clear; because as God had prepared that for them, he had also wrought and prepared them for that; and besides, had given them his spirit as the earnest and pledge of it, ver. 5. wherefore, as they were confidently assured of it, and considering that they were but sojourners and strangers whilst in the body, and in the present state of things, and not at home in their father's house, and absent from Christ, ver. 6. as is evident from their walking by faith in the comfortable assurance, lively hope, and earnest expectation of things future and unseen, and not in the beatific vision of them, ver. 7. Hence they were very desirous, and chose rather to quit their present dwelling, the tabernacle of the body, that they might be at home, and enjoy the presence of the Lord, ver. 8. And this confidence and hope of eternal things wrought in the apostle, and other faithful ministers of the word, great carefulness and diligence to serve the Lord acceptably, and discharge with faithfulness the trust reposed in them, ver. 9. the reason of which concern also, or what likewise animated them to a diligent performance of their duty, was their certain appearance before the judgment-seat of Christ; which appearance will be universal, and when there will be a distribution of rewards and punishments to every one according to his works, ver. 10. And besides, it was not only their own personal concern in this awful affair that engaged them to such a conduct, but the regard they had to the good of immortal souls, to whom the day of judgment must be terrible, unless they are brought to believe in Christ; and for the truth of this they could appeal both to God, and to the consciences of men, particularly the Corinthians, ver. 11. And lest this should be imputed to pride and arrogance, the apostle suggests the reason why he made mention of all this, that they might have wherewith to answer the false teachers, and vindicate the faithful ministers of the Gospel, ver. 12. However, let it be construed which way it will, as the effect of madness or sobriety, this he could with the greatest confidence affirm, that his view was the glory of God, and the good of souls, ver. 13. and to this diligence and faithfulness in preaching the Gospel, he and others were not only moved by their desire and expectation of happiness, by the future judgment in which they must appear, and by their concern for immortal souls, that they might escape the vengeance of that day; but they were constrained thereunto by the love of Christ in dying for them, and in whom they died, ver. 14. the end of which was, that they might live not to themselves, but to him that died and rose again, ver. 15. And as a further instance of their integrity and faithfulness, the apostle observes, that they had no regard to men on account of their carnal descent, and outward privileges, as the Jews; nor even did they consider Christ himself in a carnal view, or esteem of him as a temporal king, as they once did, ver. 16. their sole aims and views being the spiritual good of men, and the advancement of the spiritual interest and kingdom of Christ; and the conclusion from hence is, that whoever is truly in Christ, and in his kingdom, is a new creature, and is in a new world, in a new dispensation, in which both the old things of the law, and of Heathenism, and of his former conversation are gone, and all things in doctrine, worship, and conversation are become new, ver. 17. And from hence the apostle proceeds to a commendation of the Gospel dispensation, and the ministry of it, from its author God, and from the subject-matter of it, reconciliation of men to God by Christ, ver. 18. which is more fully explained and enlarged on, both with respect to the efficient cause of reconciliation, the objects of it, and the means and manner in which it is brought about, and also the publication of it in the Gospel by the ministers of it, ver. 19. and who are described as the ambassadors of Christ, acting in the name of God, and as in the stead of Christ, for the good of men, ver. 20. And closes the chapter with an account of the great propitiation, Christ, by whom reconciliation is made; as that he was in himself without sin, and yet was by imputation made sin for sinners, that they, in the same way, might be made righteous in the sight of God through him, ver. 21.

Ver. 1. *For we know, that if our earthly house,* &c.] By this *house* is meant the body, so called from its being like a well-built house, a curious piece of architecture; as an house consists of a variety of parts fitly framed and put together in just symmetry and proportion, and with an entire usefulness in all, so is the body of man; which shews the power and wisdom of God the architect: likewise, because it is the dwelling-place of the soul, which makes it appear, that the soul is more excellent than the body, is independent of it, and capable of a separate existence from it: it is said to be an *earthly* house, because it is from the earth; is supported by earthly things; has its present abode on the earth, and will quickly return to it: and the earthly house of *this tabernacle*, in allusion to the tabernacles the patriarchs and Israelites of old dwelt in; or to the tents and tabernacles of soldiers, shepherds, travellers, and such-like persons, which are soon put up and taken down, and removed from place to place; and denotes

the frailty and short continuance of our mortal bodies. So Plato[z] calls the body *γηινον σκηνος, an earthly tabernacle*: so the Jews were wont to call the body an *house*, and a *tabernacle*: "every man (they say[a]) has two "houses, בית הגוף, *the house of the body*, and the house "of the soul; the one is the outward, the other the "inward house." So Abarbinel[b] paraphrases those words, Isa. xviii. 14. "*I will consider in my dwelling-"place; I will* return, or again consider in my dwell-"ing-place, which is the body, for that is משכן הנפש, "*the tabernacle of the soul*." Now this tabernacle may, and will be, *dissolved*, unpinned, and taken down; which does not design an annihilation of it, but a dissolution of its union with the soul, and its separation from it: and when the apostle puts an *if* upon it, it is not to be understood as though it is uncertain whether it would be dissolved or no, unless it be said with a view to the change that will be on the living saints at Christ's second coming; but it is rather a concession of the matter, and may be rendered, *though the earthly house*, &c. or it points out the time when the saints' future happiness shall begin, *when the earthly house*, &c. and signifies that being in the body, in some sense, retards the enjoyment of it. Now it is the saints' comfort whilst they are in it, and in a view of the dissolution of it, that they *have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens*: which some understand of the glorified body upon its resurrection, as opposed to its frail, mortal, earthly frame in its present situation; though rather all this designs the happiness of the saints, which will be begun, and they shall immediately enter into, at the dissolution of their bodies, and will be consummated at the resurrection; which is all of God's building and preparing; not made by the hands of the creature, or obtained by works of righteousness done by men; and it lies in the heavens, and will continue for ever. So the[c] Jews speak of בית קדישא, *the holy house*, in the world to come, and which they suppose is intended in Isa. lvi. 5. and Prov. xxiv. 3. In this the saints have a present interest; they *have* it already built and prepared for them; they have an indubitate right and title to it through the righteousness of Christ; they have it secured to them in Christ, their feoffee in trust, their head and representative; and they have the earnest of it, the spirit of God in their hearts; of all which they have sure and certain knowledge: *for we know*; they are well assured of the truth of this from the promise of God, who cannot lie, from the declaration of the Gospel, the testimony of the Spirit, and the close and inseparable connection there is between the grace they have already received, and the glory that shall be hereafter.

Ver. 2. *For in this we groan earnestly*, &c.] Meaning either for this happiness we groan, or rather in this tabernacle we groan. These words are a reason of the former, proving that the saints have a building of God; and they know they have it, because they groan after it here; for the groanings of the saints are under the influence and direction of the spirit of God, who makes intercession for them, as for grace, so for glory, according to the will of God: and this groaning is further explained by *desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven*: by which is meant not the glorified body in the resurrection-morn; for though the bodies of the saints will be glorious, incorruptible, powerful, and spiritual, they are not said to be celestial, nor will they be from heaven, but be raised out of the earth: besides, the apostle is speaking of an habitation the soul will go into, and is desirous of going into as soon as it removes out of the earthly house of the body, and of a clothing it desires to be clothed with as soon as it is stripped of the garment of the flesh; wherefore, by the house from heaven must be meant the heavenly glory, which departed souls immediately enter into, and are arrayed with, even the white and shining robes of purity, perfection, and glory they shall be clothed with, as soon as ever their tabernacles are unpinned and dissolved. The Jews indeed speak of a celestial body which the soul shall be clothed with immediately upon its separation from the earthly body, and much in such figurative terms as the apostle does in this, and the following verses: "when a man's time is come, say they[d], to go "out of this world, he does not depart until the "angel of death has *stripped him of the clothing of this "body*, (see ver. 4.) and when the soul is stripped of "the body, by the angel of death, it goes ומתלבשא "בההוא גופא אחרא, *and is clothed with that other "body*, which is in paradise, of which it was stripped "when it came into this world; for the soul has no "pleasure but in the body, which is *from thence*, and "it rejoices because it is stripped of the body of this "world, ואתלבש בלבושא אחרא שלים, *and is clothed "with another perfect clothing*." And a little after, "the holy blessed God deals well with men, for he "does not strip men of their clothes until he has pro-"vided for them other clothes, more precious and "better than these, except the wicked of the world, "who return not to their Lord by perfect repentance; "for naked they came into this world, and naked (see "ver. 3.) they shall return hence." And in another place[e], "the soul does not go up to appear before the "Holy King, until it is worthy to be clothed בלבושא "דלעילא, *with the clothing which is above*."

Ver. 3. *If so be that being clothed*, &c.] This supposition is made with respect to the saints who shall be alive at Christ's second coming, who will not be stripped of their bodies, and so will *not be found naked*, or disembodied, and shall have a glory at once put upon them, both soul and body; or these words are an inference from the saints' present clothing, to their future clothing, thus; *seeing we are clothed*, have not only put on the new man, and are clothed and adorned with the graces of the spirit, but are arrayed with the best robe, the wedding-garment, the robe of Christ's righteousness, *we shall not be found naked*; but shall be clothed upon with the heavenly glory, as soon as we are dismissed from hence. Some read these words as a wish, *O that we were clothed, that we might not be found naked!* and so is expressive of one of the sighs, and groans, and earnest desires of the saints in their present situation after the glories of another world.

[z] In Clement. Alexandr. Stromat. l. 5. p. 593.
[a] Sepher Caphtor, fol. 88. 2.
[b] Mashmia Jeshua, fol. 11. 4.
[c] Zohar in Exod. fol. 34. 3. & 35. 3.

[d] Zohar in Exod. fol. 62. 1, 2.
[e] Zohar in Exod. fol. 93. 2. Vid. fol. 84. 3. 4. in Gen. fol. 49. 3. & Caphtor, fol. 19. 2. & 78. 2.

Ver. 4. *For we that are in this tabernacle do groan,* &c.] There are some of the saints who are not in the tabernacle, the body. They were in it, but now are not; their bodies are in the grave, the house appointed for all living; and their souls are in the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, in everlasting habitations, in the mansions prepared in Christ's father's house; and they have done groaning, being delivered from every oppressor, sin, Satan, and the world; are at rest from all their labours, and are free from every burden; only the saints who are in the tabernacle of the body, in an unsettled state, groan, being in the midst of tribulation, and not yet in the enjoyment of that happiness they are wishing for. The reason of their groaning is, because they are *burdened* with the body itself, which is a clog and incumbrance to the soul in its spiritual exercises; and oftentimes by reason of its disorders and diseases a man becomes a burden to himself; but what the saints are mostly burdened with in this life, and which makes them groan the most, is the body of sin and death they carry about with them; the filth of it is nauseous, grievous, and intolerable; the guilt of it oftentimes lies very heavy on the conscience; the weight of it presses hard, and is a great hinderance to them in running their Christian race; nor have they any relief under this burden, but by looking to a sin-bearing and sin-atoning Saviour, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. They are also frequently burdened with Satan's temptations, with blasphemous thoughts, solicitations to sin, the fears of death, the pangs of it, and what will follow upon it; though God is faithful, who will not suffer them to be tempted above that they are able to bear; however, these temptations are great burdens, and occasion many a groan: to which may be added the various afflictions of life, which though comparatively *light*, are in themselves heavy, grievous burdens, and hard to be bore; the nature, number, and continuance of them often make them so; and especially they are such, when God is pleased to hide his face, and withhold the discoveries of his love and mercy. The apostle goes on to explain what he means by desiring to be clothed, *not for that we would be unclothed;* that is, of our bodies; and this he says, not through any love and liking he had to this animal life, or to the sensual methods of living here, which make natural men in love with life, and desirous of always living here; but from a principle of nature, which recoils at death, does not like a dissolution, chooses any other way of removing out of this world than by death; a translation of soul and body together to heaven, like that of Enoch and Elijah's, is more eligible even to a good man; or such a change as will be upon the living saints at the coming of Christ, which the apostle seems to have in view, who will be not unclothed of their bodies, as men are at death, *but clothed upon;* as is here desired, with incorruption and immortality: *that mortality might be swallowed up of life;* not that the mortal body, or the substance of the body, which is mortal, might be consumed and destroyed, but that mortality, that quality to which it is subject by sin, might be no more: and he does not say, *that death may be swallowed up of life,* which will be done in the resurrection-morn; but mortality, which being swallowed up by a translation, or such a change as will be at the last day, will prevent death: and the phrase, *swallowed up,* denotes the suddenness of the change, in an instant, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, and that without any pain, or such agonies as usually attend death; and also the utter, final, and total abolition of mortality; so that there will never be more any appearance of it: his desire is, that it may be swallowed up *of the life,* which is properly and emphatically life, as this life is not; and means the glorious, immortal, and everlasting life, which saints enter into as soon as they are rid of their mortal bodies, and the mortality of them.

Ver. 5. *Now he that hath wrought us for the self-same thing,* &c.] By *the self-same thing* is meant, either the cross, the burden of sorrows and afflictions, under which the saints groan whilst here, which God has appointed them unto, and therefore to be bore patiently by them; or that glory and immortality, which they, as vessels of mercy, were prepared by him for from everlasting; for which their bodies and souls are formed by him in creation, and for which they are made meet in regeneration, by the curious workmanship of his spirit and grace upon them: and seeing he *is God,* and not man, who hath wrought them for this, either by his secret purposes and preparations of grace in eternity, or by his open works of creation and regeneration in time; there's no doubt but they shall certainly enjoy it, since his counsels are immutable, and he is a rock, and his work is perfect; whatever he begins he finishes, nor is he ever frustrated of his end: one of Stephens's copies adds, *and hath anointed us,* which seems to have been transcribed from ch. i. 21. *Who also hath given us the earnest of the spirit;* and therefore may be assured of possessing the inheritance, of which he is the earnest; see ch. i. 22.

Ver. 6. *Therefore we are always confident,* &c.] Because God has formed us for immortality and glory, and given us his spirit as the earnest of it, we take heart, are of good courage, don't sink under our burdens, or despair of happiness, but are fully assured of enjoying what we are desirous of: *knowing that whilst we are at home in the body;* or whilst we are inmates or sojourners in the body; for the body is not properly the saints' home; whilst they are in it, they are but pilgrims and strangers; the time of their abode in it is the time of their sojourning: during which time they *are absent from the Lord:* not with respect to his general presence, which is everywhere, and attends all creatures, an absence from which is impossible; nor with respect to his spiritual presence, which though not always sensibly enjoyed, yet frequently; nor are the children of God ever deprived of it totally and finally; but with respect to his glorious presence, and the full enjoyment of that. Now the knowledge and consideration of this, that the present state and situation of the saints, whilst in the body, is a state of pilgrimage, and so of absence from the Lord Christ, and from their father's house, serves to increase their confidence and assurance, that they shan't long continue so, but in a little time shall be at home, and for ever with the Lord.

Ver. 7. *For we walk by faith, and not by sight.*] Faith is a grace which answers many useful purposes: it is the eye of the soul, by which it looks to Christ

for righteousness, peace, pardon, life, and salvation; the hand by which it receives him, and the foot by which it goes to him, and walks in him as it has received him; which denotes not a single act of faith, but a continued course of believing; and is expressive, not of a weak, but of a strong steady faith of glory and happiness, and of interest in it: and it is opposed to *sight*: by which is meant, not sensible communion, but the celestial vision: there's something of sight in faith; that is a seeing of the son; and it is an evidence of things not seen, of the invisible glories of the other world: faith looks at, and has a glimpse of things not seen, which are eternal; but it is but seeing as through a glass darkly; 'tis not that full sight, face to face, which will be had hereafter, when faith is turned into vision.

Ver. 8. *We are confident, I say, and willing rather, &c.*] We are cheerful in our present state, being assured of future happiness; though we choose rather *to be absent from the body*: that is, to die, to depart out of this world. The interval between death, and the resurrection, is a state of absence from the body, during which time the soul is disembodied, and exists in a separate state; not in a state of inactivity and sleep, for that would not be desirable, but of happiness and glory, enjoying the presence of God, and praising of him, believing and waiting for the resurrection of the body, when both will be united together again; and after that there will be no more absence, neither from the body, nor from the Lord: *and to be present with the Lord.* This was promised to Christ in the everlasting covenant, that all his spiritual seed and offspring should be with him. This he expected; 'twas the joy of this which was set before him, that carried him through his sufferings and death with so much cheerfulness; this is the sum of his prayers and intercession, and what all his preparations in heaven are on the account of. 'Tis this which supports and comforts the saints under all their sorrows here, and which makes them meet death with pleasure, which otherwise is formidable and disagreeable to nature; and even desirous of parting with life, *to be with Christ, which is far better.*

Ver. 9. *Wherefore we labour, that whether present or absent, &c.*] This may be understood either of the ministers of the Gospel in particular, who labour in the word and doctrine, are ambitious, as the word here used signifies, and strive to preach the Gospel, not to please men, but their Lord and master; or of saints in general, who are intent upon this, and whose highest ambition is, that whether living or dying they *may be accepted of him*: both persons and services: such who are born again, who are believers in Christ, and truly love him, are earnestly desirous of doing those things which are pleasing to him; and do in the strength of Christ endeavour to perform them. Faith is a diligent, industrious, and operative grace, and makes persons like itself. As none ought to be, so none are more careful to perform good works, or more ambitious to excel others in them, and thereby please their Lord, than believers. And these are the only persons that can please him, for without faith it is impossible to please him; for these act from a principle of love to him, and with a view to his glory; and may they be but accepted of him, living and dying, both in this and the other world, they have the highest favour they can wish for and desire.

Ver. 10. *For we must all appear, &c.*] This is a reason why the saints are so diligent and laborious, so earnest and intent upon it, to be accepted of the Lord, because they must stand *before the judgment-seat of Christ*; who is appointed Judge of the whole earth, who is every way qualified for it, being God omnipotent and omniscient; and when he comes a second time will sit upon his great white throne, a symbol of purity and integrity, and will enter on this work, and finish it with the strictest justice and equity: and before him *we must all appear*; all the saints as well as others, ministers and people, persons of all ranks and conditions, of every nation, age, and sex; there will be no avoiding this judgment, all *must appear*, or *be made manifest*; they will be set in open view, before angels and men; their persons, characters, and actions, even the most secret will be: *that every one may receive the things done in his body*; which he has performed by the members of the body as instruments thereof, or whatsoever he has done whilst in the body; and so this not only reaches to words and actions, but includes all the secret thoughts of the mind, and counsels of the heart, which will be made manifest: and when 'tis said, that *every one shall receive* these; the meaning is, that he shall receive the reward of them, *according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad*; the reward of good works will be of grace, and not of merit: good works will be considered at the last judgment, not as causes of eternal life and happiness, to which the saints will be adjudged; but will be produced in open court as fruits of grace, and as evidences of the truth of faith, which will justify the Judge in proceeding according to what he himself, as a Saviour, has said, *he that believeth shall be saved, he that believeth not shall be damned.* The reward of bad works will be in strict and just proportion, according to the nature and demerit of them. The Jews say [f], that "all the works which a man does "in this world, בגופא, *in the body*, and spirit, he must "give an account of in body and spirit before he goes "out of the world." And again [g], all the works of men are written in a book, הן טוב הן ביש, *whether good or evil*, and for them all they must give account.

Ver. 11. *Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, &c.*] Or *the fear of the Lord*: by which is meant either the grace of the fear of the Lord, implanted in the hearts of the apostles, and in which they acted in their ministry, faithfully dispensing to men the mysteries of grace; from which they could by no means be moved, because the fear of God was before their eyes, and upon their hearts: or rather the terror of the Lord in the last judgment, which will be very great, considering the awfulness of the summons, arise ye dead, and come to judgment; the appearance of the Judge, which will be sudden, surprising, and glorious; the placing of the thrones, the opening of the books, the position of the wicked, the dreadful sentence pronounced on them, and the immediate execution of it; all which the ministers of the word know

[f] Zohar in Gen. fol. 57. 2.

[g] Midrash Hanneelim in Zohar in Gen. fol. 75. 4.

from the Scriptures of truth; they know the Judge, that there will be a general judgment, and that the day is fixed for it, though they know not the exact time: and therefore *persuade men;* not that their state is good because of a little outside morality, nor to make their peace with God, or get an interest in Christ, or to convert themselves, neither of which are in the power of men to do; but they endeavour to persuade them by the best arguments they are masters of, taken from the word of God, and their own experience, that they are in a dangerous state and condition, walking in a way that leads to destruction; that they are liable to the curses of the law, the wrath of God, and everlasting ruin; that present duties of religion will not make amends for past sins, nor can their tears atone for their crimes, or any works of righteousness done by them justify them before God; and that salvation is only by Christ, who is both able and willing to save the chief of sinners: and they endeavour to persuade and encourage poor sensible sinners to venture on Christ, and believe in him to the saving of their souls. So the Arabic version reads it, *we persuade men to believe:* though when they have done all they can, these persuasions of theirs are ineffectual, without the powerful and efficacious grace of the spirit of God; however, in so doing they discharge a good conscience, and act the faithful part to God and men: *but we are made manifest unto God:* who searches the heart, and tries the reins, who knows all actions, and the secret springs of them; to him the sincerity of our hearts, and the integrity of our conduct, are fully manifest; we can appeal to him that 'tis his glory, and the good of souls, we have in view in all our ministrations; *and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences:* that you also can bear witness to our faithfulness and honesty, to the unwearied pains we have taken, and the hearty concern we have shewn for the welfare of the souls of men. One of Stephens's copies reads, *and we trust;* which agrees with the apostle's speaking in the first person plural in this, and the preceding verses.

Ver. 12. *For we commend not ourselves again to you,* &c.] We have no need to do so, being well known to you; nor do we intend it when we thus speak of ourselves, and of our ministrations: *but give you occasion to glory on our behalf;* suggest some things to you which you may make use of in our favour, for the vindicating of our characters and conduct: *that you may have somewhat to answer them which glory in appearance, and not in heart;* by whom are meant the false apostles who gloried in an outward shew, in their learning, eloquence, and popular applause they had acquired, and not in the sincerity of their hearts, and the testimony of a good conscience, things which the true apostles of Christ were most ambitious of.

Ver. 13. *For whether we be besides ourselves,* &c.] As some took them to be, and as Festus thought the Apostle Paul was, because of the doctrines they preached, and the self-commendation they were obliged to enter into through the calumnies of their adversaries; in which they did not so much seek their own reputation, as the honour and glory of God, which was struck at through them: *it is to God;* it is for his glory, and not our own, that we act this part, for which we are condemned as madmen. *Or whether we be sober;* think and speak meanly of ourselves, and behave with all modesty and lowliness of mind: *it is for your cause;* for your instruction and imitation. The glory of God, and the good of his churches, were what concerned them in every part of life. Some refer this to the apostle's being, or not being, in an ecstacy or rapture. Others to his speaking, either of the more sublime doctrines of the Gospel, on account of which he was reckoned mad, though in the delivering of them he had nothing else but the glory of God in view; or of the lower and easier truths of it, which were more accommodated to meaner capacities; in doing which he sought their edification and advantage.

Ver. 14. *For the love of Christ constraineth us,* &c.] Or *containeth us;* holds and keeps us in our station and duty, as soldiers are held and kept together under a banner, or ensign displayed; to which the church refers, when she says, *his banner over me was love,* Cant. ii. 4. Nothing more effectually keeps ministers, or other believers, in the work and service of their Lord, or more strongly obliges and constrains them to a cheerful discharge of their duty to him, and one another, than his love displayed in his covenant-engagements, in his assumption of human nature, and particularly in his dying for them, which is the instance given in the text: *because we thus judge;* having well weighed, and maturely considered the affair, *that if one died for all, then were all dead:* or *seeing one died for all;* for it is rather an assertion than a supposition, upon which the apostle reasons. The person designed, who died for all, is Jesus Christ, though not mentioned, and is to be supplied from the former clause. The doctrine of Christ's dying for men was well known, so that there was no need to mention his name; he is called *one,* in distinction to the *all* he died for, and as exclusive of all others, he being sufficient of himself to answer the ends of his death; and therefore is to be looked unto, and believed on, alone for salvation, and to have all the glory of it. The manner of his dying is *for,* or in the room and stead of all; so that he died not merely as a martyr, or by way of example, or only for their good, but as their substitute, in their room and stead, having all the sins of his people upon him, for which he made satisfaction; and this the nature of his death shews, which was a sacrifice, a ransom, a propitiation and atonement. The persons for whom Christ died are *all;* not every individual of mankind, but all his people, all his sheep, all the members of his church, or all the sons he, as the great Captain of salvation, brings to glory. Wherefore this text does not make for the doctrine of general redemption; for it should be observed, that it does not say that Christ died for *all men,* but for *all;* and so, agreeably to the Scriptures, may be understood of all the persons mentioned. Moreover, in the latter part of the text it is said, that those for whom Christ died, for them he rose again; he died for no more, nor for others, than those for whom he rose again: now those for whom he rose again, he rose for their justification; wherefore, if Christ rose for the justification of all men, all would be justified, or the end of Christ's resurrection would not be answered; but all men are not, nor will they be justified, some

will be condemned; hence it follows, that Christ did not rise from the dead for all men, and consequently did not die for all men: besides, the *all* for whom Christ died, died with him, and through his death are dead both to the law and sin; and he died for them, that they might live, not to themselves, but to him; neither of which are true of all the individuals of mankind: to which may be added, that the context explains the *all* of such who are in Christ, are new creatures, are reconciled to God, whose trespasses are not imputed to them, for whom Christ was made sin, and who are made the righteousness of God in him: which cannot be said of all men. The conclusion from hence is, *then were all dead*: meaning, either that those for whom Christ died, were dead in Adam, dead in law, dead in trespasses and sins, which made it necessary for him to die for them; otherwise, there would have been no occasion for his death; yet it does not follow from hence, that Christ died for all that are in such a condition; only that those for whom Christ died were dead in this sense, admitting this to be the sense of the passage; though death in sin seems not to be intended, since that all men are dead in sin, would have been a truth, if Christ had died for none; and much less is this an effect, or what follows upon the death of Christ; nor does it capacitate, but renders men incapable of living to Christ: wherefore a mystical death in, and with Christ, seems rather to be meant; and so the Ethiopic version reads it, *in whom every one is dead*. Christ died as the head and representative of his people, and they all died in him, were crucified with him, and through his death became dead to the law, as to its curse and condemnation; and to sin, as to its damning power, being acquitted, discharged, and justified from it: the consequence of which is a deliverance from the dominion of it, whereby they become capable of living to the glory of Christ. The sense of the passage is not, that Christ died for all that were dead, but that all were dead for whom he died; which is true of them, whether in the former, or in the latter sense: the article οἱ, is anaphorical or relative, as Beza and Piscator observe; and the meaning is, that if Christ died for all, then all *those* were dead for whom he died.

Ver. 15. *And that he died for all, that they which live, &c.*] The end of Christ's dying for men was that they might live; live, in a law-sense, live a life of justification; and that they which live in such a sense, *should not henceforth live unto themselves*: to their own lusts, and after their own wills, to either sinful self, or righteous self: *but unto him which died for them, and rose again*: that is, for them, for their justification; for all those for whom Christ died, for them he rose again; and who were justified, acquitted, and discharged when he was; which cannot be said of all mankind; and which is an obligation on such persons to live to Christ, to ascribe the whole of their salvation to him, and to make his glory the end of all their actions. Some copies read, *which died for them all*.

Ver. 16. *Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh, &c.*] Since the death and resurrection of Christ, which has broken down the middle wall of partition, and has took away all distinction of men, we know, we esteem, we value no man on account of his carnal descent, and fleshy privileges, as being of the Jewish nation, a descendant of Abraham, and circumcised as he was; or on account of their outward state and condition, as being rich and honourable among men, or on account of their natural parts and acquirements, their learning, wisdom, and eloquence; nor do we own any man to be a Christian, that lives after the flesh, to himself, and not to Christ; nor do we make account of the saints themselves as in this mortal state, but as they will be in the resurrection, in consequence of Christ's having died for them, and rose again. *Yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh*: some of them had seen him in the flesh; others valued him on account of his being of the Jewish nation, and of his relation to them according to the flesh; and all of them had formerly entertained carnal apprehensions of him, and his kingdom, as though it would be a temporal one: *yet now henceforth know we him no more*; no more in this mortal state, being risen from the dead; nor do we value ourselves upon having seen him in the flesh; for though such a sight and knowledge of him was desirable, yet a spiritual knowledge is much more preferable; and many there were who knew him in the flesh, who neither enjoy his spiritual presence here, nor will they be favoured with his glorious presence hereafter. Moreover, we don't judge of him as we did before we had a spiritual knowledge of him, and as our countrymen did, by his outward circumstances, by his parentage and education, his poverty and afflictions, his company and conversation, that he could not be the Messiah, the son of God, and therefore was worthy of death; we have quite other thoughts and apprehensions of him now, believing him to be the Christ of God, a spiritual Saviour and Redeemer, whose kingdom is not of this world; we have relinquished all our national prejudices, and former notions, concerning the Messiah, his kingdom, and people. Some copies add, *after the flesh*; and the Arabic version, *yet now know we him no more in that*.

Ver. 17. *Therefore if any man be in Christ, &c.*] There's a secret being in Christ from everlasting; so all that are loved by him, espoused unto him, chosen and preserved in him, to whom he was a covenant-head, surety, and representative, are in him, united to him, and one with him; not in such sense as the father is in him, and the human nature is in him, but as husband and wife, and head and members are one; and there's an open being in Christ at conversion, when a man believes in Christ, and gives up himself to him; faith does not put a man into Christ, but makes him appear to be in him: and such an one *is a new creature*: or, as some read it, *let him be a new creature*; who understand being in Christ to be by profession, and the sense this, whoever is in the kingdom or church of Christ, who professes himself to be a Christian, ought to be a new creature: the Arabic version reads it, *he that is in the faith of Christ is a new creature*. All such who are secretly in Christ from everlasting, though as yet some of them may not be new creatures, yet they shall be sooner or later; and those who are openly in him, or are converted persons, are actually so; they are a new *creation*, as the words may be rendered: בריה חדשה, *a new creation*, is a

phrase often used by the Jewish[b] doctors, and is applied by the apostle to converted persons; and designs not an outward reformation of life and manners, but an inward principle of grace, which is a creature, a creation-work, and so not man's, but God's; and in which man is purely passive, as he was in his first creation; and this is a new creature, or a new man, in opposition to, and distinction from the old man, the corruption of nature; and because it is something anew implanted in the soul, which never was there before; it is not a working upon, and an improvement of the old principles of nature, but an implantation of new principles of grace and holiness; here's a new heart, and a new spirit, and in them new light and life, new affections and desires, new delights and joys; here are new eyes to see with, new ears to hear with, new feet to walk, and new hands to work and act with: *old things are passed away*; the old course of living, the old way of serving God, whether among Jews or Gentiles; the old legal righteousness, old companions and acquaintance are dropped; and all external things, as riches, honours, learning, knowledge, former sentiments of religion, are relinquished: *behold, all things are become new*: there's a new course of life, both of faith and holiness; a new way of serving God through Christ by the Spirit, and from principles of grace; a new, another, and better righteousness is received and embraced; new companions are sought after, and delighted in; new riches, honours, glory, a new Jerusalem, yea, new heavens, and a new earth, are expected by new creatures: or the sense of the whole may be this, if any man is entered into the kingdom of God, into the Gospel dispensation, into a Gospel church-state, which seems to be the sense of the phrase *in Christ*, in Gal. iii. 28. and v. 6. and vi. 15. he is become a new creature, or is got into a new creation, as it were into a new world, whether he be a Jew or a Gentile; for with respect to the former state of either, *old things are passed away*; if a Jew, the whole Mosaic œconomy is abolished; the former covenant is waxen old, and vanished away; the old ordinances of circumcision and the passover are no more; the daily sacrifice is ceased, and all the other sacrifices are at an end, Christ, the great sacrifice, being offered up; the priesthood of Aaron is antiquated, there is a change of it, and of the whole law; the observance of holy days, new moons and sabbaths, is over; the whole ceremonial law is at end; all the shadows of it are fled and gone, the things they were shadows of being come by Christ, the sum and substance of them; and there's no more a serving God in the oldness of the letter, but in the newness of the spirit: and if a Gentile, all the former idols he worshipped he turns from, and his language is, *what have I to do any more with idols? or what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?* all former sacrifices, superstitious rites and ceremonies, with which he worshipped them, are relinquished by him; with *all* other Heathenish customs, rules, and methods of conduct he had been used to: *behold, all things are become new*: to the one, and to the other; the Gospel dispensation is a new state of things; a new form of church-state is erected, not national, as among the Jews, but congregational, consisting of persons gathered out of the world, and anew embodied together; new ordinances are appointed, which were never in use before, as baptism and the Lord's supper; a new and living way is opened by the blood of Christ into the holiest of all, not by the means of slain beasts, as among the Jews, nor by petty deities as with the Gentiles; a new commandment of love is enjoined all the followers of the Lamb; and another name is given them, a new name, which the mouth of the Lord their God has named, not of Jews nor Gentiles, but of Christians; and new songs are put into their mouths, even praise to God: in short, the Gospel church-state seems to be, as it were, a new creation, and perhaps is meant by the new heavens and new earth, Isa. lxv. 15, 17. as well as those who are the proper members of it, are new creatures in the sense before given.

Ver. 18. *And all things are of God*, &c.] A man's being brought into a Gospel church-state is of God; the causing all old things to pass away, whether in the Jewish or Gentile world, is of God; the shaking of the heavens and the earth, and the removing of those things that are shaken, the abrogation of the ceremonial law, the putting an end to all the Mosaic rites and sacrifices, the ejection of Satan out of the Heathen temples, and the abolition of Gentilism, with every thing else that comes under the names of old, and new, are of God: it is he that causes old things to pass away, and makes all things new, see Rev. xxi. 1, 5. Moreover, as all things in the old creation are from him, all creatures owe their beings to him, are supported in them by him, and all are made for his pleasure, and his glory so all things in the new creation are of him; the work of renovation itself is his; all the grace that is implanted in regeneration comes from him: nothing is of the creature, or to be ascribed to it. All things in redemption are of him; he drew the plan of it, called his son to be the Redeemer, appointed and sent him as such; and particularly that branch of it, reconciliation, is of him: *who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ*. The work of reconciliation, or making atonement for sin, is ascribed to the father; not that he is the author of it, for it is properly Christ's work; but because he took the first step towards it: he formed the scheme of it; he set forth his son in his purposes and decrees to be the propitiary sacrifice; he assigned him this work in council and covenant, in promise and in prophecy, and sent him to effect it; therefore he is said to do it *by* him; that is, by his blood and sacrifice, by his sufferings and death, to which, and to which alone, the Scriptures ascribe our peace and reconciliation: and this is made *to himself*; as being the party offended, whose law was broken, against whom sin was committed, and whose justice required and demanded satisfaction: *and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation*: which is the Gospel of peace, the word which preaches, publishes and declares, peace made by the blood of Christ; which is a gift to ministers, and a blessing to the people. The free grace of God

[b] T. Hieros. Roshhashana, fol. 59. 3. Vajikra Rabba, fol. 170. 4. Bemidbar Rabba, fol. 202. 2. Cosri, fol. 92. 2. & R. Levi ben Gersom in Exod. fol. 108. 1. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 121. 2.

greatly appears in this matter; God the father sets this work of reconciliation on foot, Christ has brought it about, and the ministers of the Gospel publish it.

Ver. 19. *To wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, &c.*] This expresses and explains the subject-matter of the ministration of the Gospel, especially that part of it which concerns our reconciliation with God; and declares the scheme, the author, the subjects, the way, and means, and consequence of it. The phrase, *in Christ*, may be either joined with the word *God*, as in our version, *God was in Christ reconciling*: that is, he was in Christ drawing the scheme, fixing the method of reconciliation; his thoughts were employed about it, which were thoughts of peace; he called a council of peace, and entered into a covenant of peace with Christ, who was appointed and agreed to, to be the peace-maker. Or with the word *reconciling*, thus, *God was reconciling in Christ*; that is, by Christ; and so it denotes, as before, actual reconciliation by Christ. God, in pursuance of his purposes, council, and covenant, sent his son to make peace; and laid our sins, and the chastisement of our peace upon him; this is the punishment of sin, whereby satisfaction was made for it, and so peace with God: or with the word *world*, thus, *God was reconciling the world in Christ*; by whom are meant, not all the individuals of mankind, for these are not all in Christ, nor all reconciled to God, multitudes dying in enmity to him, nor all interested in the blessing of non-imputation of sin; whereas each of these is said of the world: but the elect of God, who are chosen in Christ, whose peace Christ is, whose sins are not imputed to them, and against whom no charge of any avail can be laid; and particularly the people of God among the Gentiles are here designed, who are frequently called *the world* in Scripture; being the world which God loved, for whose sins Christ is the propitiation, and of the reconciling of which mention is particularly made, John iii. 16. 1 John ii. 2. Rom. xi. 12, 15. And this sense well agrees with the context, which signifies, that no man is regarded for his natural descent; 'tis no matter whether he is a Jew or a Gentile, provided he's but a new creature: for Gospel reconciliation, and the ministry of it, concern one as well as another. Moreover, this reconciliation must be considered, either as intentional, or actual, or as a publication of it in the ministry of the word; and taken either way it cannot be thought to extend to every individual person in the world: if it is to be understood intentionally, that God intended the reconciliation of the world to himself by Christ, and drew the scheme of it in him, his intentions cannot be frustrated; his counsel shall stand, and he'll do all his pleasure; a scheme so wisely laid by him in his son, cannot come to nothing, or only in part be executed; and yet this must be the case, if it was his design to reconcile every individual of mankind to himself, since a large number of them are not reconciled to him: and if the words are to be understood of an actual reconciliation of the world unto God by Christ, which sense agrees with the preceding verse, then it is out of all question, that the word *world* cannot be taken in so large a sense as to take in every man and woman in the world; since it is certain that there are many who are not reconciled to God, who die in their sins, whose peace is not made with him, nor are they reconciled to the way of salvation by Christ: and should it be admitted that the ministry of reconciliation is here designed, which is not an offer of reconciliation to the world, but a proclamation or declaration of peace and reconciliation made by the death of Christ; this is not sent to all men; multitudes were dead before the word of reconciliation was committed to the apostles; and since, there have been great numbers who have never so much as heard of it; and even in the times of the apostles it did not reach to every one then living; besides, the text does not speak of what God did by the ministry of his apostles, but of what he himself had been doing in his son, and which was antecedent, and gave rise unto and was the foundation of their ministry. There was a scheme of reconciliation drawn in the counsels of God before the world began, and an actual reconciliation by the death of Christ, which is published in the Gospel, which these words contain the sum and substance of: and this reconciliation, as before, is said to be *unto himself*; to his offended justice, and for the glory of his perfections, and the reconciling of them together in the affair of salvation: *not imputing their trespasses*. This was what he resolved upon from all eternity, that inasmuch as Christ was become the surety and substitute of his people, he would not impute their sins to them, or look for satisfaction for them from them; but would reckon and place them to the account of their surety, and expect satisfaction from him; and accordingly he did, and accordingly he had it. And this will, not to impute sin to his people, or not to punish for it, which existed in God from everlasting, is no other than a justification of them; for to whom the Lord does not impute sin, he imputes righteousness, and such are properly justified. *And hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation*; or *put it in us*, as a rich and valuable treasure; for such the doctrine of peace and reconciliation, by the blood of Christ, is; a sacred deposition, committed to the trust of faithful men, to be dispensed and disposed of for the use and purpose for which it is given them.

Ver. 20. *Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, &c.*] Since God has made reconciliation by Christ, and the ministry of it is committed to us, we are ambassadors for him; we come with full powers from him, not to propose terms of peace, to treat with men about it, to offer it to them, but to publish and proclaim it as made by him: we personate him, and God who made it by him, *as though God did beseech you by us*: to regard this embassy and message of peace, which we bring from him; to consider from whence it takes its rise, what methods have been used to effect it, and how it is accomplished; which should oblige to say and sing with the angels, *glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, and good will towards men*; and to behave in a peaceable manner to all men, and one another: *we pray you in Christ's stead*: personating him as if he was present before you: *be ye reconciled to God*: you, who are new creatures, for whom Christ has died, and peace is made; you, the members of the church at Corinth, who upon a profession of faith have been taken into such a relation; be ye reconciled to all the

dispensations of divine Providence towards you; let your wills bow, and be resigned to his, since he is the God of peace to you; and as you are reconciled by Christ as a priest, be reconciled to him as your King, and your God; to all his ordinances and appointments; to all the orders and laws of his house; conform in all things to his will and pleasure, which we, as his ambassadors, in his name and stead, have made known unto you. You ought to be all obedience to him, and never dispute any thing he says or orders.

Ver. 21. *For he hath made him to be sin for us,* &c.] Christ was made of a woman, took flesh of a sinful woman; though the flesh he took of her was not sinful, being sanctified by the spirit of God, the former of Christ's human nature: however, he appeared *in the likeness of sinful flesh;* being attended with infirmities, the effects of sin, though sinless: and he was traduced by men as a sinner, and treated as such. Moreover, he was made a sacrifice for sin, in order to make expiation and atonement for it; so the Hebrew word חטאת signifies both sin and a sin-offering; see Psal. xl. 6. and so ἁμαρτία, Rom. viii. 3. Heb. x. 6. But besides all this, he was made sin itself by imputation; the sins of all his people were transferred unto him, laid upon him, and placed to his account; he sustained their persons, and bore their sins; and having them upon him, and being chargeable with, and answerable for them, he was treated by the justice of God as if he had been not only a sinner, but a mass of sin; for to be made sin, is a stronger expression than to be made a sinner: but now that this may appear to be only by imputation, and that none may conclude from hence that he was really and actually a sinner, or in himself so, 'tis said he was *made sin;* he did not become sin, or a sinner, through any sinful act of his own, but through his father's act of imputation, to which he agreed; for it was *he* that made him sin: it is not said that men made him sin; not but that they traduced him as a sinner, pretended they knew he was one, and arraigned him at Pilate's bar as such; nor is he said to make himself so, though he readily engaged to be the surety of his people, and voluntarily took upon him their sins, and gave himself an offering for them; but he, his father, is said to make him sin: 'twas he that *laid,* or *made to meet* on him, the iniquity of us all; it was he that made his soul an offering for sin, and delivered him up into the hands of justice, and to death, and that *for us,* in *our* room and stead, to bear the punishment of sin, and make satisfaction and atonement for it; of which he was capable, and for which he was greatly qualified: for he *knew no sin;* which can't be understood of pure absolute ignorance of sin; for this can't agree with him, neither as God, nor as Mediator; he full well knew the nature of sin, as it is a transgression of God's law; he knows the original of sin, the corrupt heart of man, and the desperate wickedness of that; he knows the demerit, and the sad consequences of it; he knows, and he takes notice of too, the sins of his own people; and he knows the sins of all wicked men, and will bring them all into judgment, convince of them, and condemn for them: but he knew no sin so as to approve of it, and like it; he hates, abhors, and detests it; he never was conscious of any sin to himself; he never knew any thing of this kind by, and in himself; nor did he ever commit any, nor was any ever found in him, by men or devils, though diligently sought for. This is mentioned, partly that we may better understand in what sense he was made sin, or a sinner, which could be only by the imputation of the sins of others, since he had no sin of his own; and partly to shew that he was a very fit person to bear and take away the sins of men, to become a sacrifice for them, seeing he was the Lamb of God, without spot and blemish, typified in this, as in other respects, by the sacrifices of the legal dispensation; also to make it appear that he died, and was cut off in a judicial way, not for himself, his own sins, but for the transgressions of his people; and to express the strictness of divine justice in not sparing the son of God himself, though holy and harmless, when he had the sins of others upon him, and had made himself responsible for them. The *end* of his being made sin, though he himself had none, was, *that we might be made the righteousness of God in him;* not the essential righteousness of God, which can neither be imparted nor imputed; nor any righteousness of God wrought in us; for 'tis a righteousness *in him,* in Christ, and not in ourselves, and therefore must mean the righteousness of Christ; so called, because it is wrought by Christ, who is God over all, the true God, and eternal life; and because it is approved of by God the father, accepted of by him, for, and on the behalf of his elect, as a justifying one; it is what he bestows on them, and imputes unto them for their justification; it is a righteousness, and it is the only one which justifies in the sight of God. Now to be *made the righteousness of God,* is to be made righteous in the sight of God, by the imputation of the righteousness of Christ. Just as Christ is made sin, or a sinner, by the imputation of the sins of others to him; so they are made righteousness, or righteous persons, through the imputation of his righteousness to them; and in no other way can the one be made sin, or the other righteousness. And this is said to be *in him,* in Christ; which shews, that though Christ's righteousness is unto all, and upon all them that believe, it is imputed to them, and put upon them; it is not any thing wrought in them; it is not inherent in them. *Surely in the Lord have I righteousness and strength,* says the church, Isa. xlv. 24. and also, that the way in which we come by this righteousness is by being in Christ; none have it reckoned to them, but who are in him: we are first *of* God *in* Christ, and then he is made unto us righteousness. Secret being in Christ, or union to him from everlasting, is the ground and foundation of our justification, by his righteousness, as open being in Christ at conversion is the evidence of it.

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASWATI MAHAL

CHAP. VI.

THE apostle having given a commendation of the Gospel in the latter part of the preceding chapter, does in this address the ministers of it that were at Corinth, under the character of fellow-labourers, and by way of entreaty, that they would be careful to make it appear that they had not received neither the Gospel of the grace of God, nor gifts to minister it, in vain, ver. 1. and in proof of the Gospel being a ministry of reconciliation, and a doctrine of free grace and salvation, which carry in them so many arguments why it should not be received in vain, the apostle in ver. 2. cites a passage out of Isa. xlix. 8. by which it appears, that the Gospel dispensation is a time of acceptance, and of salvation; and which he accommodates to the then present time in which he lived; and is true of the whole intermediate time between the sufferings and death of Christ, which was the time in which he was helped and succoured, and his second coming, when all the elect will have been gathered in: after which he proceeds to give directions how to conduct without offence, that so no blame and reproach might fall upon the ministration of the Gospel, ver. 3. and proposes himself, and other faithful ministers, as examples to them, who had approved themselves as the ministers of God by their patient bearing all kind of afflictions for the sake of Christ, and his Gospel, of which a particular enumeration is given in ver. 4, 5. and by the exercise of various other graces, virtues, and gifts bestowed upon them, and which were illustrious in them, of which there is a particular detail in ver. 6, 7. though by reason of the different lights in which they were viewed by men, as well as the different appearances they made, and the different things that might be said of them, either through misrepresentation or ignorance, or as under different considerations, many very strange and enigmatical things are predicated of them, ver. 8, 9, 10. which can only be unriddled by their being possessors of the Gospel of Christ, and being partakers of the grace of God. And next the apostle addresses the members of the church at Corinth; and to make way for the exhortations he had to deliver to them, and that they might be taken in good part by them, he expresses his great regard to them; how free he was to communicate any thing that might be profitable to them, and how much his heart was enlarged with love to them, ver. 11. that there was no straitness of spirit in him towards them, though there was so much in them towards him, ver. 12. Wherefore he entreats them, as his children, that as he had shewn paternal love to them, they would also express filial affection and obedience to him, ver. 13. and then he enters upon his exhortation to have no communion with ungodly persons; and which he confirms by five arguments taken from the disagreement of righteousness and unrighteousness, of light and darkness, of Christ and Belial, of a believer and an unbeliever, and of the temple of God and of idols, ver. 14, 15, 16. by which he suggests, that as the proper characters of wicked men are unrighteousness, darkness, Belial, unbelievers, and idols, or idolaters; so the names of saints were righteousness, light, Christ, believers, and the temple of God; and in proof of the latter, he produces some passages out of Lev. xxvi. 11, 12. and Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27. and in the words of the prophet Isaiah, ch. lii. 11. he calls upon the Corinthians to quit the company of sinful and unclean men, to separate from them, and have nothing to do with them in things criminal and sinful; and for their encouragement to regard such an exhortation, the promises of God are mentioned; as that he will receive such persons into his protection, and will behave as a father towards them, and treat them as his sons and daughters, ver. 17, 18.

Ver. 1. *We then, as workers together with him*, &c.] The ministers of the Gospel are workers or labourers; their ministry is a work, and a very laborious one, which none have strength equal to, and are sufficient for, of themselves: it is a work that requires faithfulness and diligence, is honourable, and those who perform it aright deserve respect. These do not work alone: according to our version, they are *workers together with him*; meaning either God or Christ, not as co-ordinate with him, but as subordinate to him: he is the chief shepherd, they under ones; he is the chief master-builder, they under workers; but inasmuch as he is with them, and they with him, he is over them, and stands by them, great honour is done them; they have encouragement to work; and hence it is that their work is successful. Though the phrase, *with him*, is not in the original text, where only one word, συνεργοῦντες, is used, and may be rendered *fellow-workers*, or *fellow-labourers*, meaning with one another: and since therefore reconciliation was made by Christ, and the ministry of it was committed to them, and they were appointed ambassadors for him, and were in his stead, therefore, say they, *we beseech you also*; you ministers also; as we have entreated the members of the church, to be reconciled to the order of the Gospel, and the laws of Christ in his house, so as fellow-labourers with you, and jointly concerned in the same embassy of peace, we beseech you the ministers of the word in this church, *that ye receive not the grace of God in vain*: by *the grace of God*, is not meant the grace of God in regeneration, and effectual calling, which can never be received in vain; for the grace of God never fails of producing a thorough work of conversion: nor is it ever lost, but is strictly connected with eternal glory: but by it is meant either the doctrine of grace, the Gospel of Christ, so called, because it is a declaration of the love and grace of God to sinners, ascribes salvation in part, and in whole, to the free grace of God, and is a means of implanting and increasing grace in the hearts of men. Now this may be received in vain by ministers and people, when it is but notionally received, or received in word only;

when it is abused and perverted to vile purposes, and when men drop, deny it, and fall off from it; or else by the grace of God may be designed gifts of grace, qualifying for ministerial service; and the sense of the exhortation be, that they be careful that the gifts bestowed on them might not be neglected by them, but be used and improved to the advantage of the church, and the glory of Christ; by giving up themselves to study, meditation, and prayer, by labouring constantly in the word and doctrine, and by having a strict regard to their lives and conversations, *that the ministry be not blamed*; which exhortation he pursues in, and by his own example and others, in some following verses, the next being included in a *parenthesis*.

Ver. 2. *For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted*, &c.] These words are a citation from Isa. xlix. 8. and are spoken by the father to Christ, declaring he had heard him, as he always did. He heard him when he put up that prayer to him, recorded John xvii. for the glorification of himself, by strengthening him as man in his work, by raising him from the dead, setting him at his own right hand, and giving him the glory he had with him before the world was; for the good of his people, the preservation of those that were called, the conversion of them that were not called, and the glorification of all the father had given him: he heard him in the garden, and answered him; the will of God was done according to his desire, and his will was conformed to the will of his father, and he was delivered from the fear of death; his ends in his prayer there were answered, which were to shew the greatness of his sufferings, the impossibility of man's salvation in any other way, and that there could be no alteration made in the methods of obtaining it. He heard him on the cross with respect to the deliverance of him from man, with regard to his being forsaken by God, and for the forgiveness of his enemies. Now this period of time in which he was heard on account of these several things, is called *a time accepted*; or, as in the Hebrew text, עת רצון, *a time of good will, or acceptance*; a season in which God expressed good will to the sons of men, by sending his own son to work out salvation for them; this was good will to men, and not to angels, to such as were ungodly, enemies, sinners, and the worst of sinners: it was a time very grateful to him; 'twas *the accepted year of the Lord*; the sufferings, sacrifice, satisfaction, and righteousness of his son were well-pleasing to him; because his purposes, promises, and covenant transactions had their accomplishment, his perfections were glorified, and his people saved. And it was a time of acceptance, or an acceptable time to men, since it was the day of their salvation, and therefore must be exceedingly agreeable to all such who see their need of it, know the worth of it, and are sensible that there is no other way of salvation than by him. *And in the day of salvation have I succoured thee.* These words are still spoken to Christ, who whilst he was in human nature, working out the salvation of his people, by his obedience, sufferings, and death, was succoured, or helped by his father. This help was promised to him as man, and he expected it, and exercised faith on God for it, and which was actually and punctually given him; and which is no instance of weakness in Christ, who is the mighty God, and was mighty to save; but an indication of the father's regard to the human nature of Christ, and of his concern for the salvation of men; and also shews what power and strength were necessary to accomplish it. *Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.* These are the words of the apostle, applying the former to the present Gospel dispensation; which he introduces with prefixing a *behold* to each sentence, in order to raise both attention to, and admiration at what is delivered: *now is the accepted time*; not that the Gospel dispensation is a milder dispensation of things, in which God will accept of an imperfect sincere obedience to his law, in the room of a perfect one; or in which Christ is now offered to sinners, and it is left to them whether they will accept of him or no: but 'tis so called, because God and Christ now testify their good will to the sons of men, and are ready to accept of, and embrace poor sensible sinners coming to them; and because the Gospel publishes salvation by Christ, which, as it is worthy of their acceptation, cannot but be acceptable to them: *now is the day of salvation*: now is salvation preached, as being done, already obtained by Christ for sinners, the chief of sinners; it is now brought home to their souls by the ministration of the Gospel under the influence of the spirit of God; now sinners are convinced of their need of it, and that it can't be had elsewhere; now they are made to submit to Christ, to be saved by him, and him alone, are encouraged to believe in him, and are by him actually possessed of it. *Now* is, and not yesterday was, the day of salvation; and *now*, and that for ever, that is, as long as the Gospel dispensation continues; for it will be always *now* till all the elect of God are gathered in. This day of grace and salvation will never be over till that time comes; 'tis still *now is the day of salvation*; though men may have long withstood the ministration of the Gospel, and notwithstanding their manifold sins and transgressions. There's no withstanding the *now* of grace when it comes with the power of the Holy Ghost.

Ver. 3. *Giving no offence in any thing*, &c.] These words are in *connection* with ver. 1. and to be considered either as a continuation of the exhortation to others, that they would take care to give no offence to any; or rather as an account the apostle gives of himself, and other ministers, by way of example; and is as if he had said, I Paul, Timotheus, Sylvanus, and other ministers of the word, take all possible care to lay no stumbling-block in the way of the hearers of the Gospel; to give no offence to them that are without, or to them that are within, to Jew or Gentile, or to the church of God, neither by word nor writing, by doctrine or conversation, or in any way whatever: *that the ministry be not blamed*; the ministry of the word of reconciliation, which they had received of the Lord Jesus. The apostle knew there were persons enow who were waiting all opportunities, and taking all advantages to vilify and reproach the ministry of the Gospel, and so hinder its progress and spread; and that if that was once brought into contempt by the disagreeable conduct of the preachers of it, there would be but little hope of success from it. Some copies read,

our ministry: and so the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions; the Ethiopic version reads, *your ministry*.

Ver. 4. *But in all things approving ourselves*, &c.] It is not sufficient for a minister of the Gospel to avoid every thing that might bring any blot or scandal on his ministry; but he should in all things, and by all ways and means, proper, lawful, and laudable, approve, prove, and shew himself to be a true and faithful dispenser of the word. All in such an office ought to make it appear, that they are such by behaving and conducting *as the ministers of God*, as becomes such, whom he has chosen, called, and fitted for that service; and particularly *in*, or *by much patience*: by a large, constant, and continued exercise of that grace: and by bearing patiently many things for the sake of Christ, and his Gospel, without murmuring at the hand of God, or being angry with men, and without fainting and sinking in their own spirits: *in afflictions*: that is, in patiently bearing them. This word may be considered as a general word, including all sorts of afflictions whatever, of which the following are particular species: *in necessities*: want of food, drink, and raiment, being hungry, thirsty, and naked, as the apostles sometimes were: *in distresses*: both of body and mind; being in such straits and difficulties they know not where to look, what course to steer, or which way to turn themselves.

Ver. 5. *In stripes*, &c.] As the Apostle Paul particularly was, who was thrice beaten with rods, and five times scourged by the Jews with the scourge of forty stripes save one. *In imprisonments*; under which are included bonds, in which they often were for the Gospel of Christ: *in tumults*: and uproars of the people, when their lives were frequently in imminent danger: or *in tossings to and fro*; being drove from place to place through the fury of their enemies: *in labours*; in a laborious ministry of the word, and administration of ordinances; or by labouring with their own hands to supply their necessities: *in watchings*: being obliged to work night and day at their handlabour, and in preaching, praying, and singing psalms; which exercises they were often employed in at midnight: *in fastings*: by which are meant not voluntary, but involuntary ones, through want of food to eat.

Ver. 6. *By pureness*, &c.] The apostle having observed how he, and other ministers of God, shewed themselves to be such by patiently bearing every thing that was afflictive and distressing to the outward man, proceeds to shew how they approved themselves in other respects; and which more chiefly regard the inward man, the exercise of grace, and a spiritual behaviour: *by pureness*; of doctrine and conversation, chastity of body and mind, sincerity of heart, and integrity of life: *by knowledge*; of the Scriptures of truth, the mysteries of grace; or by a prudent conduct, a walking in wisdom with caution and circumspection: *by long-suffering*; not easily provoked to wrath, but bearing with patience every indignity and affront: *by kindness*: gentleness, sweetness of temper and manners, affability and courteousness: *by the Holy Ghost*; influencing and assisting in the exercise of every grace, and the discharge of every duty, or by the gifts of the Holy Ghost, ordinary and extraordinary: *by love unfeigned*; without dissimulation, being not in word only, but in deed and in truth towards the brethren, and to all men.

Ver. 7. *By the word of truth*, &c.] By preaching the Gospel, truly, sincerely, without any adulteration of it, which comes from the God of truth, has for its subject-matter Christ, who is the truth, and into which ministers are guided by the spirit of truth, and every doctrine of which is truth: *by the power of God*; accompanying the word to the conversion and salvation of multitudes of souls; or by the signs, wonders, and miracles which were wrought for the confirmation of it: by *the armour of righteousness, on the right hand, and on the left*: meaning, either the whole armour of God, with which a Christian is all over clothed from head to foot, and in the strength of Christ may engage any adversary without fear; or else particularly the sword of the spirit in the right hand, and the shield of faith in the left, whereby both the offensive and defensive part may be acted; or, as others think, uprightness of conscience, and holiness of life and conversation; with which being blessed, though on the one hand he meets with prosperity, and on the other hand with adversity, he's not lifted up with the one, nor cast down with the other; he's moved by neither, but passes on unconcerned.

Ver. 8. *By honour and dishonour*, &c.] Some persons think and speak honourably of us, and behave in a reverent manner towards us; they wish us well, bid us God speed, receive us into their houses, and treat us with respect: others think meanly of us, speak of us with the utmost contempt, and use us as if we were the filth of the world, and the off-scouring of all things; so we pass through the world; this is the treatment we meet with on the right hand and on the left; nor are we much affected with it: *by evil report and good report*; as it fares with our persons, so with our doctrine: some speak well of it, receive and embrace it; others blaspheme it, and have it in the utmost abhorrence; we are charged with the vilest of crimes, and our doctrines loaded with the most absurd and wicked consequences, and both branded in the most infamous manner by one set of men; and by others both our persons and principles are cleared and vindicated from all such aspersions, and are highly commended and applauded. *As deceivers*; for so they were accounted, as Christ was before them, by the unbelieving Jews, and by the false apostles, as if they were the authors, or abettors, and spreaders of errors, and the instruments of leading people aside. *And yet true*; true and faithful ministers of the word; true to their Lord and master; true to the trust committed to them; true to the Gospel of Christ, and to the souls of men.

Ver. 9. *As unknown, and yet well known*, &c.] Not unknown to Father, Son, and Spirit, or to one another, but to the world; and that not with respect to their outward estate, but their spiritual and eternal state; as that they were the chosen of God, the children of God, and born again; they knew not what a life they lived, or what they lived upon; and as they were unacquainted with their inward troubles, they were strangers to their spiritual joys here, and to what they shall partake of hereafter. Moreover, something more may be intended in this word *unknown*; as that they

were not owned, esteemed, and approved of by them, but slighted, despised, hated, and persecuted: *and yet well known;* to God the Father, who loved them with an everlasting love, chose them in Christ, gave them to him, made a covenant with him on their account, and sent his Son to redeem them, which knowledge of them is special, eternal, affectionate, approbative, and attended with care of them; well known to Jesus Christ, who knows all that are his, specially, distinctly, perfectly, and that from everlasting, bears a strong affection for them, takes great care of them, indulges them with intimate communion with him, and openly owns and acknowledges them as his own: well known to the Spirit of God, who enlightened and quickened them, regenerated and sanctified them, wrought faith and every other grace in them, witnessed their adoption to them, led them into all truth, filled and furnished them with his gifts, and dwelt in them, and abode with them, as the seal and earnest of their future glory; and were well known to the saints, and one another: they loved each other, delighted in each other's company; they knew each other's experiences, joys, and sorrows, and, in some measure, their hearts, and even their spiritual and eternal estate. *As dying, and behold we live.* They were as dying men, having the seeds of mortality in them, being subject to diseases, which bring on death; and especially as they carried about with them the dying of the Lord Jesus, were continually exposed to death, and in danger of it, lived in the views of it, had the sentence of it in themselves, and were appointed to it. And *behold,* to admiration *we live;* a natural life, which we have from God, depends upon him, and is preserved by him amidst a thousand dangers and enemies to which it is exposed; and we live a spiritual life, a life of grace from Christ, a life of faith on him, and communion with him. *As chastened and not killed; chastened* by men, and chastened by God; not in a way of vindictive wrath, but in a fatherly manner; but *not killed,* or put to a corporeal death by our persecutors, who have sought to take away our lives, but have not yet been suffered to do it: or by the Lord, by the means of afflictions, the messengers of death; these sometimes bring very near it, and God chastens by them, but does not as yet give over to death, because our time is not yet come, and our work not yet done.

Ver. 10. *As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing,* &c.] As to their outward appearance they are *sorrowful,* and oftentimes really so on account of sin, their own and others, by reason of afflictions, temporal and spiritual; and as to the state and condition of the church of Christ, and the interest of religion: and *yet always rejoicing:* not in themselves, or in any creature, but in the Lord, in the person, blood, and righteousness of Christ, and salvation by him. *As poor, yet making many rich.* It is, generally speaking, the lot of Christ's ministers to be *poor* in this world; and there are some reasons for it, why it is, and should be so; as that they might be maintained by the people, which is the ordinance of God; that it might appear that Christ's kingdom is not of this world; that the faith of men might not stand in the riches of the world, but in the power of God; that ministers might not be above their work, nor neglect it, nor drop it; and that they might not be ensnared and encumbered with the things of life. *And yet making many rich;* are instruments in making many souls rich in things spiritual; by shewing them their spiritual poverty, stripping them of what they trusted in, and valued themselves upon; directing them where true riches are, and furnishing them with spiritual knowledge, with the knowledge of things more worth than thousands of gold and silver. *As having nothing, and yet possessing all things;* for the apostles left all for Christ, were sent out bare by him; what they had they gave away, and were very destitute of worldly enjoyments: *and yet possessing all things:* they had food and raiment, with which they were content, what was sufficient for them, and which they had in mercy, and with a blessing; and then they enjoyed all spiritual good things; they had not only a right unto them, but were possessed of them; they had all things pertaining to life and godliness; they had Christ, and all things with him, and therefore could say as Jacob did, that they had enough, yea, that they had all things.

Ver. 11. *O ye Corinthians,* &c.] The apostle having exhorted the ministers of the church at Corinth to take care of their ministry, that they fulfil it, and that it might appear that the Gospel, and gifts fitting them to preach it, were not received in vain by them; all which he strengthens and encourages by his own example, and that of others, addresses the members of the church in a very pathetic manner, saying, *our mouth is open to you;* to speak our minds freely to you; we shall hide and conceal nothing from you, we shall deal with you with all plainness and faithfulness. This seems to refer unto, and pave the way for what he afterwards says about their unequal fellowship with unbelievers: *our heart is enlarged;* with love to you, and eager desires after your good; and 'tis from the abundance of our hearts, and hearty affection for you, that our mouth is open so freely to communicate to you.

Ver. 12. *Ye are not straitened in us,* &c.] The meaning of which is, either you are not brought into straits and difficulties by us; we don't afflict and distress you, or fill you with anguish and trouble; *but ye are straitened in your own bowels;* you are distressed by some among yourselves, who ought not to be with you, with whom you should have no fellowship and communion: or thus, you have room enough in our hearts, our hearts are so enlarged with love to you, that they are large enough to hold you all; an expression, setting forth the exceeding great love, and strong affection the apostle bore to the Corinthians; when, on the other hand, they had but very little love to him comparatively; he had a heart to hold them all without being straitened for room; and among all them they could scarce find room enough in their hearts and affections for him.

Ver. 13. *Now for a recompence in the same,* &c.] That your love to me may answer mine to you; that as you have my heart, I may have yours, and the same room in your heart, as you have in mine. The Vulgate Latin version reads, *having the same recompence;* and the Arabic version renders it, *grant to me the same recompence;* and the Syriac version, *recompense to me my usuries that are with you;* that is, repay me with affec-

tion, let love be returned for love. *I speak as unto my children*: which relation subsisting between us requires mutual affection; for as a father should love his children, so children should love their father: *be ye also enlarged*: in your love to me, as I am to you; and then, as if he should say, you will bear with, and take in good part the following exhortation and advice.

Ver. 14. *Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers, &c.*] This seems to be an allusion to the law in Deut. xxii. 10. and to be a mystical explanation of it; and is to be understood not as forbidding civil society and converse with unbelievers; for this is impracticable, then must believers needs go out of the world; this the many natural and civil relations subsisting among men make absolutely necessary; and in many cases is both lawful and laudable, especially when there is any opportunity or likelihood of doing them any service in a spiritual way: nor is it to be understood as dehorting from entering into marriage contracts with such persons; for such marriages the apostle, in his former epistle, had allowed to be lawful, and what ought to be abode by; though believers would do well carefully to avoid such an unequal yoke, since oftentimes they are hereby exposed to many snares, temptations, distresses, and sorrows, which generally more or less follow hereon: but there is nothing in the text or context that lead to such an interpretation; rather, if any particular thing is referred to, it is to joining with unbelievers in acts of idolatry: since one of the apostle's arguments to dissuade from being unequally yoked with unbelievers is, *what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?* and from the foregoing epistle it looks as if some in this church had joined with them in such practices; see 1 Cor. x. 14, 20, 21, 22. But I rather think that these words are a dissuasive in general, from having any fellowship with unbelievers in any thing sinful and criminal, whether in worship or in conversation: *for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness?* This, with what is said in the following verse, and in the beginning of the next to that, contain reasons or arguments engaging believers to attend to the exhortation given not to keep company with unbelievers. By *righteousness* is meant righteous persons, who are made the righteousness of God in Christ, to whom Christ is made righteousness, or to whom the righteousness of Christ is imputed for justification; and who also have principles of grace and holiness in their hearts, or have the kingdom of God in them, which consists of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost; and who being made free from the dominion of sin, are become servants of righteousness: and by *unrighteousness* is designed unrighteous persons, who are destitute of a justifying righteousness, are filled with all unrighteousness, and are, as it were, a mass and lump of iniquity; now, what fellowship can there be between persons of such distant characters? *And what communion hath light with darkness?* regenerate men are *made light in the Lord*: they are enlightened into their state and condition by nature, to see the exceeding sinfulness of sin, to behold the glory, beauty, fulness, and suitableness of Christ, so as to be sensible of their need of him, and to be able to look unto him for life and salvation; they are enlightened more or less into the doctrines of the Gospel, and the duties of religion; and their path is a shining light, shining more and more unto the perfect day. Unregenerate persons are *darkness* itself; they are dark and ignorant of God in Christ, of the way of salvation by Christ, of the work of the spirit of God upon the heart, and of the mysteries of grace; they know not themselves, nor the sad estate they are in; they are born, and brought up in darkness worse than Egyptian darkness; they go on in it, and if grace prevent not, will be cast into utter and eternal darkness. Now, what *communion* can there be between persons so different one from another? for what is more so than light and darkness? these the God of nature has divided from each other; and they are in nature irreconcileable to one another, and so they are in grace.

Ver. 15. *And what concord hath Christ with Belial? &c.*] The word *Belial* is an Hebrew word, and is only used in this place in the New Testament, but often in the Old; this word is differently read and pronounced, some copies read it *Beliar*, and accordingly in the Ethiopic version it is *Belhor*, and by Jerom read[j] *Belvir*: but he observes, that it is more rightly called *Belial*: in some copies it is *Belias*, and so Tertullian[k] read it; and Jerom[l] says, that most corruptly read it *Belias*, for *Belial*: some derive it from בלי, *Beli*, and עלה, *Alah*, and signifies *without ascent*; one in a very low condition, of low life, that never rises up, and comes to any thing; to which Kimchi's etymology of the word seems to agree, who says[m], that Belial is a wicked man, בל יעלה ובל יצליח, *who does not succeed, and does not prosper*: others say it signifies[n] one that is בלי עול, *Beli Ol*, *without a yoke*, without the yoke of the law; so Jarchi explains children of *Belial*, in Deut. xiii. 13. without yoke, who break off the yoke of God; and so say[o] the Talmudists, "children of "Belial, are children that break off עול שמים, *the* "*yoke of heaven* (*i. e.* the law) from their necks;" lawless persons, who are under no subjection to God or man: others[p] derive it from יעל, *Jaal*, and בלי, *Beli*, and so it signifies one that is unprofitable, does no good, and is good for nothing; and it is applied in Scripture to any wicked person, or thing; it is commonly rendered by the Chaldee paraphrast, a *wicked man*; and by Aquila and Suidas it is interpreted, *an apostate*, and so it is rendered here in the Arabic version; sometimes the corruption of nature is called *Belial* by the Jews[q], than which nothing can be more contrary to Christ; it is also a name of the devil; by Hesychius, *Beliar* is interpreted *a dragon*, by which name the devil is sometimes called; and here the Syriac version is, *what concord hath Christ with Satan?* most interpreters by Belial understand the devil, who has cast off the yoke of obedience to God, and is unprofitable, yea, noxious and hurtful to men; between whom and Christ there's no

[j] De Nominibus Hebraicis, fol. 106. K.
[k] De Corona, c. 10.
[l] Comment. in Ephes. iv. 27.
[m] Sepher Shorashim, rad. בל.
[n] Hieronym. Quaest. sive Trad. Heb. in Lib. Reg. fol. 74. I. Tom. 3. & in Ephes. iv. 27. R. Abraham Seba in Tzeror Hammor, fol. 141. 4. & 142. 2.
[o] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 111. 2.
[p] Philip Aquinas, Schindler, Cocceius, &c.
[q] Tzeror Hammor, fol. 143. 3. & 149. 2.

concord, but a perpetual enmity; and as there's no concord between Christ personal, and Belial the devil, so what can there be between Christ mystical the church, which goes by the name of Christ, 1 Cor. xii. 12. and wicked men, the sons of Belial; who have cast away the law of the Lord, are not subject to the law of God, nor can they be, and are become unprofitable to themselves, and others? *or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?* such have no part, and shall have no part or portion in one and the same thing; the believer's part and portion are God, Christ, and an eternal inheritance; the unbeliever's part and portion will be in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone; and therefore what part, society, or communion, can they have with one another?

Ver. 16. *And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?* &c.] That is, what association, confederation, or covenant-agreement can the saints, who are the temple of God, have with idols, or their worshippers? no more than the ark of the Lord had with Dagon, or Dagon with the ark; which when brought into his temple, and set by him, the idol fell down, and part of him was broke to pieces: *for ye are the temple of the living God:* some copies read *we are*, and so the Ethiopic version. The Corinthians, not only as particular believers, were the temples of God, both with respect to their souls and bodies, but they, as a church of Christ incorporated together, were the temple of God; wherefore the apostle does not say, ye are the *temples*, but *the temple* of the living God, in allusion to the temple built by Solomon; and that in respect to him the builder of it, who was a type of Christ, the son of David, the Prince of peace, the beloved of the Lord, who was to build the temple, the Gospel church, and to bear the glory; and as Solomon's temple was built on an eminence, on Mount Moriah, so the church is built upon a rock, higher than men, than angels, than the heavens, and out of the reach of men and devils, so as to hurt and destroy it. The matter of the temple at Jerusalem were timber of cedar, and costly stones, hewed, squared, and fitted for the building, before they were brought thither; so the proper materials of a Gospel church are such as are born of incorruptible seed, and therefore comparable to cedars; and are lively stones, hewed, fitted, and squared by the spirit and grace of God, and put and jointed in among the saints: Solomon's temple was a very stately magnificent building; it was overlaid within with pure gold, expressing the internal glory of Christ's church, which is all-glorious within, having the Lord himself to be the Glory in the midst of her: the church of Christ may be compared to the temple also, for the firmness of its foundations and pillars; Christ is the foundation of his church, and that itself is the pillar and ground of truth: that temple was holy, being set apart for the worship and service of God, as the church of Christ is sanctified by the spirit of God, and is built up a spiritual house, to offer the spiritual sacrifices of prayer and praise to God: it is called the *temple of God*, because it is of his building, and where he dwells; *of the living God*, because he has life in himself, and gives both spiritual and eternal life to his people; and in opposition to the idols of the Gentiles, who have no life in them; are representations of dead men, can't give life, nor any of the comforts of life to their votaries; and who, by worshipping them, expose themselves to eternal death. The evidence of the saints, or church of Christ being the temple of the living God, is as follows, *as God hath said*, Lev. xxvi. 11, 12. Ezek. xxxvii. 26, 27. *I will dwell in them:* not by his omnipresence, so he dwells everywhere; nor by his omnipotence, so he dwells in, and with all his creatures, supporting them by the word of his power; but by his spirit and grace, or by his spiritual and gracious presence, which he favours his people with, in the use of ordinances, and where according to his promises they may expect it: *and walk in them.* This denotes the communion God is pleased to afford his church and people, and that gracious presence of his with them, whilst they are sojourners here, and passing on to the heavenly glory; as God is said to *walk in a tent and tabernacle* with the *Israelites*, whilst they were travelling through the wilderness to Canaan; so he walks in his temple, and with his church and people, whilst they are travelling home to the heavenly Canaan; he walks in them, as in his court and palace, or as in his garden, where he takes much pleasure and delight, and great notice and care of them. R. Solomon Jarchi explains the phrase in Lev. xxvi. 12. *I will walk among you*, thus; I will walk with you in the garden of Eden, or paradise, as one of you, and ye shall not be afraid of me: but the passage regards the presence of God with his people here, and not hereafter: *and I will be their God:* not as the God of nature and providence only, but as the God of all grace; as their covenant God and father in Christ; which is the greatest happiness that can be enjoyed: *and they shall be my people:* his special people, loved by him with a peculiar love, on whom he bestows peculiar blessings; and who are made a willing people, willing to be his people by powerful grace, and are formed for himself, his service, and glory: hence it follows,

Ver. 17. *Wherefore come out from among them*, &c.] Since they were the temple of the living God, built up an habitation for the Most High; since he resided among them, took his walks in the midst of them, was their God, and they were his people. These words are taken out of Isa. lii. 11. where the several phrases here used may be observed. They seem to be directed to the Israelites, and particularly to the priests and Levites, who bore the vessels of the Lord; and are fitly applied to believers under the Gospel dispensation, who are by Christ made priests unto God. They are usually interpreted by the Jewish writers, as a call to the Jews to come out of captivity, to quit Babylon and Persia, and the several cities and countries where they were; and are applied in Rev. xviii. 4. to mystical Babylon, the church of Rome, as a call to God's people, to leave the superstitions and idolatries of that church, lest they be partakers of her plagues; and here, by the apostle, as an exhortation to believers in general, to forsake the company and conversation of the men of the world: who may be said to come out from among them at first conversion, when they are called to forsake their own people, and their father's house, to leave their native country, and seek an heavenly one; and when, in consequence of effectual calling grace, their conversations are different from what

they were before, and from other Gentiles; when they dislike their former companions, abhor their sinful conversation, abstain from it, keep out of it, as being infectious, hurtful, and detrimental to them; when they have no fellowship with the workers of iniquity, but reprove them both by words and deeds, which is their incumbent duty: the phrase in Isaiah is, *go ye out from the midst of her;* which Kimchi interprets, *out of the midst of every city in which thou art:* that is, in which idolaters lived; and well agrees with ἐκ μέσου αὐτῶν here, *out of the midst of them: and be ye separate, saith the Lord:* this phrase is not to be met with expressly in our version of the above text in Isaiah, but is signified by several expressions in it; the words rendered *depart ye, depart ye,* are by the Targum, or Chaldee paraphrase on the place, expressed by אתפרשו אתפרשו, *be ye separate, be ye separate,* which are the very words of the apostle here; and the phrase, *touch no unclean thing,* is explained by R. Aben Ezra, שיבדלו מאומות העולם, *that they might be separate from the nations of the world* and another word, הברו, *be ye clean,* signifies such a purgation as is made by separation, by removing the clean from the unclean, by separating the wheat from the chaff. The people of God are a separate people in election, redemption, and effectual vocation, and ought to be so in their conduct and conversation; they ought to separate themselves from all superstition and will-worship in religious matters, and from the evil customs and manners of the world, though they are sure to become a prey, and to expose themselves to the contempt and rage of it: *and touch not the unclean thing.* The allusion is to several laws under the former dispensation, which forbid touching many things which were accounted unclean, whereby pollution was contracted, and the persons were obliged to a ceremonial cleansing; see Levit. v. 2, 3. Numb. xix. 11, 16. It has no regard to touching, tasting, and eating any sort of food, which was forbid as unclean by the ceremonial law; for the difference between meats clean and unclean was now removed; but if any thing is particularly designed by *the unclean thing,* it seems to be idolatry, and to be a prohibition of joining with worshippers of idols in their idolatrous practices, whereby a moral pollution is contracted; since in the beginning of the former verse 'tis said, *what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?* though it is rather intended in general, to forbid all communion and fellowship with unclean persons and things, not to touch them, to come nigh them, or have any thing to do with them: *and I will receive you:* this, and what follows in the next verse, are said to encourage believers to keep at a distance from wicked and immoral persons, whose company and conversation are dishonourable, ensnaring, and defiling. These persons had been already received into the love of God, his best and strongest affections, from which there can be no separation; and in the covenant of grace, which as it cannot be removed, so neither could they be removed out of that; they were received into the church of Christ, and had a place and a name in it, better than that of sons and daughters; and as they had been received by Christ, when they came to him as poor perishing sinners without him, so they were still received graciously, notwithstanding their many backslidings: neither of these therefore is the sense of this passage: but, that whereas by quitting society with carnal men, they would expose themselves to their resentments; the Lord here promises, that he would take them under the wings of his protection; he would take care of them and preserve them, keep them as the apple of his eye, and be a wall of fire round about them, whilst in this world; and when he had guided them by his counsel here, would *receive* them *to glory:* this clause seems to be taken from the latter part of Isa. lii. 12. which may be rendered, *the God of Israel will gather you; i. e.* to himself, and protect them.

Ver. 18. *And will be a father unto you,* &c.] The same is promised to Solomon, 2 Sam. vii. 14. and said of Israel, Jer. xxxi. 9. which is thought to be referred unto. This is not to be understood of the first commencement of this relation, as though God now began to be their father; nor indeed of the first manifestation of it, which had been already made to their souls by the spirit of adoption, witnessing to their spirits that God was their father, and they were his children; but of his acting, and continuing to act the part of a father to them; which he does, by pitying his children, sympathizing with them, and supporting them under all their trials and afflictions; by taking care of them, that they have food and raiment convenient for them; by laying up for them, as he has done in his covenant, in his son, and in heaven; by communicating unto them, by passing by their offences and miscarriages to him, and by correcting them for their good, and at last giving them the heavenly inheritance, and putting them into the possession of it: *and ye shall be my sons and daughters.* This also does not relate to the first act of adoption, when these persons first became the sons and daughters of God; for so they were by adopting grace, in the mind, counsel, and covenant of God, from eternity; as such they were considered when given to Christ, when he assumed their nature, and died to gather them together in one; and as antecedent to faith and the work of the spirit upon their souls: nor even of the first discovery of this grace unto them; but the meaning is, that whereas they were the sons and daughters of God, they should be treated as such; whenever he spoke to them, or dealt with them in providence, he would speak to them and deal with them as children; or it may refer to the more full and open manifestation of their sonship, before angels and men, at the appearance of Christ: to all which is added, *saith the Lord Almighty:* for confirmation-sake, and to encourage the faith of the saints; since he who said all this is the Lord God Almighty, and so able to perform it; and of which, and his willingness, no question is to be made, since he has said it.

CHAP. VII.

THIS chapter begins with an inference deduced, from what is said in the latter part of the foregoing chapter, engaging to holiness of heart and life, in opposition to filthiness of flesh and spirit, ver. 1. and the apostle, in order to prevail upon the Corinthians kindly to receive his exhortations, observes his own conduct, and that of his fellow-ministers towards them; as that they had done them no injury by the advice they had given them, nor had they corrupted them by unsound doctrine, or had coveted their worldly substance, ver. 2. not that by so saying he would insinuate as if they had been guilty of injury, corruption, and covetousness; it was far from his thoughts to suggest any thing of that kind concerning them, for whom he had so great an affection, as never to separate from them, but living and dying to continue the same regards unto them, ver. 3. and which he expresses, and had shewn everywhere, by the freedom of speech he had used concerning them, and his boasting of them, and the joy and comfort he had in the midst of his troubles, by the good news he had received of them, ver. 4. which he had in the following manner; for though when in Macedonia he had no rest, partly through outward troubles, and partly through inward fears, ver. 5. yet meeting with Titus, who had been with them, and had brought an account of their state, it was a means God made use of for the comfort of him, ver. 6. and it was not merely the sight of Titus that yielded him this consolation, but the comfortable reception he had met with at Corinth; and also the good effect the apostle's letter written to them had upon them, as related by Titus; what a desire they had to see him, what grief that they should sin, and by it distress him, and what a fervent affection they had for him ver. 7. for which reason he did not repent of the letter he sent them, though it did produce sorrow in them, since that was of the right kind, and was but for a time, ver. 8. yea, he was so far from it, that he was glad, not merely on account of their sorrow, but because their sorrow was a godly one, and issued in repentance; and so they were no losers, but gainers by the epistle, it producing such good effects, ver. 9. which leads him to distinguish between a true right godly sorrow, and a worldly one, and that by their consequents; repentance and salvation following upon the one, and death upon the other, ver. 10. the fruits and evidences of which godly and true repentance he makes mention of in seven particulars, by which it appeared that their sorrow and repentance were sincere and genuine, ver. 11. when the apostle proceeds to observe to them the end he had in view in writing to them, upon the account of the incestuous person, in which he had used great plainness and faithfulness; and this was not merely on account of him that offended, nor only on account of the person injured by him, but chiefly to testify his care of, and concern for their welfare, as a church of Christ, ver. 12. and inasmuch as though they had been grieved, yet were now comforted, it added to the consolation of the apostle and his companions, and the more delighted they were, when they understood what a reception Titus had among them, what reverence he was had in, what respect was shewn him, and care was taken of him, ver. 13. and the rather, seeing the apostle had boasted of the liberality, generosity, and affectionate regard of the Corinthians to the ministers of the Gospel, Titus found it to be all true what he had said; so that he had no reason to be ashamed, as he must have been, had they behaved otherwise, ver. 14. and still it gave him further pleasure, that by their behaviour to Titus, they had gained his heart, and increased his affection towards them; which he could not but express, whenever he called to mind, or made mention of the great respect, veneration, and obedience, they yielded to him, ver. 15. and indeed it was not only in this instance, but in all others, the apostle had confidence concerning them, which heightened his joy and pleasure in them, ver. 16.

Ver. 1. *Having therefore these promises, &c.*] That God will walk in his temple, and dwell in his churches, be their God, and they his people, that he will receive them, and be their father, and they his sons and daughters: which promises they had not in hope, as Old-Testament saints had the promises of the Messiah and his kingdom, and as New-Testament saints have of the resurrection, the new heavens and new earth, and of appearing with Christ in glory; but in hand, in actual possession; for God was really become their God and father, and they were his people and children; they had had communion with him, and were received, protected, and preserved by him; which promises and blessings of grace, and which are absolute and unconditional, the apostle makes use of to engage them to purity and holiness; and is a clear proof, that the doctrine of an absolute and unconditional covenant of grace has no tendency to licentiousness, but the contrary: and that his following exhortation might be attended to, and cheerfully received, he uses a very affectionate appellation, *dearly beloved*; so they were of God, being his people, his sons and daughters, adopted, justified, called, and chosen by him; and so they were by the apostle and his fellow-ministers, who, as he says in a following verse, were *in their hearts to die and live with* them; some copies read *brethren*, and so the Ethiopic version. The exhortation he urges them to, and, that it might be the better received, joins himself with them in it, is, *let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit*: by *the filthiness of the flesh* is meant external pollution, defilement by outward actions, actions committed in the body, whereby the man is defiled; such as all impure words, filthiness, and foolish talking, all rotten and corrupt communication, which defile a man's own body; as the tongue, a little member, when so used does, and corrupts the good manners of others; all filthy actions, as idolatry, adultery, fornication, incest, sodomy, murder, drunkenness, revellings, &c. and

every thing that makes up a filthy conversation, which is to be hated, abhorred, and abstained from by the saints: by *filthiness of the spirit* is meant internal pollution, defilement by the internal acts of the mind, such as evil thoughts, lusts, pride, malice, envy, covetousness, and the like: such a distinction of טומאת הגוף, *the filthiness of the body*, and טומאת הנפש, *the filthiness of the soul*, is to be met with among the Jews; who say [t], that when a man has taken care to avoid the former, it is fit he should take care of the latter; they also call the evil imagination, or corruption of nature, *the filth of the body* [u]. Now when the apostle says, *let us cleanse ourselves*, this does not suppose that men have a power to cleanse themselves from the pollution of their nature, or the defilement of their actions; for this is God's work alone, as appears from his promises to cleanse his people from their sins; from the end of Christ's shedding his blood, and the efficacy of it; from the sanctifying influences of the spirit; and from the prayers of the saints to God, to create in them clean hearts, to wash them thoroughly from their iniquity, and cleanse them from their sin: besides, the apostle is not here speaking either of the justification of these persons, in which sense they were already cleansed, and that thoroughly, from all their sins and iniquities; nor of the inward work of sanctification, in respect of which they were sprinkled with clean water, and were washed in the laver of regeneration; but what the apostle respects is the exercise of both internal and external religion, which lies in purity of heart and conversation, the one not being acceptable to God without the other; he is speaking of, and exhorting to the same thing, as in the latter part of the preceding chapter; and suggests, that it becomes those who have received such gracious promises to be separate from sin and sinners, to abstain from all appearance of sin, and to have no fellowship with sinners; to *lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness*, and, under a sense of either external or internal pollution, to have recourse to the fountain opened; to deal by faith with the blood of Christ, which cleanses from all sin, of heart, lip, and life; and which is the only effectual method a believer can make use of, to cleanse himself from sin; namely, by washing his garments, and making them white in the blood of the Lamb: *perfecting holiness in the fear of God*: by *holiness* is not meant the work of sanctification upon the heart, for that is wholly the work of the spirit of God, and not of man; he begins it, carries it on, and perfects it of himself: but holiness of life and conversation is here designed, which in conversion the people of God are called unto, and which highly becomes them: and this they are to be *perfecting*; not that a believer is able to live a life of holiness, without sin being in him, or committed by him; this is impossible and impracticable in the present life; but the sense of the word επιτελουντες is, that he is to be carrying on a course of righteousness and holiness to the end; to the end of his life, he is to persevere as in faith, so in holiness; as he is to go on believing in Christ, so he is to go on to live soberly, righteously, and godly, to the end of his days; which requires divine power to preserve him from sin, and keep him from falling; and the grace of God, the strength of Christ, and the assistance of the Spirit, to enable him to perform acts of holiness, and the several duties of religion, and to continue in well-doing: all which is to be done, *in the fear of God*; not in a servile slavish fear, a fear of hell and damnation, but in a filial fear, a reverential affection for God, an humble trust in him, and dependence on him, for grace and strength; it is that fear which has God for its author, is a blessing of the new covenant, is implanted in regeneration, and is increased by discoveries of pardoning grace; and it has God for its object, not his wrath and vindictive justice, but his goodness, grace, and mercy. This shews from what principle, and upon what views believers act in a course of righteousness and holiness; not from the fear of hell, nor from the fear of men, or with a view to gain their applause, but as in the sight of God, from a reverential affection to him, a child-like fear of him, and with a view to his glory.

Ver. 2. *Receive us*, &c.] Into your affections, let us have a place in your hearts, as you have in ours: Gospel ministers ought to be received with love and respect, both into the hearts and houses of the saints; for *he that receiveth you*, says Christ, *receiveth me*, Matt. x. 40. Their doctrines are to be received in the love of them, and with faith and meekness; and this may be another part of the apostle's meaning here; receive the word and ministry of reconciliation, which we as the ambassadors of Christ bring, and the several exhortations we give in his name, particularly the last mentioned: next follow reasons, or arguments, engaging them to comply with this request, *we have wronged no man*; we have done no man any injury in his person, estate, or name. There is one among you that has done wrong, and another among you that has suffered wrong, ver. 12. and we have given very faithful advice to the church how to behave in this affair; but, in so doing, we have neither wronged him nor you; and as not in this, so neither in any other case: if I or my fellow-apostles have wronged you in any thing, it is in not being *burdensome* to you for our maintenance, *forgive me this wrong*, ch. xii. 13. for in no other respect have we done you any: some understand this of any lordly power, or tyrannical domination they had exercised over them, denied by the apostle; we have not behaved in an insolent manner towards you, we have not lorded it over God's heritage, or claimed any dominion over your faith, or required any unreasonable obedience and submission from you: *we have corrupted no man*; neither by our doctrines and principles, which are perfectly agreeable to the word of God, make for the good of souls, and tend to the glory of Christ; nor by our example, but have been careful to lead such lives and conversations as are becoming the Gospel of Christ, adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour, and are patterns to them that believe; nor have we corrupted by flatteries, or with bribes, any of the leading men among you, in order to gain their good will, and thereby respect and credit among others: *we have defrauded no man*, or *coveted no man*; no man's silver, gold, or apparel; we have not sought yours, but you; not to amass wealth to ourselves, but that we

[t] Tzeror Hammor, fol. 111. 2.

[u] Zohar in Lev. fol. 43. 2.

might be useful to your souls, for your spiritual good, and serviceable to the glory of Christ: we have not through covetousness made merchandise of you, with feigned words, as the false apostles have done, therefore receive us.

Ver. 3. *I speak not this to condemn you,* &c.] Referring either to the exhortations before given, to have no sinful conversation with unbelievers, and to cleanse themselves from all impurity, external and internal; and to go on in a course of holiness, in the fear of God, to the end of life; or to the account just given of himself and fellow-ministers; and his sense is this, the exhortations I have given must not be so understood, as though I charged and accused you with keeping company with unbelievers, or as though you were not concerned for purity of life and conversation; or when I remove the above-mentioned things from myself and others, I mean not to lay them upon you, as if I thought that you had wronged, corrupted, or defrauded any; when I clear myself and others, I do not design to accuse or condemn you; my view is only to the false apostles, who have done these things, when we have not, and therefore we have the best claim to your affections: *for I have said before, you are in our hearts;* you are inscribed on our hearts, engraven there, *ye are our epistle written in our hearts,* ch. iii. 2. *ye are not straitened in us,* ch. vi. 12. you have a place and room enough in our affections, which are strong towards you, insomuch that it is our desire and resolution *to die and live with you;* or together: neither death nor life shall separate our love, or destroy our friendship; there's nothing we more desire than to live with you: and should there be any occasion for it, could freely die with you, and for you.

Ver. 4. *Great is my boldness of speech towards you,* &c.] Or *liberty of speaking,* which I use with you; I very freely, and without any disguise, open my mind to you; I faithfully tell you your faults; I am free in my exhortations and counsels to you, as in the case of the incestuous person, and in other instances, which is a sign of true friendship; for had I any suspicion of you, or not cordial affection for you, I should have been more reserved, more upon my guard, and have spoke and wrote with more caution: besides, *great is my glorying,* or *boasting of you;* of your faith in Christ, your love to the people of God, respect to the ministers of the Gospel, obedience to us, and very great liberality to the poor saints, of which the apostle frequently boasts in this epistle: now as speaking freely to them when present with them, or in writing to them, so glorying in them, and speaking well of them when absent, clearly shewed what an opinion he had of them, and what true hearty respect he had for them: *I am filled with comfort,* says he; not only with divine and spiritual consolations from God, but with the news Titus brought of the state of this church, of the good effect the apostle's reproof and advice had both upon them, and the offender among them, and of their tender and affectionate regard to him: this filled him brimful of comfort, yea, adds he, *I am exceeding joyful;* I abound, I over-abound in joy; such is the joy that possesses my soul, at the tidings brought me, that it superabounds all the sorrow and anguish of spirit, out of which I wrote unto you, occasioned by the unhappy affair among you: yea, it makes me inexpressibly joyful *in all our tribulation;* which is not small we meet with, wherever we go, in preaching the Gospel of Christ.

Ver. 5. *For when we were come into Macedonia,* &c.] Whither Paul went in quest of Titus, not finding him at Troas, ch. ii. 12, 13. and where he met with him, and had the agreeable account from him of the state of this church; but here, as elsewhere, they had their troubles: *our flesh had no rest;* that is, their outward man, their bodies; they were continually fatigued with preaching, disputing, fighting; what with false teachers, and violent persecutors, they had no rest in their bodies; though, in their souls, they had divine support and spiritual consolation; and it was no small addition to their joy to hear of the flourishing condition of this church: *but were troubled on every side;* from every quarter, by all sorts of enemies; see ch. iv. 8. *Without were fightings, within were fears;* there seems to be an allusion to Deut. xxxii. 25. They had continual combats with false teachers, and furious persecutors, *without* the church, or in the world, or in their bodies; and *within* the church, or in themselves, in their own minds, had many fears, lest any should be discouraged by the violence of persecutions, or be drawn aside by the doctrines of the false apostles: and as it was with the apostles in these respects, so it is with private believers: *without are fightings;* their outward conversation in this life is a warfare; partly with false teachers, with whom they fight the *good fight of faith,* contend for the doctrine of faith, using the spiritual weapons of the Scriptures of truth; and partly with the men of the world, to whose rage and contempt they are exposed, and among whom they endure a *great fight of afflictions,* with patience, and in the exercise of faith, whereby they gain the victory over the world; and partly with Satan, their avowed adversary, and implacable enemy, against whom they wrestle in the strength of Christ, making use of the whole armour of God provided for them, by the help of which, through divine grace, they come off more than conquerors; and partly with the lusts and corruptions, or open prevailing iniquities which are in the world, to which they oppose themselves, and, by the power of God keeping them, are preserved from: not that their only fightings are thus without; for there is, as it were, a company of two armies within them, sin and grace, flesh and spirit, opposing each other: and hence, as well as from other causes, are *fears within;* about their interest in everlasting love, electing grace, and the covenant of grace; about the presence of God with them, and the truth of grace in them; about their interest in Christ, their sonship, their final perseverance, and enjoyment of the heavenly glory: and though these fears are not their excellencies, but their infirmities, yet this will be more or less their case, till that state takes place, when there will be no more fightings, no more fears.

Ver. 6. *Nevertheless, God that comforteth those that are cast down,* &c.] Or *humble ones:* such as are humbled under the afflicting hand of God, and have low and mean apprehensions of themselves; these God looks unto, dwells with, revives their hearts, cheers their drooping spirits, and fills them with comforts: he has been used to do so with such persons; he has pro-

mised comfort to them; they may expect it, and the apostle experienced it; and which he refers to God as the author of it, as he had done in the beginning of this epistle, calling him *the God of all comfort*; he was the efficient cause, the means by which it was effected was the coming of Titus: *comforted us by the coming of Titus*; to whom the apostle bore a very great affection, he being his son in a spiritual sense, a companion with him in his travels, and of great usefulness and service in the ministration of the Gospel: so that the very sight of him gave him pleasure; and the more, inasmuch as he had for some time longed to see him, that he might have some account from him of the affairs of this church.

Ver. 7. *And not by his coming only*, &c.] It was not barely by his coming, that he and his fellow-ministers were so much comforted: *but by the consolation wherewith he was comforted in you*. The church at Corinth received Titus with all respect and reverence; treated him in the most kind and tender manner; satisfied him in the affair of the incestuous person; greatly refreshed his spirits with an account of their faith in Christ, experience of the grace of God, and their regard and close attachment to the honour of religion, and the interest of the Redeemer; many comfortable opportunities had he with them, in preaching among them, and conversing with them; and the account of this added to the apostle's consolation; for the joys and comforts of one believer yield a considerable pleasure, and are matter of joy and comfort, to another: *when he told us your earnest desire*; that is, of seeing the apostle, of satisfying him in the thing he had complained of, and of reformation in their conduct, and the discipline of Christ's house for the future: *your mourning*; for the evil that had been committed among them; the dishonour it had brought upon the doctrine and ways of Christ; their remissness, carelessness, and neglect in discharging their duty; and the grief and sorrow occasioned hereby to the apostle: *your fervent mind toward me*; in vindicating him, his character, doctrine, and conduct, against the false apostles, and others: *so that I rejoiced the more*; his joy on this narrative of things abundantly exceeded his troubles and afflictions, which surrounded him on every side, and overcame and extinguished that sorrow, which had possessed him on their account; and greatly added to the joy he felt by the coming of Titus, and the consolation that he had met with at Corinth.

Ver. 8. *For though I made you sorry with a letter*, &c.] His former epistle, relating to the incestuous person: *I do not repent, though I did repent*; not of writing the letter, which was wrote by divine inspiration; but of the sorrow occasioned by it, though now he did not repent of that: *for I perceive that the same epistle made you sorry, though it were but for a season*: inasmuch as the sorrow was true, hearty, and genuine, though it was but for a time, the apostle was entirely satisfied, and the more pleased, because of its brevity, since it was sincere.

Ver. 9. *Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry*, &c.] Their grief and sorrow, as a natural passion, was no matter or cause of joy to him; nor was this what he sought after, being what he could take no real pleasure in; for so far as that was a pain to them, it was a pain to him: *but that ye sorrowed to repentance*; their sorrow issued in true evangelical repentance, and this was the ground of his rejoicing; for as there is joy in heaven among the angels, at the repentance of a sinner, so there is joy in the church below, among the saints and ministers of the Gospel, when either sinners are brought in, or backsliders returned by repentance: *for ye were made sorry after a godly sort*; what gave him so much joy and satisfaction was, that their sorrow was of the right sort; it was a godly sorrow, they sorrowed after; or according to God, according to the will of God, and for sin, as it was committed against him; it was a sorrow that God wrought in them: *that ye might receive damage by us in nothing*; what added to his pleasure was, that his writing to them, and the effect it produced, had not been in the least detrimental to them; things had worked so kindly, and this sorrow had wrought in such a manner, that they were not hurt in their souls, but profited; nor in their church-state, they had not lost one member by it; nay, the offender himself, which was the occasion of all this trouble, was recovered and restored by these means.

Ver. 10. *For godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation*, &c.] These words contain a reason, proving that they had received no damage, but profit by the sorrow that had possessed them, from the nature of it, a *godly* sorrow; a sorrow which had God for its author; it did not arise from the power of free will, nor from the dictates of a natural conscience, nor from a work of the law on their hearts, or from a fear of hell and damnation, but it sprung from the free grace of God; it was a gift of his grace, the work of his spirit, and the produce of his almighty power; being such, which no means, as judgments, mercies, or the most powerful ministry of themselves could effect; it was owing to divine instructions; it was heightened and increased with a discovery of the love of God, and views of pardoning grace and mercy, being attended with faith in the Lord Jesus Christ: it had God also for its object, as well as its author: it was a sorrow, דמטל אלהא, *which is for God*, as the Syriac version reads the words, and also the Ethiopic; on the account of God, his honour, interest, and glory; it was a sorrow for sin, because it was committed against a God of infinite holiness, justice, and truth, goodness, grace, and mercy; and it was a sorrow, κατὰ Θεὸν, *according to God*, according to the mind and will of God; it was, as it is rendered by the Arabic version, *grateful to God*; what he took notice of, observed, and approved of; and was also such a sorrow as bore some resemblance to what in God goes by the name of grieving and repenting, as that he had made man, because of sin; there being in it a displicency with sin, an hatred of it, and a repentance that ever it was committed: moreover, this sorrow is further described, from its salutary operation, it *worketh repentance*; it is the beginning of it, a part of it, an essential part of it, without which there is no true repentance; this produces it, issues in it, even in an ingenuous confession of sin, a forsaking of it, and in bringing forth fruits meet for repentance, in the life and conversation: and this repentance is *unto salvation*; not the cause or author of it, for that is Christ alone; nor the condition of it, but is itself a blessing of salvation, a part of it,

the initial part of it, by which, and faith we enter upon the possession of salvation; it is an evidence of interest in it, and issues in the full enjoyment of it: and this, or repentance, is such as is *not to be repented of*; or that is *stable* and immovable, as the Vulgate Latin version renders it; which *never returns*, or goes back, as the Syriac version, but remains the same unrepented of; for to either of them may it be applied: salvation is not to be repented of; it is not repented of by God, who repents not, neither of the thing itself, nor of the way and manner in which it is effected, nor of the persons saved by it, and his choice of them to it; nor is it repented of by them, who believe in Christ to the saving of their souls: nor is true repentance, which is connected with it, to be repented of; God does not repent of giving it, for *his gifts and calling are without repentance*; nor does the repenting sinner repent of it; nor has he any occasion, since it is unto life, even *unto eternal life*, as the Ethiopic version here renders it; and as it is called *repentance unto life*, in Acts xi. 18. This sorrow is likewise illustrated by its contrary, *but the sorrow of the world worketh death*; a worldly sorrow is such, as is common to men of the world, as Cain, Pharaoh, Judas, and others; it springs from worldly selfish principles, and proceeds on worldly views; it is often nothing more than a concern for the loss of worldly things, as riches, honours, *&c.* or for a disappointment in the gratification of worldly lusts and pleasures: and this *worketh death*; temporal and eternal death; it sometimes brings diseases and disorders on the body, which issue in death; and sometimes puts men upon destroying themselves, as it did Ahitophel and Judas; it works in the minds of men a fearful apprehension of eternal death, and, if grace prevent not, issues in it.

Ver. 11. *For behold, this self-same thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort*, &c.] The apostle proceeds to describe godly sorrow by its effects, which are so many evidences of the sincerity and genuineness of it; some of the things mentioned are peculiar to the case of the Corinthians, and others common to evangelical repentance in any: *what carefulness it wrought in you*; to remove the incestuous person from communion with them, which they were very negligent of before; to sin no more after this sort; to keep up, for the future, a more strict and regular discipline in the church; to perform good works in general, and not to offend God: *yea, what clearing of yourselves*; not by denying the fact, or lessening, or defending it; but by acknowledging their neglect, praying it might be overlooked, declaring that they were not partakers of the sin; nor did they approve of it, but disliked and abhorred it, and were highly pleased with the method the apostle advised to: *yea, what indignation*; not against the person of the offender, but against his sin; and not his only, but their own too, in not appearing against him, and taking notice of him sooner; and particularly that they should act in such a manner, as to deserve the just rebuke of the apostle: *yea, what fear*; not of hell and damnation, as in wicked men and devils, who repent not; but of God, and of grieving his ministers; and lest the corruption should spread in the church, as the apostle had suggested, *a little leaven leavens the whole lump*: *yea, what vehement desire*; of seeing the apostle; of giving him full satisfaction; of behaving in quite another manner for the time to come; and to be kept from evil, and to honour God by a becoming conversation: *yea, what zeal*; for God and his glory; for restoring the discipline of the church; for the doctrines of the Gospel; for the ordinances of Christ's house; for the supporting the character of the apostle, and other ministers of the word, against the false apostles: *yea, what revenge*; not of persons in a private way, vengeance belongs to God; but of all disobedience, particularly that of the unhappy criminal among them, which has shewn in the punishment inflicted on him by many: *in all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter*; of the incestuous person: it appeared plainly that they did not consent to, and approve of his sin; and though at first they were unconcerned about it, did not mourn over it as they ought, nor make such haste to deal with the offender as they should, yet having discovered true repentance for their sloth, negligence, and indulgence, they are acquitted, and stand, in the apostle's view of them, as if they had not offended.

Ver. 12. *Wherefore, though I wrote unto you*, &c.] Meaning in his former epistle, with so much sharpness and severity, and as may have been thought too much: *I did it not for his cause that had done the wrong*; not for the sake of the incestuous person only and chiefly, not merely for his correction and restoration; though these things were intended, and earnestly desired by the apostle: *nor for his cause that suffered wrong*; that is, the father of the incestuous person, who had been injured by this wicked action; it was not only or merely out of favour and respect to him, and that some compensation should be made to him in a church-way, by detesting the crime, casting out the offender, and declaring themselves on the side of the injured person, and against him that had done the injury: *but that our care for you, in the sight of God, might appear unto you*; some copies, and the Complutensian edition, and the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, read, *that your care for us*, &c. and then the sense is, that you might have an opportunity of shewing your affection for us, your regard to us, how readily you obey us in all things; but the other reading is to be preferred, the meaning of which is, that the apostle in writing did not so much consult and regard the private good of any particular person, either the injurer or the injured, though these were not out of his view; but he wrote in the manner he did, chiefly that it might be manifest what a concern he had for the good and welfare of the whole church; lest that should be corrupted, and receive any damage from such a notorious delinquent being tolerated or connived at among them; and that it was such a care and concern as was real, hearty, and sincere, was well known to God, and for the truth of which he could appeal to him.

Ver. 13. *Therefore we were comforted in your comfort*, &c.] In the comfortable situation the church was in; not in their grief and sorrow, as a natural passion, but in the effects of it as a godly sorrow; by which it appeared that their repentance was genuine, and that they were clear in the matter that had given so much trouble; and that things had so well succeeded for the welfare and more comfortable estate of the church for the future. The comfortable estate, flourishing con-

dition, and well-being of churches, yield great pleasure and consolation to the ministers of the Gospel; the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions read, *our comfort: yea, and exceedingly the more joyed we, for the joy of Titus*: not only the repentance of the Corinthians, and the blessed effects of that, occasioned joy in the apostle; but what added to it, and increased it the more abundantly, was the joy of Titus, which he had been a partaker of during his stay with them: *because his spirit was refreshed by you all*: not by one only, or a few, but by all the members of the church; he was received by them with great respect, provided for in a liberal manner, treated with all humanity and courteousness; and, above all, his mind was eased and filled with an unexpected pleasure, to find them in such an agreeable frame of mind; so sensible of their neglect of duty, so ready to reform, so united in themselves, so affected to the apostle, and so determined to abide by the order, ordinances, and truths of the Gospel, against all false teachers.

Ver. 14. *For if I have boasted any thing to him of you*, &c.] As of their faith in Christ, of their liberality to the saints, their affection for him, and obedience to him as children to a father: *I am not ashamed*: since these all appeared to be true; as he must have been had they been otherwise: *but as we spake all things to you in truth*; that is, our preaching among you was true; all the doctrines we delivered to you were truth; our word was not yea and nay, but uniform, and all of a piece: *even so our boasting, which I made before Titus, is found a truth*: some understand this of the boasting which the apostle made concerning Titus, in his epistle to them, highly commending him, and which they found to be in all things exactly true; but the words rather design his boasting of the Corinthians unto Titus, which was found to be true by him.

Ver. 15. *And his inward affection is more abundant toward you*, &c.] Or *his bowels*; denoting the tenderness of his heart, the strength of his affections, which inwardly and to a very great degree moved towards them; especially *whilst he remembereth the obedience of you all*; to him, and to me by him; to the advice and orders given, which were so readily, cheerfully, and universally complied with; and how *with fear and trembling you received him*: that is, with great humility and respect, with much deference to him; considering his character as a minister of the Gospel, and as one sent by the apostle to them, they embraced him with great marks of honour and esteem; for this is not to be understood of any inward slavish fear or dread of mind, or trembling of body at the sight of him, and because he came to know their estate, and with reproofs from the apostle to them.

Ver. 16. *I rejoice therefore that I have confidence in you in all things*.] That I can speak freely and boldly to you, reprove, admonish, and advise you, since you take it all in good part, as I design it; that I can confidently speak in your favour, boast of your love and obedience, which is found upon trial and by experience to be truth; and that I can promise myself every good thing from you, that is proper to ask of you, and lies in your power to perform; which he says partly to commend them for their past conduct, and partly to pave the way for what he had to say to them, concerning making a collection for the poor saints.

CHAP. VIII.

In this chapter the apostle stirs up the Corinthians, to make a collection for the poor saints at Jerusalem, by a variety of arguments, and gives a commendation of Titus and some other brethren, who were appointed messengers to them on that account. He first sets before them the example of the Macedonian churches, who had made a liberal collection for the above persons; which the apostle calls the grace of God, and says it was bestowed on them; and it was not the generosity of one church only, but of many, and so worthy of imitation, ver. 1. which generosity of theirs he illustrates by the circumstances and condition they were in, they were not only in great affliction, but in deep poverty; and yet contributed with abundance of joy, and in great liberality, ver. 2. yea, this they did not only to the utmost of their power, and according to the best of their abilities; but their will was beyond their power, they had hearts to do more than they were able; and what they did, they did of themselves without being asked and urged to it, ver. 3. nay, they even entreated the apostle and his fellow-ministers to take the money they had collected, and either send or carry it to the poor saints at Jerusalem, and minister it to them themselves, ver. 4. and which was beyond the expectation of the apostle, who knew their case; and yet it was but acting like themselves, who at first gave themselves to the Lord and to the apostles by the will of God, ver. 5. and this forwardness and readiness of the Macedonian churches, or the churches themselves put the apostle upon desiring Titus to go to Corinth, and finish the collection he had begun; and which carries in it more arguments than one to excite them to this service; as that this was not only at the request of the apostle, but of the Macedonian churches, that Titus should be desired to go on this business; and besides the thing had been begun, and it would be scandalous not to finish it, ver. 6. and next the apostle argues from their abounding in the exercise of other graces, which he enumerates, that they would also in this, ver. 7. for to excel in one grace, and not in another, was not to their praise and honour; however, he did not urge them to this in an imperious way, and to shew and exercise his authority; but was moved unto it through the generous example of others, and that there might be a proof of their sincere love and affection to the Lord, and to his people, ver. 8. but as what he wisely judged would have the greatest weight with them; he proposes to them the example of Christ, and instances in his great love to them; who though he was rich became poor for them, that they might be

enriched through his poverty, ver. 9. and therefore should freely contribute to his poor saints. Moreover, inasmuch as the apostle did not take upon him to command, only give advice, he should be regarded; and that the rather because what he advised to was expedient for them, would be for their good, and be profitable to them; as well as prevent reproach and scandal, which would follow should they not finish what they had begun so long ago, ver. 10. wherefore he exhorts them cheerfully to perform what they had shewn a readiness to; and points out unto them the rule and measure of it, that it should be out of their own, what they were possessed of, and according to their ability; which be it more or less would be acceptable to God, ver. 11, 12. for his meaning was not that some should be eased and others burdened; but that all should communicate according to what they had, ver. 13. to which he stimulates them from the hope of the recompence of reward, whenever it should be otherwise with them than it was, and things should change both with them who communicated, and with them to whom they communicated; or this was the end proposed by the apostle, that in the issue there might be an equality between them, ver. 14. which he confirms and illustrates by the distribution of the manna to the Israelites, who had an equal measure, ver. 15. as appears from what is said, Exod. xvi. 18. next the apostle enters upon a commendation of the messengers, that were appointed and ordered to be sent to them upon this errand, and begins with Titus; and gives thanks to God, that had put it into his heart to be so solicitous about this matter, ver. 16. and praises him for his forwardness in undertaking it of his own accord, and in performing it without being urged to it, ver. 17. and next he commends another person, whose name is not mentioned, who was sent along with him; a person of note and fame in all the churches, ver. 18. and who had the honour to be chosen by the churches for this service, ver. 19. and the reason why more persons than one were sent, was to prevent any suspicion of converting the collections to wrong purposes; and to preserve and secure a good character, a character of honesty before God and men, ver. 20, 21. To these two a third was added, whose name also is not mentioned, and who had been proved to be a diligent man, and appeared more so in this matter upon the apostle's confidence in the Corinthians, that they would readily attend to the service these were sent to promote, ver. 22. and thus having separately given the characters of these men, they are all of them commended again; Titus, as the apostle's partner and fellow-helper; and the other brethren as the messengers of the churches, and the glory of Christ, ver. 23. and the chapter is concluded with an exhortation to the members of the church at Corinth, to give these messengers a proof of their love to the poor saints before all the churches, and make it appear that he had not boasted of them in vain, ver. 24.

Ver. 1. *Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God, &c.*] The apostle having said every thing that was proper to conciliate the minds and affections of the Corinthians to him, and the matter in difference being adjusted to the satisfaction of all parties concerned; he proposes what he had wisely postponed till all was over, the making a collection for the poor saints at Jerusalem; which he enforces by the example of the Macedonian churches, the churches at Philippi, Thessalonica, *&c.* He addresses them in a kind and tender manner, under the endearing appellation of *brethren*, being so in a spiritual relation; and takes the liberty to inform them of the goodness of God to some of their sister churches; *we do you to wit*, or *we make known unto you.* The phrase *to wit* is an old English one, and almost obsolete, and signifies to acquaint with, inform of, make known, or give knowledge of any thing. The thing informed of here, *is the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia;* by which is meant, not any of the blessings of grace common to all the saints, such as regeneration, justification, adoption, forgiveness of sin, and the like; but beneficence, liberality, or a liberal disposition to do good to others, called *the grace of God;* because it sprung from thence, as all good works do when performed aright; they were assisted in it by the grace of God; and it was the love and favour of God in Christ, which was the engaging motive, the leading view, which drew them on to it. This was *bestowed* upon them, not merited, it was grace and free grace; God may give persons ever so much of this world's goods, yet if he does not give them a spirit of generosity, a liberal disposition, they will make no use of it for the good of others: and this was bestowed on *the churches of Macedonia;* not on a few leading men among them, but upon all the members of these churches in general; and not upon one church, but upon many; a spirit of liberality was in general diffused among them, and this is proposed for imitation. Examples have great influence, and the examples of many the greater; too many follow a multitude to do evil; here the example of many, even of many churches, is proposed in order to be followed to do good, to exercise acts of beneficence and goodness, in a free generous way to saints in distress; which as it is here called, *the grace of God*, so in some following verses, *the gift, the same grace, and this grace*, ver. 4, 6, 7. agreeably to the Hebrew word חסד, which signifies *grace* and *free bounty:* and is used for doing good, or for beneficence, which the Jews call גמילות חסדים, *a performance of kind and bountiful actions;* which are done freely, and for which a person expects no return from the person to whom he does them: and this they distinguish from צדקה, *alms*, after this manner[1]; "an "alms (they say) is exercised towards the living, bene-"ficence towards the living and the dead; alms is used "to the poor, beneficence both to the rich and poor; "alms is performed by a man's substance, beneficence "both by body and substance."

Ver. 2. *How that in a great trial of affliction, &c.*] The apostle proceeds to shew the condition these churches were in when, and the manner in which, they contributed to the relief of others. They were in affliction; they received the Gospel at first in much affliction, as did the church at Thessalonica, which was one of them; and afterwards suffered much from their countrymen for the profession of it, by reproaches,

[1] T. Hieros. Peah, fol. 15. 3.

persecutions, imprisonments, confiscation of goods, &c. They were under trying afflictions, which tried their faith and patience, and in many of them. Now for persons in prosperity, when all things go well with them, to be liberal is no such great matter; but for persons in adversity, under trying dispensations of Providence, amidst many afflictive ones to communicate generously to the relief of others, is something very remarkable, and worthy of notice and imitation, which was the case of these churches: for notwithstanding this, *the abundance of their joy, and their deep poverty, abounded unto the riches of their liberality*; so that it appears likewise that they were not only in great afflictions, but in *deep poverty*; had but an handful of meal in the barrel, and a little oil in the cruse, their purses almost empty, and their coffers almost exhausted; they had gotten to the bottom of their substance, had but very little left; and yet freely gave, with joy, even with an abundance of it. The allusion seems to be to the words of David, in 1 Chron. xxii. 14. *now behold*, בעניי, which the Septuagint render by κατα πτωχειαν μου, *according to my poverty, I have prepared for the house of the Lord an hundred thousand talents of gold*, &c. for by *the abundance of their joy*, is not so much meant the joy they felt in the midst of their afflictions, so that they could glory in them, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God, as the cheerfulness of their spirits in contributing to the necessities of others; glad at heart they were that they had hearts to do good, and an opportunity of doing it; which they gladly laid hold on, observing the divine rule, *he that sheweth mercy*, let him do it *with cheerfulness*: and this they did, considering the small pittance they were possessed of, very largely; for though their poverty was deep, and their purses low, their hearts were large and full, and their hands ready to communicate; so that their poverty *abounded to the riches of their liberality*: though their poverty was great, their liberality was rich and large; though it might be but little they gave in quantity, it was much in quality, much in liberality; like the poor widow, who, of her want and penury, cast in more than all the rich besides, not in quantity, but in liberality; they only giving some, and a disproportionate part, she her all.

Ver. 3. *For to their power (I bear record)*, &c.] They gave according to their ability, to the utmost of it, which is the most that can be desired, or be given; for no man can give more than he has, nor is he required to do more than he is able: *yea, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves*; not that they did or could do beyond their power; but they were *willing* beyond their power; their hearts were larger than their purses; they would gladly have done more than they had ability to do; and to this the apostle bears testimony to give it credit, which otherwise might have been called in question: and it is to be observed, that these churches communicated in this cheerful manner and large way, considering their circumstances, to the utmost of their ability, *of themselves*; unasked, not having been put upon, pressed, and urged to such a service; for persons to give when they are asked, especially when they do it readily, at once, without demurring upon it, and with cheerfulness, is much; but to give unasked discovers a very generous and beneficent disposition: this is reckoned by the Jews as one of the excellencies in giving of alms *, "when a man gives into the hands "of another קודם שישאל, *before he asks*: and the "next degree to this is, when he gives to him after "he asks; and the next to this, who gives less than "is proper, but with a cheerful countenance."

Ver. 4. *Praying us with much entreaty*, &c.] They not only gave freely, being unasked by the apostles; but they sought to them, and earnestly entreated them, *that* they *would receive the gift*; the beneficence, what they had so freely and generously collected: *and the fellowship of the ministering to the saints*; what they had communicated for the service of the poor saints at Jerusalem, in which they testified their having and holding fellowship with the churches of Christ; and that they would receive it at their hands, and take it upon them, and carry it to Jerusalem, and distribute to the poor saints there, as should seem to them most proper and convenient; which they accordingly agreed to; see Rom. xv. 25, 26.

Ver. 5. *And this they did not as we hoped*, &c.] All this was unexpected by the apostles, who knew their great affliction and deep poverty, and therefore could not have hoped for such a collection from them; or that they would have desired the apostle to have ministered it for them: *but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God*; the sense of which is not barely, or only, that they committed themselves to the care of Providence in all their afflictions and poverty, trusting in God that he would provide for them for time to come, and therefore even in their strait circumstances gave liberally; and were so much under the direction of the apostles, God so disposing their minds, that they were willing to do or give any thing that they should say was proper; yea, were very willing that some of their number should leave their habitations and families to accompany them, in forwarding this good work elsewhere: but the apostle seems to have respect to what these persons did at first conversion, when they gave themselves to Christ, to be saved by him, and him alone; and to serve him to the uttermost, in every thing he should signify to be his will; and when they joined themselves to the churches of Christ, and put themselves under the care, government, and direction of the apostles, who were over the churches in the Lord: and therefore though what the members of these churches collected, was very wonderful and beyond expectation; yet when it is considered that these persons had long ago given their whole selves, their all to Christ, had committed all into his hands, and devoted themselves entirely to his service; and had declared their subjection to his ministers as servants under him, and to his word and ordinances as ministered by them: it need not be so much wondered at, that they should be so liberal in giving away their worldly substance for the relief of Christ's poor members, when they had given their precious souls, their immortal all, and had committed the salvation of them

* Maimon. Hilch. Mattanot Aniyim, c. 10. sect. 11, 12, 13.

entirely to him. Giving themselves to Christ, in this sense, supposes that they had a true sight and apprehension of their state and condition by nature, how sinful they were, and lost and undone in themselves; that they were destitute of a righteousness, and unable to obtain one by the works of the law; that they were in hopeless and helpless circumstances, as considered in themselves; that they were diseased from head to foot, and could not cure themselves; that they were dead in law, and liable to the curse and condemnation of it; for till men see themselves in such a case they will never give themselves to Christ, or betake themselves to him to be saved by him. Moreover, this supposes some knowledge of him as God's ordinance for salvation, as the Saviour of the father's appointing and sending; of him, as having effected it by his obedience and death: of his being the only Saviour, a suitable one, both able and willing to save to the uttermost, even the chief of sinners that come to God by him. It is expressive of faith in Christ; of seeing the son and the fulness of grace and salvation in him, and of going to him for it; of staying, resting, leaning, and relying upon him, venturing on him, committing all into his hands, and trusting him with all and for all. It denotes subjection to him, as their husband, to whom they give themselves as his spouse and bride, and consent to be the Lord's in a conjugal relation; and submission to him in all his offices, as a prophet to be taught and instructed by him, as a priest to be washed in his blood, and justified by his righteousness, to which they heartily submit, and as their Lord and King to the sceptre of his kingdom, the laws of his house, and ordinances of his Gospel; for they are made a willing people, not only to be saved by him, but to serve him in body and soul, and with all they have; as it is but right they should, since he has given himself, his all, for them. Giving themselves up to the apostles, signifies not a surrender of themselves to them as lords over God's heritage, to be governed and ruled over in a tyrannical and arbitrary way; but a submitting of themselves to them, as Christ's servants set over them in the Lord, whilst they minister the word and administer the ordinances, according to the will of Christ; owning them as their fathers, or instructors, and guides, and as watchmen and overseers placed in and over the churches, for their spiritual welfare: all which is, *by the will of God*: as that poor sensible sinners should give up themselves to Christ, to be saved by him, and serve him; and that they should join themselves to the churches, and be subject to the care, teachings, and government of his servants in his house.

Ver. 6. *Insomuch that we desired Titus*, &c.] Observing the very great readiness, cheerfulness, and liberality of the poor Macedonians in this matter, the apostles could do no other than desire Titus to forward, hasten, and accomplish a like liberal contribution among the Corinthians; or the sense is, that the Macedonians not only prayed with much entreaty, as in ver. 4. that the apostle would be pleased to take their collection, and send or carry it to Jerusalem; but also that they would entreat Titus, *that as he had begun, so he would also finish in you the same grace also*; that is, that as he had already moved this affair to the Corinthians while he was with them, and had made some progress in it, though what, through one thing or another, it had been retarded, and lay in some measure neglected; that he might be desired to go again, on purpose to complete so good a work, so acceptable to God, and so useful to the poor saints; which carries in it a new and strong argument to stir up the Corinthians to this service; since they had not only the example of the Macedonian churches, but it was even at their request that Titus was desired to go upon this errand; and to this sense read the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions.

Ver. 7. *Therefore as ye abound in every thing*, &c.] In all gifts and every grace, in the use and exercise of them, insomuch that they were enriched in every thing, and wanted nothing; see 1 Cor. i. 5, 6, 7. what is here expressed in general, is explained by particulars following: *in faith*: both in the doctrine of faith, which they had received and professed, held fast to, and abode by; yea, they abounded in the knowledge of it, zeal for it, and thankfulness to God on account of it; and in the grace of faith, not an historical one, nor the faith of miracles, but that which is peculiar to God's elect, is the gift of his grace and the work of his spirit, which has Christ for its object, and works by love; in this they abounded, inasmuch as they had a large measure of it, grew in it, were full of it, and were much in the exercise thereof: *in utterance*, or *speech*: meaning either the gift of speaking with tongues, which many in this church had; or the gift of understanding and explaining the word of God with much freedom; or a liberty of mind and speech to declare their faith in Christ, and make an ingenuous confession of it to others: *in knowledge*: of God and of Christ, and of the truths of the Gospel: *and in all diligence*: their ministers were diligent in preaching the Gospel, the people in hearing the word, and attending on ordinances, and both studiously careful to keep up the discipline of the church; and very industrious to discharge the several duties of religion, and to assist one another, both in things temporal and spiritual: *and in your love to us*: the apostles and ministers of the word, whom they loved, esteemed, and honoured for their works' sake: and since they were so eminent for these graces, and the exercise of them, the apostle exhorts them to liberality to the poor saints; *see that ye abound in this grace also*: for as faith, utterance, knowledge, diligence, and love to Christ's ministers are graces; so also is kindness shewn to Christ's poor members, it is a gift of God's grace, can't be rightly exercised without the assistance of his grace, has for its objects men who have received the grace of God, and will be rewarded with a reward of grace; persons eminent for the several graces of the spirit of God, and the exercise of them, it may be not only desired, but expected from them, that they should abound in the exercise of beneficence to the poor. This is another argument exciting to that good work.

Ver. 8. *I speak not by commandment*, &c.] Either of God, who has not fixed the certain times when, or certain sums which persons are to give, and other circumstances, which are left to discretion; but in general has signified it as his will, that those in neces-

sity are to be relieved by such who are in ability to do it: or as an apostle, he did not speak in an imperious manner, extorting from them a collection, or laying his apostolical injunctions upon them to make one; he did not go about to force or oblige them to it, for men in such cases must act willingly, and what they do, must do of their own accord with cheerfulness, and not through constraint or grudgingly: *but by occasion of the forwardness of others;* or *through carefulness for others;* what moved the apostle to propose this matter to the Corinthians, and exhort them to it, were either the forwardness of the Macedonians, cheerfully contributing in the midst of their poverty, and their urgent solicitations that the same good work might go on elsewhere, or else the very great care and concern that he himself had for the poor saints at Jerusalem: it was not therefore to shew his apostolical authority, that he sent Titus to them to finish this service; but he was stirred up hereunto, partly by the bounty and solicitations of others, and partly by bowels of compassion within himself, and concern in his own mind for the poor saints; and also, as he adds, *to prove the sincerity of your love;* to God, to Christ, to his ministers, and to the saints, particularly the poor; that their love might appear to be true, genuine, hearty, and real to others, to all men as well as to them the apostles.

Ver. 9. *For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus,* &c.] This is a new argument, and a very forcible one to engage to liberality, taken from the wonderful grace and love of Christ, displayed in his state of humiliation towards his people; which is well known to all them that have truly believed in Christ; of this they are not and cannot be ignorant, his love, good will, and favour are so manifest; there are such glaring proofs of it in his incarnation, sufferings, and death, that leave no room for any to doubt of it: *that though he was rich;* in the perfections of his divine nature, having the fulness of the Godhead in him, all that the father has, and so equal to him; such as eternity, immutability, infinity and immensity, omnipresence, omniscience, omnipotence, &c. in the works of his hands, which reach to every thing that is made, the heavens, the earth, the sea, and all that in them are, things visible and invisible; in his universal empire and dominion over all creatures; and in those large revenues of glory, which are due to him from them all; which riches of his are underived from another, incommunicable to another, and can't be lost: *yet for your sakes he became poor;* by assuming human nature, with all its weaknesses and imperfections excepting sin; he appeared in it not as a lord, but in the form of a servant; he endured in it a great deal of reproach and shame, and at last death itself; not that by becoming man he ceased to be God, or lost his divine perfections, though these were much hid and covered from the view of man; and in his human nature he became the reverse of what he is in his divine nature, namely, finite and circumscriptible, weak and infirm, ignorant of some things, and mortal; in which nature also he was exposed to much meanness and outward poverty; he was born of poor parents, had no liberal education, was brought up to a trade, had not where to lay his head, was ministered to by others of their substance, and had nothing to bequeath his mother at his death, but commits her to the care of one of his disciples; all which fulfilled the prophecies of him, that he should be דל and עני, *poor* and *low*, Psal. xli. 1. Zech. ix. 9. The persons for whom he became so, were not the angels, but elect men; who were sinners and ungodly persons, and were thereby become bankrupts and beggars: the end for which he became poor for them was, *that they through his poverty might be rich;* not in temporals, but in spirituals; and by his obedience, sufferings, and death in his low estate, he has paid all their debts, wrought out a robe of righteousness, rich and adorned with jewels, with which he clothes them, and through his blood and sacrifice has made them kings and priests unto God. They are enriched by him with the graces of his spirit; with the truths of the Gospel, comparable to gold, silver, and precious stones; with himself and all that he has; with the riches of grace here, and of glory hereafter. These are communicable from him, though unsearchable, and are solid and substantial, satisfying, lasting, and for ever. Now if this grace of Christ will not engage to liberality with cheerfulness, nothing will.

Ver. 10. *And herein I give my advice,* &c.] As Daniel did to Nebuchadnezzar, Dan. iv. 27. The apostle did not choose to make use of his apostolical authority, or give orders, as he sometimes did in such cases; he did not think fit to speak by way of commandment, obliging them to what they ought to do willingly; looking upon this the most prudential step, and wisest method he could take in order to succeed, only to give his judgment in this matter, as what would be best for them, and most conducive to their real good: *for this is expedient for you;* most versions read it, *profitable;* doing acts of beneficence is profitable to persons, as to things temporal, God usually blessing such with a greater affluence of the things of life, and which indeed is often promised; and is also profitable with respect to things spiritual, for if God does not make it up to them in temporal enjoyments, yet with his presence, the discoveries of his love, the joys of his salvation, and an increase of every grace; so Gaius, that hospitable man to the apostle, and all Christian strangers, was in much spiritual health, and a prosperous condition in his soul, when but in an ill state with respect to his body: yea, such a conduct is profitable in relation to things eternal; for as it springs from the grace of God, and men are assisted therein by it, and is exercised towards persons that have received it, it will be rewarded with a reward of grace; though it may be, the apostle here does not so much argue from the utility, as the decency of it in the Corinthians; *who,* says he, *have began before, a year ago, not only to do, but also to be forward,* or *willing:* it is hard to say whether the apostle designs to commend or reprove them; and indeed, it seems as if there was a mixture of praise and dispraise in this passage; it was in their favour that they had begun before, even a year ago, and were willing and forward of themselves to this good work; yea, were the first that set it on foot, and so were an example to the Macedonian churches, and others; but then this was against them, that the other churches, which began later than they, had finished before them; whether this their charity was obstructed, as some

have thought, through some affliction and persecution that befell them, which if it appeared would much excuse them; or rather it was neglected through lukewarmness and indolence; wherefore the apostle gives his sentiments, that to save their own credit, it was expedient for them to finish what they had begun; for otherwise, as their boasting of them would be in vain, so they would expose themselves to contempt and incur disgrace; and it was not only proper that they should do this, but do it willingly, and with much cheerfulness, for that is meant by being *forward* or *willing*: that they not only do it, but do it with a good will, which they at first discovered.

Ver. 11. *Now therefore perform the doing of it*, &c.] This is a conclusion from the former advice, to finish what was readily willed; for as it is not enough to do a thing, unless it is done cheerfully and willingly, so it is not sufficient to express a good will to such service as is here called to, without doing it; both should go together: *that as there was a readiness to will, so there may be a performance also*; in some cases there is neither power nor will to do good; in others there is will, when there is not a power; but in this case of beneficence to the poor saints, as there was a willingness declared, there was an ability in the Corinthians to perform; they had it in the power of their hands, more or less, to act: and the apostle in the last clause of this verse points out the rule and measure of their liberality, *out of that which you have*: according to your abilities, and as God has prospered you; and with which he shuts up the mouths of all objectors, rich and poor: should the rich say, would you have us give away all we have? the answer is, no; but *out of that which you have*, something of it, according as you are able; should the poorer sort say, we are in mean circumstances, we have families to provide for, and can spare little, and what we can do is so trifling, that it is not worth giving or accepting; the reply is, give *out of that which you have*, be it less or more; it follows,

Ver. 12. *For if there be first a willing mind*, &c.] If what is done springs from a truly noble, generous spirit, a spirit of bountifulness and liberality; and is given cheerfully and freely, and according to a man's ability; the quantity matters not, whether it be more or less: *it is accepted*: both of God and man: *according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not*. The widow's mite was as acceptable, and more so, than all the rich men cast into the treasury; a cup of cold water given to a prophet, in the name of a prophet, is taken notice of by God, and shall have its reward. The present sent by the Philippians to the Apostle Paul, and which perhaps was not very large, was *an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God*, Phil. iv. 18.

Ver. 13. *For I mean not that other men be eased and you burdened*.] Referring either to the givers; and that either to the richer and meaner sort in this church; the apostle's sense being, not to put the whole burden of the collection upon some only, whilst others were excused doing little or nothing; but that every one should give according to his ability; or to other churches in poorer circumstances; and the apostle's meaning was, not that these churches by reason of their meanness should be entirely free from this service, as it was plain they were not, by the instance of the Macedonians; and that the whole be devolved upon the Corinthian church, and others that were rich; but that all should contribute according to their circumstances: or this may refer to the persons given to, and for whom this beneficence was asked; for the words may be rendered, *for not that there may be ease*, or relaxation *to others, and to you affliction* or straitness; that is, his meaning was, not that there should be such a contribution raised for these poor saints at Jerusalem, that they should live in ease and great abundance; whilst their benefactors, through an over-abundant generosity to them, were straitened, and their families reduced to great difficulties; this was what was far from his intentions.

Ver. 14. *But by an equality*, &c.] All that he meant was, that there might be an equality both in givers and receivers, proportioned to their several circumstances and stations of life: *that now at this time*: which was a very necessitous time at Jerusalem, there being a famine there, and their common stock exhausted: *your abundance may be a supply for their want, that their abundance also may be a supply for your want*: which respects either the different abilities of givers at different times; and that whereas now the church at Corinth was rich and wealthy, and had great abundance of the things of this world, they in this general collection were able to make up the deficiencies of other churches; and so should it ever be their case, as it might be, that they should be reduced, and these other churches increased, and enjoy a large abundance, they might hereafter in their turn supply what would be wanting in them: or else the persons given to; and the sense is, that should they ever change circumstances, as it was not impossible that they that were now rich should become poor, and they that were poor become rich; then as their abundance had been a supply to the wants of others, the abundance of others in their turn would be a supply to their wants; so that the argument is taken from the hope of retribution, in case of such vicissitudes; see Luke vi. 38. his view was, *that there may be equality*: either that in time to come an equal return may be made, should it be necessary; or that at present some sort of equality might be observed between the rich and poor; that the rich should so distribute as not to leave themselves without a proper support, according to their station of life; and yet so freely communicate, that the poor may not be without food and raiment, suitable to their lower sphere of life.

Ver. 15. *As it is written*, &c.] In Exod. xvi. 18. *he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack*: respect is had to the history of the *manna*, a sort of food God prepared for the Israelites in the wilderness; and which were gathered by them every morning, by some more, by others less; and yet when it came to be measured, every man had his omer and no more, one had nothing over, and the other not at all deficient; each man had his proper and equal quantity; and which, by the Jews *, is looked upon as

* Jarchi & Aben Ezra in Exod. xvi. 18. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 76. 3.

a miracle that was wrought: many useful instructions may be learned from this history, as that as there was a general provision made by God for the Israelites, good and bad, and the mixed multitude that came from Egypt with them; so there is an universal providence of God which reaches to all creatures, even to the vegetable, to the birds of the air, and beasts of the field, to all the individuals of human nature, and to the bad among them as well as the good; though to the latter it is more special, who of all men have the least reason to be distrustful and uneasy: and as that provision was daily, so is that providential supply which all creatures have from God; he is to be trusted to, and depended on daily; application is to be made to him every day for daily bread; nor should there be any anxious concern for the morrow. Moreover, as the Israelites, though the manna was prepared for them, were to rise in the morning and gather it before the sun waxed hot; so notwithstanding the providence of God, and the daily care he takes of men, yet diligence, industry, and the use of means are highly commendable. And as some gathered more and others less, yet upon measuring it with the *omer*, there was an entire equality, one had not more nor less than another; so upon the winding up of things in Providence, such as have gathered much riches in the morning of life, in the evening of death will have nothing over, nor any thing to shew more than others; and they that have gathered little will appear to have had no lack; both will have had food and raiment, and no more, only with this difference, some will have enjoyed a richer diet and clothing, and others a meaner, and both suitable to their circumstances in life; which may instruct us to depend upon divine Providence, daily to be content with such things as we have, and to make a proper use of what is gathered, whether more or less, and not only for ourselves, but for the good of others. This discovers the egregious folly of such, who are anxiously concerned for the gathering and amassing much worldly riches together; which when they have done, they lay it up for themselves, and do not make use of it for common good, neither for the good of civil society, nor the interest of religion. Let it be observed, that those Israelites who from a selfish covetous disposition, and distrust of divine Providence, left of their manna till the morning, *it bred worms and stank;* which was by the just judgment of God inflicted as a punishment; for otherwise it was capable of being kept longer. So when covetous mortals lay up for themselves for time to come, and do not communicate to the necessities of others, such a practice breeds and produces worms, moth, and rottenness in their estates, which gradually decrease, or are suddenly taken from them, or they from them: such an evil disposition is the root and cause of many immoralities in life; it greatly prejudices professors of religion in things spiritual; and it tends to their everlasting ruin, to breed that worm of an evil conscience that will never die, and to render their persons stinking and abominable, both in the sight of God and men.

Ver. 16. *But thanks be to God*, &c.] The apostle proceeds to give an account of the persons and their characters, who were employed in making this collection at Corinth for the poor saints, and begins with Titus; and the rather because he had been already concerned in setting afoot that good work among them; and gives thanks to God, *which*, says he, *put the same earnest care into the heart of Titus for you;* by *earnest care* is meant that very great carefulness, solicitude, and diligence, Titus had shewn in stirring them up to a liberal contribution; and which was the *same* that he had expressed in the arguments just now used by him, to engage them in the same service; and this care, as it was a very earnest and hearty one, so he suggests that it was more *for* them, than for the sake of the poor; the performance of acts of beneficence and liberality tending more to the advantage and account of the giver than of the receiver: and he further intimates, that these good motions in the heart of Titus were not merely natural, or the effects of human power and free will, but were of God, as every good thing is; they were wrought in him by the spirit of God, and sprung from the grace of God, and therefore the apostle returns thanks to God for the same; and the mention of this could not fail of carrying weight with it, and of having some influence on the minds of the Corinthians.

Ver. 17. *For indeed, he accepted the exhortation*, &c.] The Macedonians besought the apostle with much entreaty to give unto him, ver. 4, 6. or which being moved by their example, they gave unto him, namely, that he would go and finish what he had already begun; and accordingly he did not refuse, but readily accepted the exhortation: yea, not only so, *but being more forward;* than was known or could have been expected; which shews that this was put into his heart by God, before it was moved unto him; so that if he had never been asked, or exhorted hereunto, he would have gone of himself: *of his own accord he went unto you;* so great is his care of you; so great his love unto you; so willing was he to come again and pay another visit: and especially on this account, where he had before been treated with so much respect and kindness. Titus having been at Corinth already, and being well known there, the apostle forbears saying any thing more in his commendation.

Ver. 18. *And we have sent with him the brother*, &c.] The Syriac and Ethiopic versions read, *our brother;* and one of Stephens's copies, *your brother:* who this brother was, is not certain; some think it was Luke the evangelist, the companion of the apostle in his travels: *whose praise is in the Gospel, throughout all the churches;* being known and highly commended by all the churches, for the Gospel he wrote; but it is not certain that Luke as yet had wrote his Gospel; and much less that it was so much known at present among the churches; and besides, this brother's praise seems to be on account of his preaching the Gospel, and not writing one: others think Barnabas is intended, who was chosen and sent out by the churches along with the apostle; but these in a short time separated from each other, nor do we read of their coming together again: others are of opinion, that Apollos is designed, who was a very eloquent preacher, and of whom the apostle had given the Corinthians an intimation in his former epistle, that he would come to them at a convenient time; but to him is objected, that he never was chosen of the churches, to travel with the apostle on

such an account as here mentioned: others would have it that Silas or Sylvanus is meant, who was a very constant companion of the apostle, and of whom he makes mention in most of his epistles: and others have made no doubt of it, but John Mark is here meant, who not only wrote a Gospel, but was an excellent preacher of it, and was chosen by the churches to go along with Paul and Barnabas; and though there was some distaste taken to him by Paul, he was afterwards reconciled to him, and for his profitableness in the ministry was greatly desired by him; but after all, it is difficult to determine who it was, nor is it of any great moment: a *brother* he was; being not only a regenerate person, but a preacher of the Gospel; a brother in the ministry, and one *whose praise was in the Gospel*: greatly admired, and much commended, for his excellent talent in preaching the Gospel; and for this he was famous *throughout all the churches*; a very great commendation indeed; but this is not all, it follows,

Ver. 19. *And not that only, but who was also chosen of the churches*, &c.] Not only famous for preaching the Gospel, but he was also appointed by the joint suffrages of the churches, which were made by the lifting up or stretching out of the hand, as the word here used signifies; this brother was not chosen to this service by a few private persons, or by a single church only, but by several churches; which does not refer to the churches at Jerusalem and Antioch, as if the apostles were appointed, and others were appointed by these churches to travel with them, in order to collect money for the poor saints at Jerusalem; of which no mention is any where made, only of their being sent out by them to preach the Gospel. James, Cephas, and John indeed, when they gave to Paul and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that they might go to the Heathen, desired them to *remember the poor*: Gal. ii. 9, 10. but these were not the churches. The church at Antioch did collect for the brethren in Judea, at the time of the famine among them, and sent their bounty by the hands of Barnabas and Saul, which seems to be the case here. This brother was chosen by the churches who collected, and not by the churches in Judea, for whom the collections were made; for it was usual, and what was right and proper, that the churches chose whom they thought fit to carry their liberality to Jerusalem; see 1 Cor. xvi. 3, 4. Now this brother had the honour to be chosen by these churches, *to travel*, says the apostle, *with us, with this grace*; bounty or beneficence of the churches, what they had freely and liberally contributed for the supply of the poor, from a principle of grace, and by the assistance of it; *which is administered by us*; not given by the apostles, but collected by them; or what was procured by their means, in the several churches to whom they had moved it, and by proper arguments had excited them to it, with which they cheerfully complied: and this was done on a two-fold account, both *to the glory of the same Lord*: Jesus Christ, who is the one Lord over all; the same Lord of the apostles, and the church at Corinth; the same Lord of the Corinthians, and the Macedonian and other churches; and the same Lord of the poor saints at Jerusalem, and the rich members of the several churches that contributed to them: and also to *the declaration of your ready mind*: or to stir up their ready mind to increase it and promote it in them, as well to make it manifest, and that it might appear to others, how readily and freely they came into this service; so that the apostle's concern in this administration was not from any sinister and selfish ends; no, nor so much for the relief of the poor, though this was greatly designed, as for the glory of Christ, and the honour of his churches.

Ver. 20. *Avoiding this, that no man should blame us*, &c.] There is an allusion in these words to mariners, who, when sensible of danger, steer their course another way, in order to shun a rock and secure themselves. So the apostles being aware of the censorious spirits of some persons, and to prevent all suspicion of their converting any part of what they had collected to their own private use, sent Titus with it, a man of known probity and integrity; and not he alone neither, but another brother with him, one who had obtained a good report as a minister of the Gospel in all the churches: and, besides, was appointed not by the apostles, but by the churches themselves, to this service. This shews the good conduct, and great prudence of the apostle, and his care and solicitude that the ministry be not blamed; he knew he had many enemies, and how subject such are to suspicion and jealousy, when persons are intrusted with much, which was the case here; for 'tis added, *in this abundance which is administered by us*: which designs the very large contributions which were made by the churches, through the means of the apostle's moving, exciting, and encouraging them thereunto; and which were committed to their care and trust, and at their entreaty they had accepted of.

Ver. 21. *Providing for honest things*, &c.] Or premeditating, forecasting, or considering before-hand in the mind, things that are good, that are of good report among men, as well as accounted good by God; for it becomes professors of religion, and especially ministers of the Gospel, to be careful not only to exercise a good conscience towards God; but so to behave, that they may obtain and preserve the good opinion of men; for when they have once lost their credit and reputation among men, their ministry becomes in a great measure useless: wherefore the apostle adds, *not only in the sight of the Lord*: the same Lord as before, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is a diligent searcher of the hearts, and discerner of the thoughts, and observer of the ways and actions of all his people: *but also in the sight of men*; not that the apostle affected a mere outside shew, popular applause, and the praise of men; but was concerned lest any weak persons, by their conduct, should be stumbled and fall, the edification of any should be hindered, and their ministry become unprofitable.

Ver. 22. *And we have sent with him our brother*, &c.] This is a third person sent about this business. The apostle, in this, conformed to the customs of his nation: at least if he did not purposely do it, it agrees with the Jewish canons, which require three persons for the distribution of alms. "The alms-dish, (they say [a])

[a] T. Hieros. Peah, fol. 21. 1.

" is by three; nor do they *appoint* פרנסין פחות משלשה, " *overseers* of it *less than three*." Again, they say[y], " the poor's chest is collected by two, ומתחלקת בשלשה, " *but distributed by three*: it is collected by two, be-" cause they don't appoint governors over a congrega-" tion less than two, and it is distributed by three, " even as pecuniary judgments: but the alms-dish is " collected by three, and distributed by three; for the " collection and distribution are alike:" who this brother was, sent by the apostle with Titus and the other person, is as uncertain as the former. Some think it was Luke, others Apollos, others Timothy, others Sosthenes, others Epenetus, others Silas, others Zenas the lawyer; a brother he was, and a very considerable character is given of him: *whom we have oftentimes proved diligent in many things*: he was a very diligent and industrious man, and so fit for this service; he had been tried and proved, and was found to be so, not only once or twice, but oftentimes; and that not in a few instances, but in many; and in nothing did he ever shew more diligence than in this matter: *but now much more diligent* than ever he had been in any thing before: *upon the great confidence which I have in you*; what doubled and increased this brother's diligence, and made him so eager for, and forward to this work, was, his observing the great confidence the apostle expressed of the very great readiness and liberality of the Corinthians; and which tacitly carries in it an argument exciting them thereunto: or this last clause may be read, *which he hath in you*, and so regards the confidence this brother had in them, which made him so ready to engage with, and join the other messengers.

Ver. 23. *Whether any do inquire of Titus*, &c.] The apostle here sums up the characters of each of the above persons; as for Titus, he says, *he is my partner*; he had been his companion in his travels, a partner with him in preaching the Gospel, as well as in the troubles and persecutions he had met with; and was one with whom he had had sweet communion and fellowship: and *fellow-helper*; or worker, *concerning you*; he had been a joint instrument with him, either in their conversion, or consolation, and correction; or for their edification and instruction, and setting things right, which had been out of order among them: *or our brethren be inquired of*; if their characters are asked after, as well as Titus's; by whom are meant not his fellow-apostles, but the two brethren who were sent along with Titus; what may be truly said of them is, *they are the messengers of the churches*; they were chosen and sent forth by the churches, not only to preach the Gospel, but particularly to take care of the ministration to the poor saints. They were messengers appointed by the churches for this service, and were also appointed to the service of the churches; respect seems to be had to the public minister in the synagogues, who was called שליח צבור, *the messenger of the congregation*, or *church*[z]; whose business was to take care about the reading of the law and the prophets, to pray in public, and also to preach if there was no other; so we read[a] also of שלוחי בית דין, *the messengers of the sanhedrim*; who were sent at the proper time to reap the sheaf of the first-fruits, and of others who swore the high-priest before the day of atonement[b]; and of שלוחי מצוה, *the messengers of the commandment*[c]; who went to hear the exposition (of the traditions) and visit the head of the captivity: *and the glory of Christ*; meaning either that the churches were *the glory of Christ*, in whom he is glorified, where his glory is seen, and his presence enjoyed; or rather the messengers of them, on whom the image of Christ was instamped, who faithfully performed the work of Christ, in all things sought his glory and not their own; and in and by whom his glory was displayed, and held forth to others.

Ver. 24. *Wherefore shew ye to them, and before the churches*, &c.] This is the conclusion of the apostle, upon summing up the characters of these messengers; and his exhortation is, that since they were persons of so much note and worth, as they ought to be received with great marks of respect and affection, so they would take care evidently to make it appear to them who were sent by the churches, and before the churches, or before them who personated the churches; or so as that it might be known by the churches from whence they came, when they returned with their report; or be evident to the churches in Judea, when their liberality should be brought to them: *the proof of your love*; to Christ and his poor members, how hearty and sincere it was: *and of our boasting on your behalf*; how willing and forward they were to this good work, and how liberal they would be.

CHAP. IX.

THE apostle proceeds in this chapter upon the same subject, the making a collection for the poor saints; gives the reason why he sent the brethren to them on this account; directs to the manner in which this service should be performed, and subjoins some fresh arguments to encourage them to it. As for the ministration itself, he suggests, it might seem needless to say any more about it, since he had said so much already in the preceding chapter, ver. 1. and especially seeing they were so forward to it, and were even prepared for it a year ago; of which the apostle had boasted to the Macedonian churches, ver. 2. and whereas it might be objected, that since there was such an inclination in them to this good work, why did he send these brethren to them? the reason of this he gives, ver. 3, 4. that they might get their collection ready against the

[y] Misn. Peah, c. 8. sect. 7. & Jarchi, Maimonides & Bartenora, in ib. T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 8. 2. Maimon. Mattanot Aniyim, c. 9. sect. 5.
[z] T. Bab. Sota, fol. 37. 2. Tosephot Beracot, fol. 34. 1. Misn. Beracot, c. 5. sect. 5.
[a] Misn. Menachot, c. 10. 3.
[b] Misn. Yoma, c. 1. 5.
[c] T. Bab. Succa, fol. 26. 1.

time he came, lest should any of the Macedonians come along with him, and this collection not be made, his glorying of them would be in vain, and both he and they would be ashamed; wherefore he sent them before-hand to prevent every thing of this kind, and that their collection might appear to be not done in a covetous niggardly way, but bountifully and cheerfully, ver. 5. which manner he directs unto, and encourages from the advantages of it, under the metaphorical phrases of sowing and reaping, intimating, that as a man sows, so he reaps; or in proportion to his giving, is he blessed, ver. 6. wherefore he advises to give heartily, freely, and cheerfully, and that from this consideration, because cheerful giving is acceptable to God, being like himself, ver. 7. who, as he loves, so he rewards the cheerful giver; and as he is able to give him abundance, so he does, whereby he is more qualified and fitted for such liberal service, ver. 8. And this is confirmed by a passage of Scripture cited out of Psal. cxii. 9. shewing, that he that gives bountifully to the poor is ever regarded by the Lord, ver. 9. and which is further proved from the general course of Providence, which so multiplies and increases the seed sown in the earth, that it usually ministers seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; to which the apostle had alluded in the use of these metaphorical expressions; or he puts up a prayer that there might, or delivers out a promise that there would be a like increase in giving liberally, as in sowing plentifully, ver. 10. And then he makes use of a new argument, stirring up to bountifulness, taken from the glory which is brought to God through thanksgiving to him, from the poor and needy, supplied by the liberality of those whose hearts he had opened, ver. 11. On which argument he enlarges, shewing, that not only by this bounty the wants of the poor are supplied, and thanksgivings offered up to God on that account; but also the poor saints are led to glorify God for sending his Gospel to these their benefactors, and giving them his grace to submit unto it, which had had such an influence upon them as to cause them to communicate to their necessities in such a generous manner, ver. 12, 13. To which he adds another argument, taken from the prayers of the poor saints, for those who liberally contributed to them, that they might prosper in body and soul, in things temporal and spiritual, ver. 14. And the chapter is concluded with a thanksgiving to God for the grace bestowed upon all the churches, and particularly for the gift of Christ to the sons of men; which contains in it another argument for beneficence and liberality, ver. 15.

Ver. 1. *For as touching the ministering to the saints,* &c.] It looks at first sight as if the apostle was entering upon a new subject, though by what follows it appears to be the same; for by *ministering to the saints,* he does not mean the ministry of the Gospel to them; nor that mutual assistance members of churches are to give each other; but either the fellowship of ministering to the saints, which the churches had entreated him, and his fellow-ministers, to take upon them, namely, to take the charge of their collections, and distribute them to the poor saints at Jerusalem; or rather these collections themselves, and their liberality in them; with respect to which he says, *it is superfluous for me to write to you:* that is, he thought it unnecessary to say any more upon that head, because he had used so many arguments already to engage them in it, in the foregoing chapter; and because he had sent *three* brethren to them, who well understood the nature of this service, and were very capable of speaking to it, and of enforcing the reasonings already used; and more especially he judged it needless to dwell on this subject, for the reasons following.

Ver. 2. *For I know the forwardness of your mind,* &c.] How that they were willing of themselves to engage in this good work; how readily they came into it; what a cheerful disposition of mind they shewed towards it; and how forward they were to begin the collection: *for which I boast of you to them of Macedonia:* he had done it before, which had put them upon the like service, and he still continued to boast of them, *that Achaia was ready a year ago:* not that their collection was ready-made so long ago; but they had shewn a readiness of mind, as to every good work, so to this of communicating to the saints a year ago, when they made a beginning, though as yet had not finished. By Achaia is meant, the inhabitants of Achaia. The Arabic version renders it, the citizens of Achaia; of this country, see the note on Acts xviii. 12. It is sometimes taken in a large sense, and designs Greece, and includes the countries of Doris, Hellas, Ætolia, Locri, Phocis, Bœotia, Attica, and Megaris; and had its name, as some say, from the frequent inundation of waters; and others, from one of the three generals of the Pelasgi, who were of this name; and sometimes it is taken strictly and properly for the country of the Peloponnesus, or the Morea. And so Drusius, out of Hesychius, has observed, that the Achæans were Greeks; but properly they were they that inhabited that part of Peloponnesus, called Achaia; and these seem to be intended here. The Gospel was preached in these parts with success; Epenetus, whom the Apostle Paul salutes, Rom. xvi. 5. and the house of Stephanas he mentions, 1 Cor. xvi. 15. were the first-fruits of it; and in process of time several churches were here gathered, and which continued for several ages. In the *second* century there was a synod in Achaia, concerning the time of keeping Easter, in which Bacchylus, bishop of Corinth, presided; in the beginning of the *fourth* century, the bishops of Achaia were present at the council of Nice, and in the same century bishops out of this country assisted at the synod in Sardica; in the *fifth* century there were many churches in Achaia, and the bishops of them were present in the Chalcedon synod; out of this country went several bishops, in the *seventh* century, to Constantinople, and were in the sixth synod there; and in the *eighth* century there were bishops of Achaia in the Nicene synod [f]: here by Achaia are designed the churches of Christ, which were in that part of Greece in which Corinth stood, and of which that was the metropolis; so that when the apostle says Achaia was ready, his meaning is more particularly, that the Corinthians were ready: *and,* adds he, *your zeal hath pro-*

[f] Hist. Eccles. Magdeburg. cent. 2. c. 9. p. 125. cent. 4. c. 2. p. 2. c. 9. p. 425. cent. 5. c. 2. p. 6. cent. 7. c. 10. p. 253. cent. 8. c. 2. p. 7.

voked very many: or *the zeal which is of you*; which sprung from, and was occasioned by them; for not the zeal of the Corinthians is here intended, as seems at first view, but that emulation which was stirred up in some of the leading persons among the Macedonians, upon hearing how ready they at Corinth were to minister to the necessitous brethren; and the zeal which appeared in these principal men, which was very warm, and yet prudent and seasonable, wrought very much on the minds of others, who, led by their example, contributed in a very generous and unexpected manner. In the Greek text it is, *the zeal out of you*; or, as the Arabic version renders it, *the zeal that arose from you*, which was occasioned by them.

Ver. 3. *Yet have I sent the brethren*, &c.] Titus, and the other two mentioned in the foregoing chapter: one manuscript reads, *we have sent*: and the Ethiopic version, *they have sent*, that is, the Macedonians; but the common reading is best. It might be objected, that since the apostle knew the forwardness of their minds, how ready they were a year ago, and had boasted so much of their liberality, that it must be unnecessary to send the brethren to them, to stir them up to this work; which objection is prevented by observing the reason of his sending them: *lest our boasting of you should be in vain in this behalf*: or, *in this part*, in this particular thing, על הדא צבותא, *concerning this business*, or affair of beneficence to the poor, as the Syriac version renders it. He had boasted of them with respect to other things besides this; but he was chiefly concerned, knowing the frailty and changeableness of human nature, and how possible it was that their forwardness might abate, and they grow cold and indifferent to such service, lest his glorying of them should be in vain in this particular instance; wherefore he sent the brethren to put them on, that as they had begun they would finish: *that as I said ye may be ready*. That as he had said to the Macedonians, that they were ready in mind, it might appear to be so; or as he had ordered them in his former epistle, they might be actually ready; have their collection ready-made, so that there might be no gathering when he came.

Ver. 4. *Lest haply if they of Macedonia come with me*, &c.] The apostle had determined to come himself, though he was afterwards prevented by Providence, but could not be certain of the coming of the Macedonian brethren with him; however, as it was probable that some of them would come, whose hearts were so much in this work, therefore he judged it fit and proper to send the brethren before-hand, in case they should come: *and find you unprepared*; not so ready for this service as had been boasted of, and the collection not finished, which had been begun a year ago. *We* (that *we say not you*) *should be ashamed in this same confident boasting*; or *in this same substance*, or *subsistence of boasting*: a boasting, which, he thought, they had the most solid and substantial ground and foundation to proceed upon; which, should it come to nothing, must cause shame both in the apostles, who had so largely, and with so much assurance, boasted of them; and in the Corinthians, who must be put to the blush, when it should be told them how much they had been boasted of with respect to their readiness, and yet were unprepared: so תוחלת, *hope*, expectation, confidence, is rendered by the Septuagint καύχημα, *boasting*, Prov. xi. 7. and in Psal. xxxix. 5. ὑπόστασις, the word here used. And some copies, and also the Vulgate Latin version, only read, *in this substance*, or glorying, and leave out *boasting* as superfluous.

Ver. 5. *Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren*, &c.] Titus, and the other two, on whom he did not lay his commands, or apostolical injunctions, according to the authority and dignity of his office; only exhorted or besought them, and which was judged by him very needful and proper at this time: *that they would go before-hand unto you*; before him, and the Macedonian brethren that might probably come with him: *and make up before-hand your bounty*; or *blessing*; for any present sent, or delivered, by one person to another, as a token of their friendship, favour, and good will, whether in a necessitous case or not, was by the Jews called ברכה, *a blessing*; see Gen. xxxiii. 11. 1 Sam xxv. 27. and especially what is contributed for the relief of the poor may be so called, because it is not only a part of the bounty of Providence, and blessings of life, with which men are favoured; but is also one way of blessing God for the mercies he has blessed them with, and likewise of blessing, or doing good to fellow-creatures and Christians. Moreover, because for this the poor bless their benefactors; and it is a blessing itself to do good to others. Now the apostle judged it expedient to send the brethren before-hand to complete and finish this good work begun. *Whereof*, says he, *ye had notice before*; in his former epistle, ch. xvi. 1, 2. or which was promised before by them; or had been spoken of so much before by him to other churches: *that the same might be ready, as a matter of bounty*, or blessing, *not as of covetousness*; that is, that the collection being ready-made, largely and liberally, it might appear to be a free generous action, and shew what a noble bountiful disposition they were of; and not performed as covetous men usually do what they do, sparingly, tenaciously, keeping their money as long as they can, being loth to part with it.

Ver. 6. *But this I say*, &c.] This the apostle would have the Corinthians take notice of, and well consider, it being what he could aver for truth, by observation and experience; that as in things natural, so in things of a moral and spiritual kind, *he which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly, and he which soweth bountifully*, or with blessings, *shall reap also bountifully*; or with blessings; as a man sows, so shall he reap; the one is in proportion to the other. Sowing and reaping are here used in a metaphorical sense. The former signifies doing acts of beneficence and liberality. So it is used in the Old Testament, and in Jewish writings; see Eccl. ix. 6. Isa. xxxii. 20. The interpretation of the latter text, give me leave to produce out of the Talmud *, as follows, and which will serve to illustrate this of the apostle's. "Says R. Jochanan, in the name "of R. Benaah, what is that which is written, *blessed* "*are ye that sow beside all waters, that send forth thither* "*the feet of the ox, and the ass?* blessed are the Israel-

* T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 5. 2. Zohar in Exod. fol. 2. 4.

"ites, for when they are employed in the law, "ובגמילות חסדים, *and in acts of beneficence*, their evil "concupiscence is delivered into their hand, and they "are not delivered into the hand of their evil concu-"piscence: or, as it is elsewhere [f] said, such are worthy "of the inheritance of two tribes, Joseph and Issachar; "as it is said, *blessed are ye that sow beside all waters*, "ואין זריעה אלא צדקה, *and there is no sowing but alms*: "or, by the word *sowing*, nothing else is meant but "doing of *alms*, as it is said, Hos. x. 12. and there is "no water but the law, or nothing else is meant by "water but the law, as it is said, Isa. lv. 1. And as "to these words, *that send forth thither the feet of the* "*ox and the ass*, it is a tradition of the house of Elias, "for ever let a man place himself by the words of "the law, as an ox to the yoke, and an ass to the bur-"den." There is a good deal of likeness between sowing the seed in the earth, and doing of alms, or acts of beneficence. The seed that is sown is what is selected and reserved out of the stock expended or sold off, which if not done, there would be no provision for futurity; so that which a man gives for the relief of the necessitous, is what he lays by him in store of what God has prospered him with; in doing which he may hope for a fruitful harvest, whereas otherwise he could expect none: as seed is cast from, and scattered about by the sower all over the field; so what is given to the poor, it is parted with unto them, and spread among them, every one has a portion; and it looks like a diminution of a man's substance, and as if it would never return with any advantage; though it does, as in a natural, so in a metaphorical sense. The sower casts and scatters his seed with an open hand; was he to gripe it in his fist, or only let go a grain of corn or wheat here and there, he would have but a poor harvest; so the cheerful giver opens his hand wide, and bountifully supplies the wants of the needy; who, as the sower casts his seed on the empty field, so he bestows his bounty on indigent persons, on all men in want, especially the household of faith: and, as when he has done, he harrows the ground, and covers the seed under the earth, where it lies hid, and is very unpromising for a while, and yet he exercises faith, hope, and patience, with respect to an harvest; so the generous benefactor does what he does in as private a manner as may be; and though for a time his good deeds may seem to be attended with little prospect of reward, yet in the end they certainly shall; for as a man sows, so shall he reap: if he sows, that is, gives nothing, he shall reap nothing; if he sows but little, he shall reap little; and if he sows much, he shall reap much; and that of the self-same kind which he sows; as he is liberal in things temporal, so shall he prosper and succeed in the same: see Prov. iii. 9, 10. and xi. 24, 25. Isa. xxxii. 8. Gal. vi. 7, 8, 9, 10.

Ver. 7. *Every man according as he purposeth in his heart*, &c.] Which is not to be understood of the quantity, or any set sum he has fixed upon in his mind to give; but of the quality or nature of giving: or of the manner in which he is to give: *so let him give*; of his own will and free choice, from his very heart; not as directed and forced by others, but according to his own counsel and determination: *not grudgingly*; or *not of grief*; with pain and uneasiness of mind, grieving at parting with what is given, reflecting on the persons that move him to it, or on the objects moved for. The Jews [g] reckon this the lowest degree of all in giving alms; *when a man gives to any one* בעצב, *with grief*, to which the apostle seems to refer: who adds, *or of necessity*: of force, by coaction, being obliged to it by the influence, example, or commands of superiors; or through the powerful motives, or prevailing entreaties of others; for without these, men, according to their abilities, should give of themselves freely and liberally: *for God loveth a cheerful giver*; or one that gives בסבר פנים יפות, *with a cheerful countenance*, as the Jews [h] say; or as elsewhere [i], *with a cheerful heart*: their rule is this, "he that doth the commandment, i. e. "alms, let him do it בלב שמח, *with a cheerful heart*." Who looks pleasantly on the person or persons that move him to it, or on the object to whom he gives; who parts with his money willingly, and takes delight in doing good to others; such givers God loves: not that their cheerful beneficence is the cause of his special peculiar love to them in his own heart, which arises from nothing in man, or done by him; but the meaning is, that God does well to such persons; shews his love to them; he lets them know how kindly he takes such acts of theirs, by prospering and succeeding them in their worldly affairs. In the Septuagint in Prov. xxii. 8. are these words, *God blesses a cheerful man, and a giver*, which the apostle refers to.

Ver. 8. *And God is able to make all grace abound towards you*, &c.] By *all grace* is meant, not the love and favour of God, the source of all blessings enjoyed in time and eternity; nor the blessings of grace, the fruits of it; nor the Gospel which reveals them; nor the various graces of the spirit implanted in regeneration; nor gifts of grace, fitting men for ministerial service; all which God is able to make to abound, and does, when he gives enlarged discoveries of his love, makes fresh applications of covenant-grace, leads more fully into the knowledge of his Gospel, carries on the work of his grace in the soul, and calls forth grace into act and exercise, and increases gifts bestowed; nor even merely temporal blessings of every sort, which men are unworthy of, are all the gifts of his goodness, and are given to his people in a covenant way; and which he can, and often does increase: but by it is meant all that goodness, beneficence, and liberality exercised towards the poor members of Christ; God is able, and he will, and it ought to be believed that he will, cause to return with an increase, all that which is expended in relieving the necessities of the saints; that is not thrown away and lost, which is communicated to them, but shall be repaid with use and interest, be restored with abundance, any more than the seed which the husbandman casts into the earth; for as God is able, and has promised, and will, and does cause that to spring up again, and bring forth an abundant increase, so will he multiply the seed of beneficence, and increase the fruits of righteousness. This now contains a new argument

[f] T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 17. 1.
[g] Maimon. Mattanot Aniyim, c. 10. sect. 14.
[h] Maimon. Mattanot Aniyim, c. 10. sect. 13.
[i] Vajikra Rabba, fol. 174. 1. Parash. 24.

to move to liberality, and an antidote against the fears of want, which persons are sometimes pressed with, and tend to prevent their bountiful acts of charity: *that ye always having all sufficiency in all things;* that is, God is able to increase, and will so increase your worldly substance, that you shall have a sufficiency, a perfect and entire sufficiency; enough for yourselves and families, for the entertainment of your friends, and the relief of the poor; which shall give you satisfaction and contentment, and that at all times, and with respect to every thing necessary for you, as to food and raiment, that so *ye may abound to every good work;* as to all good works, so to this of beneficence in particular, and to every branch of it, as feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, and the like.

Ver. 9. *As it is written,* &c.] In Psal. cxii. 9. where it is said of the good and righteous man, *he hath dispersed* ממוניה, *his riches,* his substance, as the Chaldee paraphrase adds by way of explanation; not in a profuse extravagant manner, but with wisdom and prudence, and yet largely and liberally, according to his ability. Just as the sower scatters his seed here, and there, and in every place, with an open and wide hand, so the good man distributes to all in necessity, and makes them all partakers of his bounty; he gives not only to one, but to many, and not to all without distinction he meets with, whether necessitous or not: *he hath given to the poor.* This explains the former phrase, and points out the persons, the objects of the good man's bounty and compassion: *his righteousness remaineth for ever.* This is not to be understood of his justifying righteousness, as if that consisted of, and was established upon his works of bounty and charity to the poor; nor of his fame among men on account of his liberality; nor of any reward in another world; but of his beneficence itself, it being common with the Jews to call alms צדקה, *righteousness;* see the note on Matt. vi. 1. and the sense is, that what such a man bestows in charity on the poor shall not be lost, but shall be like the seed cast into the earth, shall spring up again, and bring forth fruit with increase, according to what follows.

Ver. 10. *Now he that ministereth seed to the sower, and bread for your food,* &c.] For so the words ought to be pointed and read, as is clear from Isa. lv. 10. to which they refer; and are a *periphrasis* of God, who so blesses the seed that is cast into the earth, that it brings forth such an increase, as that there is a sufficiency of bread for food to the eater for the present year, and a sufficiency of seed to sow with again the next year; and that God, that does this every year, is able *to minister to,* or supply your present necessities; *and to multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness;* though some consider these as a wish or prayer of the apostle's, that God would do all this for them. Some copies, and the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, read all in the future tense, *he will minister* to you, or *supply* you, *and will multiply your seed sown, and will increase the fruits of your righteousness:* and so contain a promise of a divine blessing, encouraging to liberality with cheerfulness, by strengthening their faith in the providence of God: who as he multiplies, not the seed expended in the family, or sold at market, or as in the barn, or laid up for a better price, but the *seed sown* in the field, so he will multiply the substance of men; not what they lay out on themselves and families, or lay up in their coffers, but what they give away, or bestow on Christ's poor: and all effects which follow acts of liberality, and which are here designed by *fruits of righteousness,* such as a good name among men, blessing, praise, thanksgiving, and prosperity in things temporal and spiritual, these God will abundantly increase; some of which are mentioned in the following verses. So alms with the Jews is not only called צדקה, *righteousness,* but *seed sown.* Thus Jarchi interprets Psal. xxxvii. 26. *and his seed is blessed,* he that זורע, *sows* righteousness or alms, its end shall be for a blessing, or in the end he shall be blessed; and the phrase, *rain righteousness,* in Hos. x. 12. is by the Septuagint rendered, γεννήματα δικαιοσύνης, *fruits of righteousness,* the same as here, from whence it seems to be taken.

Ver. 11. *Being enriched in every thing to all bountifulness,* &c.] These words may be connected with ver. 8. the 9th and 10th verses being included in a parenthesis; and the sense is, that God was not only able to give them a sufficiency, and would give them a sufficiency of temporal things, as food and raiment to their satisfaction, and contentment for themselves, but a fulness, an exuberancy, an overplus also; not for luxury and intemperance, but that having such an affluence in all the good things of life, they might at all times, and upon every occasion, exercise a bountiful disposition in relieving the poor: *which causeth through us thanksgiving to God:* not their riches and fulness, but their liberal distribution of them to the poor saints, to which they were stirred up by the apostles; who were thankful to God who had so well succeeded their exhortations and advice, and which was the cause of thanksgivings in others: and since therefore such beneficence tended to the glory of God, as giving of thanks makes for his glory, this then ought to be attended to, and diligently performed; and so it furnishes out a new argument to this good work, which is enlarged upon in the following verses.

Ver. 12. *For the administration of this service,* &c.] Not only by the Corinthians, and others, in giving and collecting, but by the apostles in ministering and distributing their contributions to the poor saints, produced these two very good effects: for it *not only supplieth the wants of the saints;* makes up their deficiencies, relieves their necessities, and furnishes them with what is comfortable and refreshing to them under their many sorrowful circumstances, which is answering a very valuable end: *but is abundant also by many thanksgivings to God;* it has over and above this excellency in it, or its excellent use is enhanced, and abundantly appears by this consideration; that many precious souls are sent hereby to the throne of grace to give thanks to God, who put it into the hearts of the apostles to move the churches on their behalf, and who wrought upon them so cheerfully and largely to contribute to their necessities.

Ver. 13. *Whiles by the experiment of this ministration,* &c.] That is, the poor saints at Jerusalem having a specimen, a proof, an experience of the liberality of the Gentile churches ministered to them by the apostles, first, *they glorify God;* by giving thanks unto him,

acknowledging him to be the author of all the grace and goodness which they, and others, were partakers of; particularly *for your professed subjection to the Gospel of Christ.* The *Gospel of Christ* is the doctrine of grace, life, and salvation by Christ, of which he is the author, as God, the subject-matter, as Mediator, and the preacher, as man: *subjection* to it lies in a hearty receiving of the doctrines of it, and a cheerful submission to his ordinances; and this subjection was *professed*, declared, and made known to the churches in Judea, by their sending so largely to their relief, which they would never have done, if they had not cordially embraced the Gospel of Christ; for true faith in the doctrine of grace, and a sincere obedience to it, are best declared and known by love to the saints; for faith works by love, both to Christ, and to his people: next they glorified God by giving thanks to him, *for your liberal distribution unto them, and unto all men:* which shews, that though they were truly grateful, and heartily thankful for the favours they themselves received, yet not for these only, but for what other poor saints, in other places, were also partakers of; yea, that in the first place they were more sensibly affected with, and more especially thankful for the grace of God bestowed on the Gentiles, in sending the Gospel among them, and bringing them to a subjection to it, than for the temporal good they received from them.

Ver. 14. *And by their prayer for you,* &c.] The sense is, they glorify God on your behalf, making mention of you in all their prayers at the throne of grace, giving thanks to God for your liberality to them, and imploring all the blessings both of the upper and nether springs upon you; and this contains another argument engaging the Corinthians to liberality, taken from the prayers of the saints for them: or the words may be connected with ver. 12. the thirteenth verse being in a parenthesis; and shew not only that this ministering to the poor saints relieved their wants, and caused thanksgivings to God, but abounded in this fruit also; it put them upon daily and importunate supplications to God for their welfare both in soul and body. *Which long after you;* or *earnestly desire you;* that is, *to see you,* as the Ethiopic version adds; or exceedingly love you: their affections are wonderfully drawn out to you; not so much, or barely for your kindness to them, as *for the exceeding grace of God in you;* for that large measure of it which was bestowed upon them in regeneration, as their unfeigned faith, lively hope, and sincere love; and for all that grace which was displayed in their justification, adoption, sanctification, and whole salvation.

Ver. 15. *Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.*] Meaning either the goodness of God, both to the giver and receiver; for that the one gave so liberally, and the other received so largely, was from the grace of God, who so powerfully inclines the hearts of his children to do good, and offer so willingly of what he has given them, and who so wonderfully provides for the supply of the poor and needy; or else that exceeding grace of God which was so eminently, largely, and freely bestowed on the Corinthians in their effectual vocation; or, as some think, Christ himself, who is to be sure *the unspeakable gift* of God; who, though his son, his own son, his only-begotten son, the son of his love, his son and heir, yet he gave him to be a covenant to the people, the head of his church, the Saviour of sinners, and to be a sacrifice in their room and stead: none can tell how great this gift is, which is so suitable and seasonable, so large and comprehensive, nor declare the love both of the Father and the Son, expressed in it. Thankful we should be for it; and our thankfulness should be shewn by highly prizing and valuing this gift; by laying the whole stress of our salvation on Christ; by ascribing all the glory of it to him; by giving up ourselves to him, and to his interest; by walking worthy of him in all well-pleasing, and by communicating to the support of his cause, and the supply of his poor ministers and members. And thus the apostle tacitly suggests one of the strongest arguments that can be used, to stir up the saints to generosity and liberality, taken from the wonderful grace of God in the gift of his son; for if he of his free grace, and unmerited love, has given his son to, and for his people, and with him all things freely, both the riches of grace and glory, then they ought freely and bountifully to communicate temporal good things to the poor members of Christ, for whom God and Christ have an equal love, as for themselves.

CHAP. X.

IN this chapter the apostle has chiefly to do with the false teachers, and it is taken up in refuting their calumnies of him, and in exposing their boasting of themselves; and as he goes along, he takes notice of the efficacy of the Gospel, and of the success and extent of it, as it was preached by him, and other Gospel ministers, and points at the proper manner and ground of glorying. And whereas the false-teachers had represented him as a mean-spirited man, as well as his outward aspect was contemptible, and that he had not that authority and courage he boasted of, he describes himself by those characters they had reproached him with: by his name Paul, which signified little, they suggesting that he was little in soul, as well as in body; by his modesty and humility, when he was with the Corinthians, and by his boldness, now absent from them: and he entreats them by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, which he imitated, and they ought also, that they would not join in those sneers, nor reproach him for these things, ver. 1. and that they would so behave, that, when he came among them, he might have no occasion of using that power and authority, which the false teachers called bluster and boldness; and which he had thought and determined in his own mind to exercise on some who traduced him and his fellow-ministers as carnal selfish persons, ver. 2. which calumny he removes by owning, that they walked in the flesh, in the body, and were sub-

ject to imperfections, as men; but denies that their ministerial warfare or service was managed in a carnal and worldly, or in a weak way and manner, ver. 3. assigning this reason for it, because the weapons they made use of, in the warfare of their ministry, to defend truth, and annoy the enemy, to enlarge Christ's kingdom, and weaken Satan's, were not carnal, weak, and worldly, but spiritual and efficacious, through the power of God that accompanied them; and which appeared by the use they were of to the demolishing the strong holds of the flesh, and bringing down the haughty and lofty imaginations of the fleshly mind, which were opposed to the knowledge of God, and the refuting all the sophisms of fleshly wisdom, and carnal reasonings against the Gospel of Christ. This was the influence it had on some through the power of divine grace, whereby they became obedient to Christ, and subject to his word and ordinances, ver. 4, 5. whilst on others, as on Elymas the sorcerer, who sought to pervert the right ways of God, the apostolical power was exercised in a way of just punishment and awful vengeance, ver. 6. The apostle moreover suggests to the Corinthians, that they judged of him, and the false teachers, according to the outward appearance of things, which was wrong: however, let these men make ever so great a shew in the flesh, or what pretensions soever to Christianity, to being the members and ministers of Christ, the apostle would have them observe, that he, and those with him, were, and were to be looked upon as equally the same, ver. 7. nay, should he exalt himself above them, and affirm he had an authority superior to theirs, which he describes by the efficient cause of it, the Lord, and by its end, edification, and not destruction, he should have no reason to be ashamed, since he was capable of giving proof of it, ver. 8. however, he would say no more of this for the present, lest he should strengthen the calumny cast upon him, that it was his way to terrify by his letters, with blustering menaces of his power and authority, ver. 9. and which calumny is more fully expressed in the words of the false teachers, who said, that his letters were bold and blustering, and by which he would be thought to be a man of power and authority; though, alas! a man of no speech nor presence, when in person among men, and so not to be regarded, ver. 10. In answer to which the apostle returns, that he would have such a reviler know, that as he was in word by letters when absent, such would he be found to be in deed when present, ver. 11. and then proceeds to expose the vain-glorying of the false teachers, and to observe those things which he, and other faithful ministers of the word, might glory of; though they could not give themselves the liberties they did, and chose to glory in the Lord; they could not commend themselves in that bold and insolent manner, to the contempt of others, when there was no necessity for it, as the false teachers did, ver. 12. nor could they boast of things they never did; of conversions they never were instruments of; of the planting of churches they had no concern in; and of spreading the Gospel where they had never been, which was the case of these men: whereas, whenever they gloried, it was when there was an absolute necessity for it, and always with modesty, acknowledging the grace and goodness of God unto them, and ever with truth; and of their own labours, and not of others; and particularly with respect to Corinth, it was with the strictest regard to truth that they affirmed they were the first that preached the Gospel there, converted souls, and planted a Gospel church, and hoped they should be the means of spreading it further still, ver. 13, 14, 15, 16. However, they did not desire to glory in themselves, but in the Lord, from whom they had all their gifts, success, and usefulness; and so they directed others to do, ver. 17. and because, for this reason, that he that commends himself is not approved of God, but he that is commended by the Lord, ver. 18.

Ver. 1. *Now I Paul myself beseech you,* &c.] The apostle having said what was necessary and proper to stir up the Corinthians to a liberal contribution for the poor saints at Jerusalem, returns to the vindication of himself against the false apostles; and earnestly entreats the members of this church, *by the meekness and gentleness of Christ*, not to regard their reproaches, and join with them in them; for did they but consider the meek and gentle deportment of Christ, so worthy of his and their imitation, they would see there was no reason to reflect on him for that part of his conduct, in which he followed his Lord and master; whose *meekness* was to be seen in the assumption of human nature, in the whole of his life and conversation, and in his sufferings and death; and his *gentleness* of spirit to be observed in his coming into this world, not to judge and condemn it, but that the world might be saved; in bearing all indignities and insults, without being provoked to wrath and revenge; in rebuking his disciples for the severity of their spirits, declaring he came to save, and not take away the lives of men; in praying for his enemies, and in his silence under all the ill-treatment he met with from the worst of men. As the apostle had this excellent example before him, which served both to regulate his conduct, and support him under the hard measures he met with, so he was desirous to direct others to the observance of it, which might be a check upon the ill usage of him. He here speaks of himself in the language of his adversaries, who meant by these characters to expose him to scorn and contempt: *I Paul myself;* whose name the false teachers played upon, it signifying *little:* and he being of little stature, they reproached him for it, and would insinuate, that as his name was *little*, and his person mean, his bodily presence weak, and his speech contemptible, that he had a little soul, was a man of small knowledge, mean parts, and a very insignificant minister. Now it is as if the apostle should say, I am not ashamed of my name, nor of my person, and I am willing to own myself the least of the apostles, yea, less than the least of all saints; but I beg of you by the mild and gentle spirit of my Lord and master, whom I am not ashamed to imitate, that you would not join in those sneers. I am Paul, αὐτος, the *same* in my principles and practice, in my doctrine and life, when present and absent; though my enemies say the contrary, as that I am such an one, *who in presence am base*, or *humble among you:* they suggested, that when he was at Corinth he was humble and modest in his conversation, mild and gentle in all his expressions and deport-

ment; and which they interpreted of a meanness and baseness of spirit, as though he crept and cringed to curry favour with men, to avoid offence, and gain and keep an interest among them: *but being absent, am bold toward you;* wrote blustering, hectoring, terrifying letters, threatening to come with his apostolic rod and deliver them up to Satan, to fright them into a compliance with him.

Ver. 2. *But I beseech you, that I may not be bold when I am present,* &c.] That is, he entreated them that they would so behave for the future, that he might have no occasion, when he came among them, to use that power and authority they called boldness, which he had received from Christ for edification, and not destruction; as for that asperity and roughness with which he wrote, and which was thought to be too severe, it was in order to reclaim them, and so prevent that sharpness he was empowered by Christ to use: for though he had said in his former epistle, ch. iv. 21. *shall I come unto you with a rod or in love? and in the spirit of meekness?* he chose to come in the latter, rather than with the former; namely, not *with that confidence wherewith,* says he, *I think to be bold:* by *confidence* he means the faith of miracles he was possessed of, and particularly the power he, and other apostles had, of striking dead or blind incorrigible offenders, or of delivering them to Satan to undergo some corporeal punishment; which he had been thinking of, and reasoning about in his own mind, and was almost come to a conclusion concerning it, to inflict it upon, and with it to be bold, *against some which think of us as if we walked according to the flesh;* who not barely thought so within themselves, but reasoned the matter with others, and would fain persuade them to believe that they did walk in a carnal manner; not that they had the face to say, that they walked after the dictates of corrupt nature, or lived in open vice and profaneness; but that they walked in craftiness, had their conversation in the world with fleshly wisdom, seeking their own worldly interest and secular advantage; which is denied by the apostle, ch. i. 12. and was the real case, and true picture of the false teachers themselves.

Ver. 3. *For though we walk in the flesh,* &c.] The apostle removes the calumny of walking after the flesh, by owning that they were in the flesh, in the body, in a state of imperfection, attended with many weaknesses and infirmities, and surrounded with a variety of afflictions and sorrows; in this sense they were, and lived and walked in the flesh; but then he denies the charge exhibited against them, *we do not war after the flesh:* every Christian's life is a warfare with Satan, and his principalities and powers, with the world, the men and lusts of it, and with the corruptions of their own hearts; and much more is the life of a minister of the Gospel, who is called forth to meet the adversary in the gate; to stand in the hottest place of the battle, and sustain the whole fire and artillery of the enemy; to fight the good fight of faith, endure hardness as a good soldier of Christ, and with the weapons he is furnished with to war a good warfare: which is not done *after the flesh;* in such a manner as the men of the world wage war with one another; or upon carnal principles; or with carnal selfish views; or in a weak way and manner; but in a spiritual way, with all simplicity and disinterested views, with great courage and intrepidity of mind.

Ver. 4. *For the weapons of our warfare,* &c.] By *warfare* is here meant, not that which is common to all believers, who are enlisted as volunteers under the captain of their salvation, and fight his battles, and are more than conquerors through him; but what is peculiar to the ministers of the Gospel; and designs the ministerial function, or office, and the discharge of it. So the Levitical function, or the ministerial service of the Levites, is called צבא העבדה, *the warfare of the service,* Numb. viii. 25. The ministry of the word is so styled, because that as war is waged in defence of men's rights, properties, and liberties, and for the weakening of an enemy's power and possessions, and for the enlargement of kingdoms and dominions; so this is in defence of the truths and liberty of the Gospel, that they may continue and abide; for the weakening of Satan's kingdom, by delivering the lawful captives, taking the prey from the mighty, turning souls from the power of Satan to God, and translating them from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of Christ Jesus; and so for the enlargement of his kingdom, by spreading the Gospel far and near. The *weapons* with which this warfare is managed are the Scriptures of truth, the sword of the spirit, the word of God; and which indeed are an armoury, out of which may be taken weapons of all sorts, both offensive and defensive; such as serve both to establish and secure the doctrines of the Gospel, and to refute the errors of the wicked: to which may be added all those gifts which Christ has received for, and gives to men, qualifying them for the work of the ministry, and for the understanding of the sacred writings; together with all those means made use of by them for their improvement in spiritual knowledge; such as diligent reading the word of God, and the labours of his faithful servants, frequent meditation thereon, and earnest prayer to God for more light and experience. Also the various graces of the spirit, with which they are endued, may be taken into the account; such as the breast-plate of faith in Christ, and love to himself, his people, word, ordinances, cause, and interest; the helmet of salvation, hope, the girdle of truth and faithfulness, and the excellent grace of patience to endure all hardships, reproaches, insults, afflictions, and persecutions, cheerfully; and finally, all the acts of their ministration, such as preaching, prayer, the administration of ordinances, and laying on of censures, with the consent of the church. Now these weapons *are not carnal;* such as the men of the world fight with, not the temporal sword; for Christ sent forth his apostles without that, naked and unarmed amidst their enemies, his kingdom not being of this world, and so not to be defended and propagated in such a way; or as the weapons the false apostles used, such as natural eloquence, fleshly wisdom, carnal reason, cunning craftiness, the hidden things of dishonesty, and great swelling words of vanity; or they were not weak and impotent, which is sometimes the signification of *flesh:* see Gen. vi. 3. Isa. xxxi. 3. *but mighty through God:* powerful and effectual through the blessing of God, and the influences of his grace and spirit for the con-

version of sinners, the edification of saints, the defence of truth, the confutation of error, the destruction of Satan's kingdom, and the enlargement of Christ's: for these weapons are not powerful of themselves; they are passive instruments, which are only efficacious when used by a superior hand; when the Gospel ministration is attended with *the demonstration of the spirit, and of power*; and then they are serviceable *to the pulling down of strong holds.* The allusion seems to be to the falling of the walls of Jericho, at the sound of ram's horns, which must be ascribed not to those instruments, which were in themselves weak and despicable, but to the power of God that went along with the sound of them. By *strong holds* are meant, the strong holds of sin and Satan; such as unbelief, pride, hardness of heart, *&c.* with which the heart of man is walled (so קירות לב, *the walls of the heart*, Jer. iv. 19.) against God and Christ, and the Gospel of the grace of God, and by which Satan fortifies himself, and keeps the palace and goods in peace, until the everlasting doors are thrown open, which were bolted and barred; and these walls of defence are pulled down by the King of glory, who enters in, which is usually done by the power of God, in the ministry of the Gospel: so sins are called strong holds, fortresses, and bulwarks, by the Talmudists[k], who give this as the sense of Eccl. ix. 14. "*a little city*, this is the "body; *and few men in it*, these are the members; "*and there came a great king against it, and besieged* "*it*, this is the evil imagination, lust, or concupis-"cence; and built against it מצודים, *great bulwarks*, "or fortresses, אלה עונות, *these are iniquities.*" And so Philo the Jew[l] speaks of τα βεβαια της κακιας οχυρωματα, *the firm munitions of vice* being broken down. Or else by them may be meant the fortresses of a man's own righteousness, holiness, good works, and moral duties, in which he entrenches, and thinks himself safe: which the spirit of God, in the ministry of the word, blows a blast upon, and which are cast down by it, that revealing a better righteousness, even the righteousness of Christ; or else the fleshly wisdom, rhetorical eloquence, and sophisms of false teachers, with which they endeavoured to fortify themselves against the doctrines of the Gospel, but in vain.

Ver. 5. *Casting down imaginations*, &c.] Or *reasonings*: the carnal reasonings of the minds of natural men against God, his providences and purposes, against Christ, and the methods of salvation, and every truth of the Gospel; which are all disproved, silenced, and confounded, by the preaching of the word, which though reckoned the foolishness and weakness of God, appears to be wiser and stronger than men; and whereby the wisdom of the wise is destroyed, and the understanding of the prudent brought to nothing: *and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God*; every proud thought of the heart, every great swelling word of vanity, every big look, even all the lofty looks and haughtiness of men, with every airy flight, and high towering imagination, reasoning, and argument advanced against the Gospel of Christ; which is here meant *by the knowledge of God*, and so called, because it is the means of leading souls into the knowledge of God, even into a better knowledge of him than can be attained to, either by the light of nature, or law of Moses; to a knowledge of him, and acquaintance with him in Christ the Mediator, in whom the light of the knowledge of the glory of God is given; and with which knowledge of God eternal life is connected, yea, in this it consists; it is the beginning of it, and will issue in it. *And bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ*; or *carrying captive the whole understanding*; that is, so illustrating it with divine light, that it clearly sees Christ to be the alone, able, willing, full, and suitable Saviour, and so becomes obedient to him, both as a Saviour and a King; such an enlightened soul looks to him alone for life and salvation, ventures on him, and relies upon him, and is desirous and willing to be saved by him in his own way; he receives and embraces all his truths and doctrines with faith and love, and obeys them from the heart, and cheerfully and willingly submits to all his commands and ordinances; for though he is taken by the grace of God, and all his strong holds, reasonings, and high thoughts are demolished by the power of God in the Gospel, and he himself is carried captive, yet not against, but with his will, to be a voluntary subject of Christ, and cheerfully to submit to the sceptre of his kingdom.

Ver. 6. *And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience*, &c.] Not with the temporal sword, as the civil magistrate, but with the spiritual one; meaning either censures and excommunication, which a faithful minister of the Gospel, with the suffrage of the church, has at hand, and a power to make use of, for the reclaiming of disobedient persons; or rather that extraordinary power which was peculiar to the apostles, of inflicting punishments on delinquents, such as what was exercised by Peter upon Ananias and Sapphira, by the Apostle Paul on Elymas the sorcerer, the incestuous person, and Hymenaeus and Philetus, and which still continued with him; it was ready at hand, he could exercise it whenever he pleased, he only waited a proper time: *when your obedience is fulfilled*: till they were thoroughly reformed from the several abuses, both in doctrine and practice, they had fallen into, and were brought into a better order and decorum, and appeared to have been in all things obedient to the directions he had given; being unwilling, as yet, to use the awful authority he had from Christ, lest any of the dear children of God, who were capable of being restored by gentler methods, should suffer with the refractory and incorrigible.

Ver. 7. *Do ye look on things after the outward appearance*, &c.] Or *look upon things*, ironically said; or *ye do look on things*, a reproof for making judgment of persons and things, by the outward appearance of them; so many judged of Paul by the meanness of his person, the weakness of his body, the lowness of his voice, his outward circumstances of life, his poverty, afflictions, and persecutions; and despised him; whilst they looked upon the riches, eloquence, haughty airs, noisiness, and personable mien, of the false apostles, and admired them: *if a man trusts to*

[k] T. Bab. Nedarim, fol. 32. 2.

[l] De Confusione Linguarum, p. 335.

himself that he is Christ's; is fully assured that he has an interest in his love and favour, is redeemed by his blood, is a partaker of his grace, and a believer in him; or rather, that he is a minister of the Gospel, and an apostle of Christ, one that is qualified and sent forth by him to preach the word: *let him, of himself, think this again, that as he is Christ's, even so are we Christ's:* that is, he may, and ought of himself, without another's observing it to him, of his own accord, willingly reason and conclude, by the self-same marks and evidences he would be thought to be a minister of Christ, that we are also. The sense is, that let a man be ever so confident of his being a true minister of the Gospel, he'll not be able to point out one criterion or proof of his being so, but what he might discern in the Apostle Paul, and the rest of his fellow-ministers, and therefore ought to conclude the same of them as of himself. In which may be observed the great modesty of the apostle, who does not go about to disprove others being Christ's, who so confidently boasted of it; nor bid them look to it to see if they were or no, since all that say so are not; only as if granting that they were, he would have them look upon him, and his fellow apostles as such also, who had at least equal pretensions to this character.

Ver. 8. *For though I should boast somewhat more of our authority,* &c.] Than as yet he had done, or used to do; or rather the sense is, should he boast of a greater authority than the false apostles, or even than the true ministers of the Gospel in common had, he should not exceed the bounds of truth and modesty; for as an apostle he not only had an authority from Christ to preach the Gospel, and administer ordinances, but also had an extraordinary power of punishing offenders, as before observed: *which the Lord hath given us for edification, and not for destruction:* a power which no mere man, no creature, though ever so exalted, could have given; none but Christ, who is Lord of heaven and earth, and who has all power in his hands, could clothe with such authority as this; and which is given by him, though for the destruction of the flesh, or punishment of the body, yet for the salvation and good of the soul or spirit, as in the case of the incestuous person; and though sometimes for the destruction of the individual person or persons punished by it, as in the case of Ananias and Sapphira, yet for the edification, spiritual instruction, and welfare of the whole community or church, of which these were a part. So this authority was exercised on Hymenæus and Philetus, that either they themselves might not learn to blaspheme, or cease to blaspheme Christ, or his apostles, or the truths of the Gospel; or that others might be deterred from such a practice; and so was for the edification of the one, or the other, and the preservation of the whole. *I should not be ashamed:* as one that has told an untruth, or as a vain-glorious man, who has made his boast of what he has not. The apostle signifies, that he should be able to make good such an assertion, should he think fit to mention it.

Ver. 9. *That I may not seem as if I would terrify you by letters.*] Here seems to be something wanting, which is to be supplied. The sense is, though I might lawfully boast of the superior authority which we apostles have above other persons, in using sharpness with men insolent and hardened in sin; yet I will not, I forbear every thing of that kind, I drop it, I don't choose to insist upon it; כדמנא אנא, *I overlook,* or *neglect* it, *I don't care* to do it, as the Syriac version supplies it; and this he thought most prudent and advisable, lest he should give any occasion to the above calumny that he was bold, and blustering, and terrifying by his letters when absent, and only threatened that he had no power to perform.

Ver. 10. *For his letters, say they, are weighty and powerful,* &c.] These words contain the reason why he did not choose to say any more of his authority as an apostle to punish offenders, that he might give no occasion for such a calumny, some among them, or the false apostles, had cast upon him; that his epistles, referring particularly to his former epistle, and that part of it which respected the incestuous person, and his delivery to Satan, were blustering and thundering; were laden with sharp reproofs and severe menaces; were heavy with charges, were filled with great swelling words, with boasts of power and authority, and with threatenings what he would do, when he came among them; whereas when present, as at his first coming to them, he was mild and gentle, even to a degree of meanness and baseness, as they suggested; and so they concluded he would be, should he come again; and therefore his letters were not to be regarded: *but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible:* he made a mean figure, being of a low stature, and having an infirm body: the account the historian[m] gives of him is this, that "he had a small "and contracted body, somewhat crooked and bowed, "a pale face, looked old, and had a little head; he "had a sharp eye; his eyebrows hung downwards; "his nose was beautifully bent, somewhat long; his "beard thick and pretty long; and that, as the hair "of his head, had a sprinkling of gray hairs:" hence one in Lucian[n] scoffingly says of him, "when the "bald-pated Galilean met me, with his hook-nose, "who went through the air to the third heaven:" though the words of this text rather regard his mind and mien than the make of his body; and suggest that he was not a man of that greatness of soul, and largeness of mind, not possessed of those abilities and gifts, and of that freedom of speech, and flow of words, his letters promised; but instead of that, was a man of a mean spirit, very abject and servile, and to be despised; his conduct weak, and carrying no majesty and authority with his presence, his words without weight, his language vulgar, and style neglected; and, upon all accounts, a person worthy of no notice, and not at all to be either feared or regarded.

Ver. 11. *Let such an one think this,* &c.] The apostle seems to have in view some one particular person, though he does not choose to name him, who had more especially reproached him after this manner; and who was either one of the members of this church, or rather one of the false apostles: and so in the foregoing verse, instead of *say they,* in which way both the Syriac and

[m] Nicephorus, l. 2. c. 37.

[n] In Philopatr.

Vulgate Latin read, and is followed in our version, it is in the original text φησι, *says he*, or *he says*; and so a certain particular person seems designed in ch. xi. 4. whom the apostle would have to know and conclude with himself, and of which he might fully assure himself, *that such as we are in word by letters, when we are absent, such will be also in deed, when we are present*: he threatens the calumniator, that he should find him, to his sorrow, the same man present as absent; that what he sent by letters, should be found to be fact, when he came again; whose coming would not be with all that tenderness and gentleness, as when he first preached the Gospel to them, for which there was then a reason; since he and others had swerved from the truths of the Gospel, and the right ways of God, which would require the severity he threatened them with, and the execution of which might be depended upon.

Ver. 12. *For we dare not make ourselves of the number, &c.*] Some understand this as spoken ironically, as if the apostle jeeringly should say, he would not pretend to join, or put himself upon a level, who was a poor, little, mean, despicable person, with such great men as the false apostles were, men of such large gifts, and of such great learning and eloquence; though they may be understood without an irony, that the modesty of the apostle and his fellow-ministers would not suffer them to mingle with such persons, and act the vain-glorious part they did: *or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves*; they were not so vain and foolish, as to give high encomiums of themselves, therefore would not boast even of the authority they had, and much less say that in letters, which they could not make good in fact: *but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise*, or *understand not*; how foolish they are, how ridiculous they make themselves; they do not understand what they say, nor whereof they affirm; they don't understand themselves, what they really are; for to form a right judgment of themselves, they should have considered the gifts and abilities, the learning and knowledge of others, and thereby might have taken an estimate of their own; but instead of this, they only consulted themselves, and measured and compared themselves with themselves; which was acting just such a foolish part, as if a dwarf was to measure himself not with any kind of measure, or with another person, but with himself; only surveys himself, and his own dimensions, and fancies himself a giant. Just the reverse is this, to what is said in Philo the Jew*, "την γαρ ουδενειαν την εμαυτου μετρειν εμαθον, *I have "learned to measure the nothingness of myself*, and to "contemplate thy exceeding great bounties; and moreover, perceive myself to be dust and ashes, or if "there is any thing more abject."

Ver. 13. *But we will not boast of things without our measure, &c.*] Or *things unmeasurable*; meaning not doctrines, the knowledge of which they had not attained to, and which were not to be measured by reason or revelation, such as the Gnostics boasted of; but the sense is, that they would not glory in, and boast of actions, that were never done by them, within the compass of their ministration, as the false apostles did; who pretended that they had been everywhere, and had preached the Gospel, and had made converts in all parts of the world; but the apostle and his fellow-labourer, desired only to speak of those things which were done of them, and of their successful labours: *according to the measure of the rule*: not the measure of the gift of Christ, or of faith bestowed upon them; nor the measuring rule and canon of the Scriptures, though both are truths; but the places or parts of the world, which God in his secret purpose had fixed, and in his providence directed them to preach in: or as he says, *which God hath distributed to us*; parted and divided to them; assigning such and such places to some, and such and such to others, as he himself pleased, to discharge their ministerial office in; drawing as it were a line, or setting a bound, by which and how far each should go, and no further: *a measure to reach even unto you*; the line of their ministration was drawn, or the bounds of their preaching were carried from Judea, and through all the intermediate places to Corinth, so that the Corinthians were properly under the jurisdiction of the apostles, and in their district; wherefore the false apostles had really no right nor claim to be among them; nay, their measure reached to the ends of the world, according to Psal. xix. 4. *their line* קום, *is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.*

Ver. 14. *For we stretch not ourselves beyond our measure, &c.*] They did not go beyond the bounds set them by the purpose and providence of God, by going to Corinth; nor did they boast of things without their measure, when they spoke of their labours, and of the success of their ministrations among them; nor did they assume and arrogate to themselves what did not belong to them, when they claimed an authority over them, and a right of exercising their apostolical office among them: *as though we reached not unto you*; by right, or according to the will of God, and the measuring line and bounds he drew and fixed for them: *for we are come as far as to you also in preaching the Gospel of Christ.* The case is clear, it is a plain matter of fact, that they were not only come to other places, where they had preached the Gospel, and planted churches, but as far as to Corinth also, where they came *in*, *by*, or *with the Gospel of Christ*: not their own, or what was of their own invention, but Christ's; of which he is the author, minister, and subject; they did not come without something with them; they came with the good news and glad tidings of salvation by Christ; they came preaching the Gospel, which was owned for the conversion of many souls, and for the raising a very considerable church; all which was a full proof that they were of right, and not by usurpation, come to them; that they had not thrusted themselves in, where they had no business, and consequently still retained a power over them.

Ver. 15. *Not boasting of things without our measure, &c.*] The apostle here asserts what he had done before, ver. 13. with a view to explain it, as he does, saying, *that is of other men's labours*; when they boasted of the Corinthians as their converts and children,

* Quis rer. divin. Hæres, p. 495.

whom they had begotten through the Gospel of Christ, they did not boast of other men's labours, as did the false apostles; who when they came to Corinth, found a church already planted by the apostle, and a multitude of believers, of whose conversion and faith he had been an instrument; and yet these men claimed them as their own, and an authority over them, when they were the fruit of the apostle's labours: *but having hope, when your faith is increased, that we shall be enlarged by you according to our rule abundantly:* the sense is, that the apostle hoped, for he could not be sure, this lying in the secret will of God, that when the faith of the Corinthians was grown stronger, and more settled and established, and so would not stand in so much need of their care and instruction, they should be enlarged through their means; and that they should not stop here, but that the line, measure, or rule of their ministry, should be drawn to a greater length, and the bounds of it extended and carried abundantly further. The apostle intimates, that the weakness of their faith, and the disorders and divisions that were among them, were a hinderance to the spread of the Gospel; and that if their church-state were in a better and a more settled condition, as it would give the apostles more leisure to preach the Gospel elsewhere, so it would serve to recommend it to other places beyond them; which would be an enlargement of the bounds of their ministry, and a means of magnifying of Christ and his Gospel, and of them also.

Ver. 16. *To preach the Gospel in the regions beyond you,* &c.] Here the apostle clearly expresses what he hoped for, and explains what he meant by being enlarged according to rule; namely, that he should be at liberty to preach the Gospel elsewhere; and hoped he should be directed by the providence of God, to carry it into the more remote and distant parts of the world, where as yet Christ had not been named: *and not to boast in another man's line;* or enter into another man's province, glory in other men's labours, as did the false apostles: and boast *of things made ready to our hand;* that is, of places cultivated and improved, by the preaching of the Gospel, so as to bring forth fruit to the honour and glory of God; where many souls were already converted, and churches were planted and put into good order, and were in a flourishing condition; see Rom. xv. 18, 19, 20, 21.

Ver. 17. *But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.*] Not in himself, nor in his outward circumstances of life, or inward endowments of mind; not in his natural or acquired parts; not in his wisdom, knowledge, learning, and eloquence; nor in his own righteousness, labours, and services, much less in other men's labours; nor in his own sense of himself; nor in the opinion and popular applause of others; but in the Lord Jesus Christ, as the author and donor of all gifts, natural and spiritual; in his wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption; and in his judgment and approbation of men and things, which sense the following words direct unto.

Ver. 18. *For not he that commendeth himself is approved,* &c.] Such may be said to commend themselves, who ascribe that to themselves, which don't belong to them; as that they are the ministers of Christ, and sent forth by him, when they are not; who boast that they have large ministerial gifts, when they have none; and of their great service and usefulness, when it is all the produce of other men's labours; and what they have and do, they wholly impute to their own power and industry, and not to the grace and power of God: now such persons are neither approved by God, nor good men; for their own self-commendation stands for nothing, and is so far from being acceptable to God or men, that it must be nauseous and disagreeable; see Prov. xxvii. 2. *But whom the Lord commendeth;* they are approved by God and men, and they are such whom he highly honours, as he did Paul, by counting them faithful; and putting them into the ministry, by qualifying them for his service, by assisting them in it, and making them abundantly useful for the good of souls, and the glory of his name: by all which he bears a testimony to them, and shews his approbation of them, and at last will say, *well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of thy Lord.*

CHAP. XI.

IN this chapter, the apostle continues his discourse concerning the false teachers; blames the Corinthians for their connivance at them, and subjection to them; gives a true and ample description of them; compares himself with them, and by various instances shews, that he was greatly superior to them: and whereas self-commendation was necessary, and could not be avoided in this argument, and this might look like folly, and by some be deemed such, he entreats the Corinthians that they would bear with him in it, as well as in his reproofs and admonitions to them, ver. 1. and assigns his godly jealousy over them, as the reason why he entered into this subject, and proceeded in such a way of reasoning on it; and the rather this might be bore with in him, since he had such a concern in espousing them to Christ; his end in which was, to present them a chaste virgin to him, ver. 2. and what this jealousy was he explains, lest their minds should be corrupted by the false teachers, and they should forsake the pure and simple Gospel of Christ; which he exemplifies in the instance of Eve being deceived by the serpent, ver. 3. and proceeds to blame them for preferring these false teachers to the faithful ministers of the word; seeing, put them in the best light they could, it was but the same Jesus they preached, and not another and a better Saviour; and it was but the same spirit of faith they received through their ministry, and not another and a better; and the same Gospel they brought, and did not come with better news, or more joyful tidings; had this been the case, there would have been some reason for extolling one above another, ver. 4. for which there was

not the least foundation, especially with respect to the Apostle Paul, who was not inferior to the chief of the true apostles of Christ, and therefore could not be at all behind these men, ver. 5. and seeing it might be objected to him that he was rude in speech, when these were men of great eloquence, he allows it; but then affirms he was not so in knowledge, in which he exceeded them; for the truth of which, he appeals to the Corinthians themselves, ver. 6. and he suggests, that it was very ungrateful in them, that inasmuch as he humbled himself when among them, by working with his own hands, that they might be exalted, that they should despise him on that account, and prefer these avaricious men before him, ver. 7. when that he might be able to preach the Gospel freely, he took of other churches, ver. 8. and particularly was supplied by the Macedonian brethren, and so was not at all chargeable and burdensome to them, and he was determined ever to remain so, ver. 9. and which he confirms by an oath, that no man should ever be able to prevail upon him to take any thing of the churches in the region of Achaia, in which Corinth was, ver. 10. and whereas it might be insinuated that such a resolution shewed that he had no true affection for them, this he denies, and appeals to the omniscient God for the truth of his love to them, ver. 11. but the true reason why he had so determined, was to prevent the false teachers having any opportunity to reproach him, and exalt themselves, ver. 12. and this leads him on to a description of them, by their ambition and arrogance, in assuming a title that did not belong to them; by their crafty, cunning, and deceitful manner of working, and by their hypocrisy in mimicking the apostles of Christ, ver. 13. nor need this seem strange to any, when Satan himself has been transformed into an angel of light, ver. 14. and whom, the apostle suggests, these men imitated; whose ministers they were, though they looked like ministers of righteousness, and on whom the apostle denounces severe punishment, ver. 15. and as he saw himself under a necessity of boasting, in order to stop the mouths of these men, to vindicate himself, and prevent mischief being done by them, he renews his entreaty in ver. 1. that the Corinthians would not reckon him as a fool; or if they did, that they would bear with his folly, and suffer him to boast of himself a little, ver. 16. and that the Christian religion, and the Gospel of Christ, might not come under any reproach and blame, for his conduct in this particular, he observes, that what he was about to say on this head of boasting, was not by any order or direction from the Lord, but of himself, and might have the appearance of folly in it, ver. 17. and the rather he might be indulged in it, seeing many, even the false teachers, had gloried in a carnal way, and of outward things, and which made it necessary that he should glory also, ver. 18. and which foolish boasting in them, even many of the Corinthians had bore with, and that with a great deal of pleasure; and therefore might suffer him, a single man, to boast a little of himself unto them, whom he ironically calls wise, ver. 19. of which he gives instances, by being brought into bondage, devoured, pillaged, insulted, and abused, by the false teachers, ver. 20. nor had they abused and reproached them only, but the apostle also, as weak and contemptible; but then he would not bear it, but would boldly engage and enter the lists with them, though this might be by some reckoned foolish boasting, ver. 21. and then follows the comparison between him and them, by which it appears that he was upon an equal foot with them, on account of nation, descent, and parentage, ver. 22. that he was superior to them as a minister of the Gospel, as was manifest by his more abundant labours in it, and by his sufferings for it, the dangers he was exposed unto on account of it, and the many hardships he endured in the ministration of it, of which he gives a variety of particulars, ver. 23, 24, 25, 26, 27. to which he adds, besides these things, and all other outward ones, that the daily care of all the churches of Christ was upon him, ver. 28. and such was his sympathy with all sorts of Christians, even the weak and offended brethren, that he was affected with them, bore their infirmities, and sought to reconcile and make them easy, which greatly increased the weight of business that was upon him, ver. 29. and seeing there was a necessity of glorying, he chose to glory in his infirmities and sufferings, and on which he had mostly enlarged, ver. 30. and for the glory of divine Providence, and to express his thankfulness for the mercy, he relates a particular instance of deliverance from imminent danger; for the truth of which he appeals to the God and father of Christ, the eternally blessed One, ver. 31. the danger he escaped, the manner and means of the escape, and the place where, are particularly mentioned, ver. 32, 33.

Ver. 1. *Would to God you could bear with me a little,* &c.] The false apostles boasted so much of their gifts, abilities, and usefulness, that the apostle found himself under a necessity of saying some things in his own defence, for the honour of God, and the good of this church; which otherwise his modesty would not have permitted him, and which he saw would be accounted and censured as folly in him by others; and therefore he entreats their patience a little while, and that they would suffer him to say a few things in vindication of his character, and not be offended: though it would be in commendation of himself, which, were he not forced to, would look vain and foolish: and therefore says, *bear with me a little in my folly,* and which he presses with importunity, *and indeed bear with me;* he insists upon it, he urges it as what he must not be denied in; for could he have avoided it, he would not have done it; but such was the case, that if he did not do it, he must greatly suffer in his character and usefulness; the members of this church would be in great danger from these false apostles, and the honour and glory of Christ lay greatly at stake; which when considered, he hoped his request would be granted: the last clause may be rendered, *but also ye do bear with me;* signifying that they had done so already, and continued to do so, and therefore he could not but encourage himself, that they still would bear with him a little longer, and in a few things more.

Ver. 2. *For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy,* &c.] He lets them know it was not so much on his own account, or at all with any selfish views, or for any secular interest of his own, that he was so concerned, but it was *a godly jealousy,* or a *zeal of God;*

which he was inspired with by God, and which was for the honour and glory of God, even Jesus Christ, who is God over all; and for their real good and spiritual welfare, as a church of Christ, that possessed him, which put him upon saying what he was about to do; and what affected him the more was, when he considered himself as a friend of the bridegroom, who had been concerned in the betrothing of them to Christ: *for I have espoused you to one husband;* by whom is meant Christ, as the following clause explains it: Christ stands in the relation of an husband to the church catholic and universal; to the whole general assembly and church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven; even to all the elect of God, that ever were, are, or shall be; and so he does to particular congregated churches, as he did to this church at Corinth, and so he does to every individual believer: which character he acts up to, by loving them with a love prior to theirs, a love of complacency and delight, which is single, special, and peculiar, strong and affectionate, wonderful and inconceivable, constant, and what will last for ever; by sympathizing with them under all their afflictions, temptations, desertions, and exercises of every kind; by nourishing and cherishing them, which phrases are expressive of the spiritual food and clothing he provides for them, of that intimate communion he admits them to, and of that whole care he takes of them; by paying all their debts, supplying all their wants, supporting them with his right hand, protecting them against all their enemies, giving them grace here, and glory hereafter; and, last of all, by interesting them in his person, and all that he has, in all the blessings and promises of the covenant, in his wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. The act of espousing, the apostle here, with respect to this church, takes to himself, though in another sense, and which is the principal one, it is ascribed to Christ himself, who betroths all his to himself in righteousness, in judgment, in loving kindness, and tender mercies; he saw them in his father's purposes and decrees, in all the glory they were designed to be brought unto, when he loved them as his father did, and desired them for his spouse and bride, which was granted to him; and then secretly in covenant betrothed them to himself, and ever after looked upon them as in a conjugal relation to him; wherefore though they fell in Adam, and became guilty and filthy, he gave himself for them as his church and bride, to sanctify and cleanse them, that he might present them to himself, just such a glorious church he had seen them before. In consequence of this, the spirit of God attends the ministration of the Gospel, to the conversion of each of these souls, when they become willing to be the Lord's, and give their free and full consent to have him for their husband; and this is the day of their open espousal to him, and in this the apostle had, and other ministers of the Gospel have a concern; he was a means, in the hands of the spirit, of their regeneration, a minister by whom they believed, an instrument in directing their souls to Christ, by setting forth his unsearchable riches, the glory of his person, and fulness of his grace: as Abraham's servant set forth the greatness of his master, and the large possessions his son was heir to, and brought out his bracelets and ear-rings, his jewels of gold and silver, and thereby gained his point, a wife for Isaac; so the spirit of God going along with the ministration of the apostle so wrought upon these Corinthians, as to give up themselves to the Lord, and take him for their head and husband, Saviour and Redeemer. This was the concern the apostle had herein, and his view, desire, and hope were, to set them before Christ their husband, pure and incorrupt: *that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ;* that is, single in their love to him, strictly adhering to him, and him only, as standing in such a relation to them; incorrupt in the principles of faith, sincere and upright in their worship, and holy in their lives and conversations; nothing was more desirable to him than this, that he might thus present them to Christ at the great day; whereby it would appear, that his labour was not in vain in the Lord: now having been concerned in this affair of espousing them to Christ, and they not yet presented to him, or took home by him, he could not, as things were circumstanced, but entertain a godly jealousy over them in his own breast, lest the false apostles should draw them aside in any degree from their love to Christ, and faith in him.

Ver. 3. *But I fear lest by any means,* &c.] Jealousy is always attended with fear, care, and solicitude, whether in things natural or spiritual. The apostle, as things were in this church, could not but express his fears, lest *as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety;* that is, the old serpent the devil, who made use of a serpent, the most subtle creature of all the beasts of the field, and seduced Eve from her obedience to God, to transgress his command, by eating the forbidden fruit. The apostle here speaks the language and sense of the Jews, who say [p], that, שטן ונחש שם אחד להם, *Satan and the serpent have one name, i. e.* are the same; and that it was the old serpent (the devil), דפתי לחוה, *that beguiled Eve* [q], and who is said to be *corrupted* by him: "the serpent (they say [r]) "was corrupted first, after that, נתקלקלה חוה, *Eve* "*was corrupted,* and after that Adam was corrupted." So the apostle was jealous and fearful, knowing that the false apostles were ministers of Satan, artful and cunning men, lest, through their craftiness and sophistry, *your minds,* says he, *should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ;* that is, lest their judgments should be misled, their minds be vitiated with corrupt principles, and be carried away in any degree with the error of the wicked, from off the pure and simple doctrine of the Gospel, which respects the person and grace of Christ; and chiefly lies in this one plain, easy, and important truth, salvation alone by him. The Vulgate Latin version reads, *your minds should be corrupted, and should fall from the simplicity that is in Christ.*

Ver. 4. *For if he that cometh,* &c.] Meaning either some particular man, the apostle might have had some information of, who came from Judea to Corinth, under

[p] Caphtor, fol. 92. 1.
[q] Raya Mehimna in Zohar in Exod. fol. 50. 1.
[r] T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 15. 2.

the character of a true apostle; or any one of the false apostles whatever, who came of their own accord, and was never sent by Christ, or by any of his churches: *preacheth another Jesus whom we have not preached;* that is, if he proposes and recommends in his ministry, a better Saviour and Redeemer than had been preached by the apostles; one that was better qualified, and more fit for the purposes of salvation; one that they could more safely venture their souls upon, and believe in, as the alone able and all-sufficient Saviour, a thing impossible to be: or the sense is, if this other apostle taught the doctrine of salvation by Christ, in another and better method and in a clearer manner, more to the honour of the Redeemer, the glory of God, and the good of their souls, they would have some reason then to pay a greater regard to him: *or if ye receive another spirit which ye have not received;* a better spirit than the spirit of God, which they had received through the preaching of the Gospel by the apostles; either for graces, for they had received him as a spirit of regeneration and conversion, of sanctification and faith, of adoption and liberty, of peace and joy, and comfort; or for gifts, both ordinary and extraordinary, which could not possibly be: the spirit which the contrary ministers brought with it, and tended to ingenerate in them, must be the reverse of this, even a spirit of bondage again to fear: *or another Gospel which ye have not accepted,* or *embraced;* a better Gospel than had been preached by the apostles, and received by them: which contained more wholesome doctrines, more comfortable truths, more excellent promises, better tidings of good things, than those of peace, pardon, righteousness, life, and salvation, by a crucified Jesus; proposed a better scheme of things, more for the honour of the divine perfections, and for the comfort and safety of believers; and which laid a better foundation for faith and hope, and tended more to encourage true religion and powerful godliness: *ye might well bear with him;* receive his doctrine, submit to his authority, and prefer him to the apostles: but since another and a better Saviour than Jesus of Nazareth could not be proposed, or the doctrine of salvation by him be preached in another and better manner than it was; nor had they received, nor could they receive, another and a better spirit, than the spirit of grace and truth, which was communicated to them, through the apostle's ministry; nor was a better and a more excellent Gospel preached to them, than what they had heard: therefore they ought not to connive at, indulge and tolerate, such a false apostle among them, which it seems they did; and was the reason of the apostle's fears and jealousies, before expressed: and besides, supposing that this man that was among them, and caressed by many of them, did preach the same Jesus, and the same doctrine of salvation by him, and the same spirit and power went along with his ministry, it being the same Gospel that was preached by Paul and others, there was no reason why he should be set up above them, who had been the instruments of conveying the Gospel, and the spirit of it, to them, long before he was known by them.

Ver. 5. *For I suppose I was not a whit behind, &c.*] This is very modestly expressed by the apostle; for he does not assert, and in a haughty and confident way affirm, but only supposes, or thinks that this might be admitted, that he was not inferior to, or did not come short of, in gifts, grace, and usefulness, *the very chiefest of the apostles:* such as Peter, James, and John; who seemed to be pillars, were eminent apostles, of great note among them, and such as Christ, in the days of his flesh, took particular notice of. This he says, not to exalt himself, but to shew, how weakly and injudiciously the Corinthians acted in setting up the false apostle above him; or else these words are spoken ironically, and design the false teachers, who vaunted so much of their gifts, learning, eloquence, and usefulness; and extolled themselves at such a rate, as if they were ὑπὲρ λίαν ἀποστόλων, *greatly above the apostles;* and therefore he jeeringly calls them *the very chiefest of* them; and yet thinks fit to put himself at least, upon an equality with them: one manuscript reads, *the chiefest of the apostles among you;* and the Ethiopic version seems to have read *you.*

Ver. 6. *But though I be rude in speech, &c.*] Which might be objected to him, setting himself upon a level with men so famous for their diction, and elegance of style; and to this he answers, not by owning he was so, but granting it to be so; for the Apostle Paul was not an unlearned man, an ideot in speech, unskilful in language, his writings testify the contrary; he did not indeed, in his public ministry, dress his sermons with the flowers of rhetoric, or adorn his discourses with the words of human wisdom, with bombast, and great swelling words of vanity; he chose a plainer and easier style, more accommodated to the vulgar, to the capacities of the people he was concerned with; for he had not to do with philosophers and senators, but with the common people chiefly; with persons of every sex, age, and condition of life: in this sense indeed he acted as an idiot, a plebeian, a private person; he used a popular style, or, as the Jews say of several of their Rabbins *, he דורש לשון הדיוט, *preached,* or explained *in the common language* of people; which the common people used, and not the learned, and to which reference may be had here: but though he wisely pursued this method, as being most likely to be useful, *yet* he was *not* rude *in knowledge,* or unskilful in the mysteries of the Gospel; he was well-learned in the knowledge of Christ, and in the doctrines of grace, as all his discourses, sermons, and letters testified; and however negligent he might be thought to be of his style, and take no pains or care about the elegance of his language, but rather studied a plain and popular diction, yet he was always careful to convey profitable and useful knowledge to the souls of men; and though his discourses might not be fraught with all the beauties of oratory, and enticing words of man's wisdom, they were full of spiritual knowledge, and shewed him to have a large understanding of divine things, for the truth of which he appeals to the Corinthians: *but we have been thoroughly manifest among you in all things;* his faith and dotrine, as well as manner of life, were well known unto them; he had not shunned to declare the whole counsel of God unto them: his knowledge in the mystery of Christ's person and grace, and in all the parts of the everlasting Gospel, was no secret to them; he had used no artful methods to hide himself, or con-

* T. Bab. Bava Metzia, fol. 84. 1.

ceal the truth; but by manifestation of it, had commended himself to every man's conscience in the sight of God; and by observing this, as he had witnesses enow among them of the truth of it, so he strikes at the hypocrisy and deceitful methods the false teachers took to cover themselves, their practices, and principles.

Ver. 7. *Have I committed an offence in abasing myself*, &c.] Either by behaving among them, when he was first with them, in a very modest and humble manner, in much fear and trembling, without pride and haughtiness, or affectation of power and authority over them; or by using a popular style, suited to the capacity of the common people; or by labouring with his own hands, exercising his trade of tent-making among them, that he might provide food for himself, and not be chargeable to them; and which he suggests was so far from being criminal in him, that he ought rather to be commended for it; since it could not be thought to be with any view to himself, and his own advantage, but purely for their good: *that you might be exalted*; that nothing might lie in their way of receiving the Gospel of Christ, or prejudice them against it; that they might the more easily be brought to listen to it, come to the knowledge of it, and embrace it, and so be exalted, as they were, to a participation of the grace of Christ; to fellowship with him; to the honour and dignity of being a church of Christ; to an enjoyment of the privileges of God's house; to have a name better than that of sons and daughters, and to have a right and title to the heavenly glory: *because*, or is it *because I have preached to you the Gospel of God freely?* The Gospel he preached was not his own, but God's; of which he was the author; his grace was the subject of it, and his glory the end of its ministration; which he had given to the apostle to preach; to which he had separated him, for which he had abundantly qualified him, and in which he was greatly succeeded by him. This he preached *freely* to the Corinthians at his first coming among them, without putting them to any expense, or receiving any thing from them; which though he might lawfully have done, yet he judged it most advisable, at that time, to minister to his own necessities, by working with his hands, lest he should be burdensome to them; and this be an objection to the Gospel he preached, that he sought rather theirs than them; and for so doing he was not to be blamed, but to be praised: and yet such was the weakness of many at least in this church, that they highly valued the false apostles, who made merchandise of them, and treated with contempt this excellent servant of Christ, who had freely imparted the Gospel to them.

Ver. 8. *I robbed other churches*, &c.] Meaning the churches of Macedonia; not that what he had of them was by force and rapine, or by plundering of them, and spoiling of their substance, and living upon them against their wills, as soldiers use a conquered people, though the allusion is to such a custom; for what he had of theirs was freely communicated to him; as appears from the following verse: but because these churches from whom he received were poor, and the Corinthians whom he served were rich, he calls it a robbing of the former, though there was no injury in the case, for it was voluntary, because it was expended for the service of the latter: *taking wages of them to do you service*; or *for your ministry*: either to supply their poor, or rather to support the ministry of the Gospel among them. The apostle continues the metaphor, taken from soldiers, to whom wages are due for their warfare; as are also to the ministers of the Gospel, the good soldiers of Jesus Christ; since no man goes a warfare at his own charges and expense but is provided for by those in whose service he is; and therefore, though the apostle did not think it advisable to ask for, and insist upon wages from them at that time, for his service among them, yet he took it of others in lieu of it; and this he mentions, partly to shew that wages were due to him for his ministry, and partly to observe to them who they were beholden to for the support of the Gospel at first among them; as also to stir them up to be serviceable to other churches, as others had been to them.

Ver. 9. *And when I was present with you, and wanted*, &c.] Whilst he was among them, preaching the Gospel to them, he wanted the common necessaries of life: and yet, says he, *I was chargeable to no man*, or *benumbed no man*: a metaphor, as some think, taken from the torpedo, or cramp-fish; which is of such a cold and benumbing nature, as that, when even at the hook, it will strike the fisherman with its cold, and so benumb him as to take away his feeling, and the use of his limbs: now the apostle's meaning is, that he did not chill and benumb any man's charity, by asking relief from him, for he importuned no man on this account; nor was he benumbed himself, to the detriment of any man; for though he was reduced to great straits, he was not slothful and sluggish in preaching the Gospel, but pursued it with as much diligence and industry as if he had been supported by it in the most handsome manner; nor did he act the part of an idle drone, sit still and starve, but laboured with his own hands, to the relief of himself and others; and whereas it could not be thought he should be able to provide this way thoro[illegible]ly, both for himself and those that were with him, it was made up by other hands: *for that which was lacking to me*: which he could not make up by his own hand-labour and industry: *the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied*; meaning either Silas and Timotheus, who came to him from Macedonia, whilst he was at Corinth, working at his trade with Aquila and Priscilla, Acts xviii. 5. who might bring him a supply out of these parts; or else some that belonged to the churches of Macedonia, particularly the Philippians, who frequently communicated to him, and sent him presents by some or other of the brethren, as by Epaphroditus, Phil. iv. 15, 16, 18. *And in all things*, adds he, *I have kept myself from being burdensome unto you*: he worked hard, lived sparingly, and received from others; that as in respect to his maintenance, so in every thing else he might live without being a dead weight upon them, or any ways troublesome to them: not that a minister's maintenance is, or ought to be reckoned a burden upon a people; it is but a due debt, and what is their just right; but because it is accounted so by carnal men, and such as are disaffected to the Gospel, and the ministry of it, therefore the apostle uses such language: *and so will I keep myself*: that is, for the future; he having taken up a resolution in

himself not to be chargeable and troublesome to them, but to provide for himself some other way. This he adds, lest they should think that he had said what he did to stir them up to a discharge of their duty, in contributing towards his support for time to come.

Ver. 10. *As the truth of Christ is in me*, &c.] To shew the firmness of his resolution, and how determined he was to abide by it, he joins an oath to it; for these words are the form of an oath; and it is as if he should say, as sure as Christ is truth, who is in me; or as that the truth of grace, or the truth of the Gospel of Christ is in my heart and mouth, so sure will I constantly persevere in this determination; or let the truth of Christ never be thought to be in me, if I do not: *no man shall stop me of this boasting in the regions of Achaia*; or *this boasting shall not be stopped in me*; of preaching the Gospel freely at Corinth, and that he had not been chargeable and burdensome to them; nor would he be for time to come, neither there, nor in any part of Achaia, of which Corinth was the metropolis; see the note on ch. ix. 2. No man should stop his mouth from boasting of this, by putting any thing into his hands, for he was determined not to receive any thing from any person in these climates; not but that he reserved a liberty in himself to receive from other persons and churches, for his comfortable subsistence, and so much the limitation of his resolution to these parts implies; for if he had not intended to have received a supply from any persons whatever, the restriction to the regions of Achaia would have been unnecessary; and he should rather have said, that no man should stop him of this boasting in any part of the world. The Vulgate Latin version reads, *this boasting shall not be broken*; and to the same sense the Syriac version, *this boasting shall not be abolished*.

Ver. 11. *Wherefore? because I love you not?* &c.] Why did the apostle do this? why did he take nothing, and resolve to take nothing of the Corinthians, for preaching the Gospel to th[illegible]? why did he determine, that no man should prevent his glorying of this, in all the country of Achaia? was it because he did not love the Corinthians? some might insinuate this was the reason of it, that he had no true affection for them, and therefore would take none of their gifts, but despised both them and theirs, and loved the Macedonian and other churches better than they. To which he answers by saying, *God knoweth*: which is another form of an oath, and is a solemn appeal to God, the searcher of hearts, who knows all things, that he knew he heartily loved them; that it was not want of love to them, which was the reason of his entering into such a resolution, never to take any thing of them; but it was something else, quite another thing, which induced him to it, and is mentioned in the following verse.

Ver. 12. *But what I do, that I will do*, &c.] As he preached the Gospel freely at Corinth and in Achaia, so he was determined to do it for the future, for this reason only, or chiefly: *that*, says he, *I may cut off occasion from them which desire occasion*: meaning the false apostles, who sought for, and were desirous of every occasion and opportunity of exalting themselves, and reproaching him: *that wherein they glory, they may be found even as we*; the sense of which according to some interpreters is, that whereas some of the false apostles, at least who were rich men, took nothing for preaching, but gave their labours freely, were very desirous that the apostle would receive of the churches in these parts, that they might have an occasion against him, and an opportunity of shewing themselves, as in learning and eloquence, so in this respect, to be superior to him, in that they preached freely, and he for gain: wherefore to cut off such an occasion, the apostle determines he would take nothing; that in this very thing which they boasted of, that they preached the Gospel freely, they might appear to be at most to be but upon a par with the apostle, and not to exceed him. This sense would seem very apposite, was it a clear point that the false apostles received nothing for preaching; but the contrary is most evident; wherefore the apostle's meaning is, that these men were desirous that he would take wages, because they did; that in this respect he might not excel them, and that they might be able to plead his example and authority, and so get an occasion of extorting more money from the Corinthians: wherefore to cut off all such occasion from them, the apostle resolves to take nothing himself; that whereas they boasted they were equal to, or superior to the apostles, they might be found, would they follow their example, even as they, not taking any money at all of them, and poor, and working with their own hands.

Ver. 13. *For such are false apostles*, &c.] Such as those he had in view, who sought an occasion to depress him, and exalt themselves, and to get money from the Corinthians; these were *false apostles*, or apostles falsely so called; they had the name, but not the thing; they were not called and sent forth by Christ; they had not the grace of apostleship, or gifts qualifying them for that high office; the power and authority they exercised was usurped by them; they could not prove their mission by true and real miracles; nor had they any seals of their apostleship, as those who were sent by Christ had: *deceitful workers*; they went by the name of labourers in Christ's vineyard, when they were loiterers in it; they pretended to work, but did not; and to work for Christ, when they only served themselves, and their own bellies; they took upon them to interpret the Scriptures, but in a very fallacious manner; they walked in craftiness, and handled the word of God deceitfully, and lay in wait to deceive men; and were masters of so much art and cunning, that, if it was possible, they would have deceived the very elect: *transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ*; not so much by putting on a like garb or dress, but by pretending to be of the same principles, and to follow their practices, and to pursue the same good ends in their ministrations.

Ver. 14. *And no marvel*, &c.] This need not be wondered at, nor is it any new or strange thing; nor should it be thought to be incredible that there are such persons in being: *for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light*: a good angel, one that has his abode in the regions of light; and is possessed of divine and spiritual light and understanding; who is clothed and arrayed with light, this is his form and essence. The apostle speaks agreeably to the notion

of the Jews, who say [a], "שהמלאכים כלם הם אור, "*that all the angels are light*, the clothing of God him-"self;" and they have a distinction between מלאכין דיום, *angels of the day*, and angels of the night [b]: now Satan, the enemy of mankind, sometimes appears in the form of one of these; as he did to Eve in the garden, and to Christ in the wilderness; and by such appearances he often imposes on mankind; pretends the greatest friendship, when he designs nothing but ruin; and under a notion of good, either honest, or pleasant, or profitable, draws on into the commission of the greatest evils; and, under a shew of truth, introduces the most notorious falsehoods and errors; and, under a pretence of religion, all sorts of idolatry, superstition, and impiety; 'tis in this way he has succeeded in his enterprizes and temptations; these are his wiles, stratagems, and cunning devices.

Ver. 15. *Therefore it is no great thing*, &c.] It is no strange and wonderful thing; it may easily be given into; no man need to make any doubt of it, or hesitate concerning it, since the devil himself, who is an angel of darkness, is transformed into an angel of light: *if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness*: not that they really are transformed into such ministers, but they appear and look like such; they are not really, but *as the ministers of righteousness*; they put on the form and air of faithful upright ministers of the word, and would be thought to be such; they mimic Gospel preachers, who assert the doctrine of justification by the righteousness of Christ, though they most miserably corrupt it, and blend it with something of their own; and which they endeavour to palliate, and cover from the sight of men; and especially they set up themselves as such, by pretending to be great friends to holiness and good works, which they press with much vehemence, and oppose to the doctrines of grace, with all their might and main; in doing which, they greatly serve their master, whose ministers they are; and who well knows that the doctrine of works may do much prejudice to the Gospel interest, and churches of Christ, but will never convert nor save one soul: a dreadful character these men have, for though they would pass for ministers of righteousness, friends to holiness, and men zealous of good works, they are no other than ministers of Satan, doing his work, serving his interest, and propagating his kingdom, which is a kingdom of darkness: *whose end shall be according to their works*; for either God will make public examples of them in this world, or if they are not made manifest here, though they may deceive themselves and others, they cannot deceive God; he'll take off the mask, their hypocrisy shall be detected, their evil works will be laid open, and they'll be judged according to them, and condemned for them to everlasting punishment.

Ver. 16. *I say again, let no man think me a fool*, &c.] For praising himself, or speaking in his own commendation; which he was obliged to do, in vindication of his own character, against the false apostles, for the sake of the Gospel he preached, and for the advantage and welfare of the Corinthians; that they might not be imposed upon and carried away with the insinuations of these deceitful men; wherefore he desires them once more, that if he must be accounted a fool for speaking in his own behalf; *if otherwise*, says he, if they could not be persuaded that he acted a wise part, but must be looked upon as a fool, for what he said of himself, *yet as a fool receive me*; or *suffer me*, or bear with my folly: he desires that he might have, and use the liberty which fools have usually granted to them, to speak out the truth, and all they know, which is not always allowed to wise men: *that I may boast myself a little*; in a few instances, and for a small space of time; he suggests, that the false apostles boasted much of themselves, and they bore with them, and had done so for a great while; and therefore it was no unreasonable request he made, that they would also suffer him to boast of himself a little, especially since there was such an absolute necessity for it.

Ver. 17. *That which I speak*, &c.] Meaning in vindication and commendation of himself, on this subject of glorying; or, as here expressed, *in this confidence of boasting*; for which he thought he had good ground and foundation to go upon, and therefore might express himself with the greatest assurance, see ch. ix. 4. this he declares he spoke not as from the Lord, but of himself: *I speak it not after the Lord*; or *Christ*, as some copies read; or *our Lord*, as the Syriac version; his sense is, that he did not then speak as an apostle, or one sent by Christ; he put off this character for the present, and took that of a fool upon him, that he might speak the more freely to the Corinthians, and the more severely against the false apostles; he did not pretend to any express command from Christ for so doing, or that he acted in imitation of him, who was meek and lowly; or that what he said came from the spirit of the Lord; or, indeed, that it was agreeably to his own spirit, and the principles of grace formed in him; but was obliged to it, through the boasts of the false apostles; which though it was not criminal and unlawful, but necessary, right, and proper, considering the reasons of it, the end for which, and the intention and view with which it was done; yet viewing the form and manner of this boasting, without attending to the circumstances of it, it had the appearance of folly: wherefore the apostle says, he spoke not as according to the commandment, or example of his Lord; or according to the spirit of the Lord, or his own spirit, as renewed by his grace: *but as it were foolishly*; he does not say that what he said was foolishness, but it looked like it, and would be deemed so by such who were strangers to the true springs of it.

Ver. 18. *Seeing that many glory after the flesh*, &c.] Or with respect to things external, such as their high birth and parentage, carnal descent, circumcision, learned education, and the like; of which the false apostles, being Jews, boasted, who it seems were *many*; and though a multitude is not to be followed to do evil, yet the apostle thought, that since there were so many who were indulged by this church in this way, he might be allowed to boast also of such like things, so far as he could with truth and a good conscience,

[a] R. Abraham Seba, Tzeror Hammor, fol. 18. 4.

[b] Zohar in Numb. fol. 91. 1. & 93. 3.

and in order to secure some valuable ends: *I will glory also*: for he was of the seed of Abraham as well as they, of the stock of Israel, and tribe of Benjamin, circumcised the eighth day, and brought up at the feet of Gamaliel; but these are not all the things he could, and would, and did glory of; he gloried of these, and of others besides them, which the false apostles could not, and thereby proved himself to be superior to them, even in external things, of which they bragged so much.

Ver. 19. *For ye suffer fools gladly*, &c.] They bore with the false apostles, who were fools; were continually proclaiming their folly, boasting of themselves, ascribing that to themselves which did not belong to them, and were puffed up by their fleshly minds; they indulged these men in their folly, and that with pleasure and delight; they not only winked at it, and overlooked it, but were pleased with it: *seeing ye yourselves are wise*; acting like men who count themselves wise, and keep fools for their pleasure, diversion, and sport. These words may be considered either as spoken seriously by the apostle, and as wondering that they should suffer such fools to go on in their vain boasts, and especially with pleasure; since they were men of wisdom, who were otherwise taught of God, and by the word; they had been made wise unto salvation, and were enriched in all utterance, and in all knowledge; they had been instructed by the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ, and in the mysteries of his Gospel; and therefore it was surprising that they could bear with such vain and foolish men, and especially with delight; for though it is the part of a wise man to bear with fools, yet not with pleasure; so that this carries in it a tacit reproof to them: or else the last clause may be considered as spoken ironically, and as a severe jibe upon their folly for tolerating such a parcel of fools among them; as if he should say, you shew yourselves to be men of wisdom, as you would be thought to be; you act the wise part, don't you, in suffering such empty-headed men to converse with you, and delight in their vain talk and conversation? however, the whole furnishes out an argument for the apostle, and which he means to improve; that if they could suffer and bear with such fools, and so many of them, and that gladly, then they might and ought to bear a little with him in his folly, which is what he entreats of them.

Ver. 20. *For ye suffer if a man bring you into bondage*, &c.] They not only suffered and tolerated the foolish boasting of these men with pleasure, but patiently and stupidly bore their oppressions, injuries, and insults, things that were intolerable, which no man of any sense and wisdom would ever suffer; and yet they took all quietly from them, made no objection, but patiently submitted to them, and therefore might well bear a little with him; they were voluntarily led captive, and brought into bondage by them, to the yoke of the ceremonial law, to the observance of circumcision, meats and drinks, days, months, times and years; and to the yoke of human doctrines, traditions, tenets, laws, and rules: *if a man devour* or *eat*; though they devoured their houses, as the Pharisees did; ate up their substance, were insatiable in their covetousness; were greedy dogs that could never have enough, could not satisfy their voracious appetites, without devouring and consuming all they had, yet they took it patiently: *if a man take of you*: not food and raiment, or a proper stipend, or wages which might be voluntarily raised, and cheerfully given; but they took away their goods from them by force, as the Arabic version reads it, whether they would or no, to which they quietly submitted: *if a man exalt himself*; as these men did, extolling their nation, their descent and lineage, their parentage and education, and fleshly privileges; insulting the Corinthians as persons of a mean and base extraction, as having been Heathens and sinners of the Gentiles, yet not a word was returned in answer thereunto: *if a man smite you on the face*; though they gave them very opprobrious language, vilifying and reproaching them as uncircumcised persons, upbraiding and hitting them on the teeth with their former idolatries and manners of life; yet all was taken in good part, so much were they under the government and influence of these men.

Ver. 21. *I speak as concerning reproach*, &c.] These words may be considered either as explanative of the latter part of the former verse, *if a man smite you on the face*; that is not to be understood strictly and literally, of one man's striking another on the face, but of reproach and contumelious language, used by the false apostles to the Corinthians; or they may have reference to the apostle's design in the whole, which was partly to reproach the Corinthians for acting such a stupid part, in patiently bearing so many and such indignities from these men; and partly to expose the scandalous and reproachful usage of them by the false apostles, that if possible their eyes might be opened to see through them, and discard them: or else these words may be regarded in connexion with what follows, *as though we had been weak*; and then the apostle's meaning is, that as to the business of scandal and reproach he was speaking of, this was not confined to the Corinthians only, but they the true apostles had their share of it; for the false apostles reproached them, as poor, weak, fearful, and pusillanimous men; because they did not use that authority, and exercise that domination over them, they did not bring them into bondage, devour their substance, take away their goods from them by force, insult over them, and treat them in an ignominious and contemptuous manner; and intimated that they were upon all accounts inferior to them, and not worthy to be mentioned with them; which moved the apostle to exert himself, and boldly rise up in his own defence, saying, *howbeit, wherein soever any is bold*; to boast of his pedigree, character, office, and usefulness, *I speak foolishly*; as it might seem, and be so interpreted by some, *I am bold also*; to enter the lists with him, to compare notes, and see on which side the superiority lies; and which is done in the following verses, to the full confutation of all the pride, vanity, and boasting of the false apostles.

Ver. 22. *Are they Hebrews? so am I*, &c.] The nation of the Jews were called Hebrews, not from Abraham, as some have * thought, through ignorance of the Hebrew language, which will by no means

* Artapanus apud Euseb. præpar. l. 9. c. 18. p. 420. Ambrosius sive Hilarius in Phil. iii. 5. & alii.

admit of such a derivation and etymology of the name; wherefore the Jewish writers never make mention of this opinion as among any of them; had they took their name from Abram or Abraham, they would rather have been called Abramites or Abrahamites, and not Hebrews; besides, Abraham himself is called an Hebrew, Gen. xiv. 13. and to be so called from himself, and not denominated from some other person or thing, can never be imagined, it would be most absurd and ridiculous; to which may be added, that the apostle in this verse makes mention of being the seed of Abraham, as a distinct character from that of Hebrews: others have been of opinion that the name is derived from עבר, *Habar*, which signifies, *to pass over*; and was occasioned by one or other of the following events; either from Abraham's passing over the river Euphrates, when he came out of Mesopotamia into the land of Canaan, and so was called Abram, העברי, *Hahibri, the passer over*, or the Hebrew [x], and so his posterity were called after him; or from the posterity of Canaan, who, after the confusion at Babel, settled in that part of Asia which lies between the river Jordan and the Mediterranean sea, and from them called the land of Canaan; and who were called by the Chaldeans, from whom they separated, and by the neighbouring nations, Hebrews, or passers over, because they passed over the river Jordan; and so Abraham passing over the river Euphrates to them, and learning their language, and continuing there, he was called an Hebrew also, and his posterity after him [y]; or from Arphaxad, or Heber, passing over the river Tigris or Euphrates, and settling in the land of Canaan [z]; but it is not likely that a nation should take its name from such an event: others think it a more probable opinion that Abraham was so called, and hence his posterity after him, from the name which the Canaanites gave to Mesopotamia, from whence he came; calling it Heber Hannahar, or the country beyond the river: just as we call foreigners Transmarines, or people beyond sea; and of this opinion were some of the Jewish writers [a]; but not Mesopotamia, but Canaan, is called the land of the Hebrews, Gen. xl. 15. The more commonly received opinion with the [b] Jews is, and which is most likely, that they are so called from Heber, the father of Peleg, in whose days the confusion of languages was made, and what is now called the Hebrew language being the first and original one, was retained in him and in his family; hence Shem is said to be the father of all the children of Heber, Gen. x. 21. that is, the Hebrews, as the same people are called the children of Israel from Israel, and the children of Judah from Judah, and sometimes they go by the name of Heber, as in Numb. xxiv. 24. when as the Assyrians are called Ashur, from whom they have their name, so the Hebrews are called Heber, from whom they take their denomination: and it should be observed, that this is not only a national but a religious name, and those people were called so, because they were of the faith as well as the descendants of Heber; so Shem was the father of others, but in a peculiar manner the father of the children of Heber, because the religion he professed was continued with them; and so Abraham is particularly called the Hebrew, not only because he descended from Heber, but was of the same religion; and so his posterity, not in the line of Ishmael, but of Isaac, are so called; and not as descending from Isaac in the line of Esau, but of Jacob; and hence it was not lawful for the Egyptians to eat bread with the Hebrews, not because they were of another nation, but because of another religion, Gen. xliii. 32. It seems that these false apostles were Jews, since it is not denied by the apostle, but granted; they were some such-like false brethren as those who came from Judea to Antioch, and disturbed the church there, Acts xv. 1. and whereas they boasted of their being Hebrews, the descendants of the ancient patriarch Heber in the line of Abraham; the apostle was able to match them in this, and asserts himself to be an Hebrew too, which he could do with the strictest truth, for he was an Hebrew of the Hebrews, he was an Hebrew by father and mother's side: *are they Israelites? so am I.* The Jews were called Israelites from Israel, a name which was given to Jacob their ancestor, upon his wrestling with an angel, and prevailing over him; and was accounted an honourable one, or title of honour; for the people of Israel were they whom God chose for a peculiar people to himself above all others, brought them out of Egypt, fed them in the wilderness, and led them through it, and settled them in the land of Canaan, and bestowed upon them special and peculiar privileges; see Rom. ix. 4, 5. The Jews are very extravagant in the praise of Israelites; they not only make them the favourites of God, beloved of him, because called children, and had the law given them [c], and extol them above all mankind; see the note on Rom. iii. 9. but they even make them equal to the ministering angels, and say they are pure from sin as they, especially on the day of atonement [d], yea, more excellent than they [e]: in this also the apostle could answer them, for he was of the stock of Israel, and of the tribe of Benjamin, a son of Jacob, or Israel; and was an Israelite indeed, as Nathaniel, for all are not Israel that are of Israel: *are they the seed of Abraham? so am I:* of this the Jews mightily boasted; see John viii. 33. they reckon themselves, even the poorest among them, as the nobles and princes of the earth [f]; and even other people have been fond of being reckoned of the stock of Abraham, as particularly the Lacedemonians, 1 Maccab. xii. 20, 21. The Jews make a merciful disposition to men to be a sign and evidence of being of the seed of Abraham [g]; but in a spiritual sense, an interest in Christ, and faith in him, denominate men to be truly Abraham's seed, and heirs of the promise: this is to be understood here

[x] Hieronymus in Ezek. c. 7. fol. 182. B. Theodoret. in Gen. Qu. 60.
[y] Erpenius.
[z] Ar. Montan. Canaan, c. 9. Vid. Sigonium de Repub. Heb. l. 1. c. 1 p. 16.
[a] Bereshit Rabba, sect. 42. fol. 37. 3. Vid. Jarchium in Gen. x. 21. & xiv. 13. & Aben Ezram in Exod. xxi. 2.
[b] Joseph. Antiqu. l. 1. c. 6. sect. 4. Targ. Jon. in Gen. x. 21. Sepher Cosri, par. 1. sect. 49. fol. 24. 2. R. Nehemiah in Bereshit Rabba, ut supra, Aben Ezra in Gen. x. 21. & xxxix. 14. & in Exod. i. 16. Kimchi in rad. עבר.
[c] Pirke Abot, c. 3. sect. 14.
[d] Pirke Eliezer, c. 46.
[e] Ib. c. 47.
[f] Misn. Bava Kama, c. 8. sect. 6.
[g] T. Bab. Betza, fol. 32. 2.

in a natural sense, and of being of Abraham's seed in the line of Jacob, for otherwise the Ishmaelites and Idumeans were of the seed of Abraham; but they were his seed in that line in which the promised seed, the Messiah, was to come; though this was of no avail, without having the same faith Abraham had, and believing truly in Christ, as his spiritual seed do, whether they be Jews or Gentiles; however, the apostle was equal to them in this respect; he was of the seed of Abraham according to the flesh, and above them in another, in that he was of Abraham's spiritual seed by faith in Christ Jesus.

Ver. 23. *Are they ministers of Christ?* &c.] The apostle could have answered to this question that they were not, being neither sent by Christ, nor preachers of him, and who sought their own things and not his, being false apostles, and deceitful workers; but he chose not to litigate this point with them, and by a rhetorical concession allows it; and replies, *I speak as a fool:* that is, he might be thought to speak as such an one, for what he afterwards says; and if he was, he must be content, he could not help it, there was a necessity for it, to stop the mouths of these vain boasters: *I am more;* that is, more a minister of Christ than they, more manifestly so than they were; yea, he was more than an ordinary minister of Christ, he was an apostle, the apostle of the Gentiles, and laboured and suffered more than even the rest of the true apostles of Christ, and therefore must be greatly superior to the false ones: *in labours more abundant;* in taking fatiguing journeys, preaching the Gospel constantly, administering ordinances, working with his own hands, &c. *in stripes above measure;* which were cruelly and unmercifully inflicted on him by his enemies, and which he afterwards mentions: *in prisons more frequent;* as at Philippi, and so after this at Jerusalem, and Rome, and perhaps in other places, though not recorded; Clemens Romanus says[h], that he was *seven* times in bonds: *in deaths oft;* that is, frequently in danger of death, in such afflictions and evils as threatened with death, and therefore are so called; see ch. i. 8, 9, 10.

Ver. 24. *Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one.*] We have no account in the Acts of the Apostles, or elsewhere, of any one of these five scourgings, which the apostle underwent from the Jews; but there is no doubt to be made of them. The number of stripes he received at each time agrees with the traditions and customs of the Jews. The original law for scourging a delinquent is in Deut. xxv. 2, 3 where it is said, *forty stripes he may give him, and not exceed;* according to the nature of the case, forty stripes and no more might be inflicted, but fewer might suffice in some cases; the apostle's having but thirty-nine at a time was not because the Jews thought his crime did not require full forty; or that they out of tenderness and compassion to him abated him one; but they proceeded with him to the utmost rigour of this law, according to their interpretation of it; for so runs their tradition[i], "with how many "stripes do they beat him? (a criminal,) it is answered, ארבעים חסר אחת, *with forty save one;* as "it is said, *with the number forty;* that is, which is "next to forty; R. Judah says, with full forty is he "to be beaten;" but the decision is not according to R. Judah, as the commentators say[k]; and this is the general sense of their[l] interpreters of that law, and what they take to be the genuine meaning of it; so that the apostle was punished according to the extremity of it, in their account. This is a settled rule and point with them, מלקות תורה ארבעים חסר אחת[m], *that scourging according to the law is with forty stripes save one:* Maimonides[n] observes, that "they did not add "to forty, if a man was as strong and robust as "Samson, but they lessen the number to a man that "is weak; for if a weak man should be beaten with "many stripes, he may die; wherefore the wise men "say, that if he be never so robust, they scourge "him but with *thirty-nine*;" so that no mercy was shewn to Paul, or any regard had to his weak constitution, for it was the utmost they ever inflicted; besides, according to their manner of scourging, of which see the note on Matt. x. 17. they could not have given him another stroke, without giving him three stripes more, which would have made it forty-two, and so have exceeded, which the law forbids; for they whipped with a scourge of three cords, and every stroke went for three; so that by thirteen strokes, thirty-nine stripes were given, and if a fourteenth had been added, there would have been forty-two stripes; agreeably to which they say[o], "when they adjudge a delinquent to how "many stripes he is able to receive, they don't count "but by stripes that are fit to be trebled; if they "reckon he is able to bear twenty, they don't say he "is to be beaten with twenty-one, so that they may "be able to treble, but he is to be beaten with "eighteen; they adjudge to receive forty, and after "he begins to be beaten, they see he is weak, and "they say he cannot receive more than these *nine* "or *twelve* with which he is beaten, lo, this is free; "they adjudge him to receive twelve, and after he is "scourged they see he is strong and able to receive "more, lo, he is free, and is not to be beaten any "more upon the estimation:" so that you see that, according to their own canons, they could if they would have mitigated this punishment of the apostle's; but such was their cruelty and malice, that they carried it to the utmost height they could.

Ver. 25. *Thrice was I beaten with rods,* &c.] Or *wands*, by the Romans; for this was a Roman punishment, distinct from scourging with cords used by the Jews. There is mention made but of one time only that he was so beaten, elsewhere, and that is in Acts xvi. 22, 23. which was at Philippi; but that he was so many times beaten in this way, there is no room to doubt: *once was I stoned.* This was at Lystra, at the instigation of the Jews that came from Antioch and Iconium, Acts xiv. 19. by whom he was left for dead: *thrice I suffered shipwreck:* neither of which are mentioned by Luke in the Acts of the Apostles; for the

[h] In Epist. ad Corinth. i. p. 14. Ed. Oxon. 1669.
[i] Misn. Maccot. c. 3. sect. 10.
[k] Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.
[l] Targum Jon. & Jarchi in Deut. xxv. 3. Zohar in Deut. fol. 119. 3. Joseph Antiqu. l. 4. c. 8. sect. 23. Moses Kotsensis Mitzvat Tora, pr. Affirm. 195.
[m] T. Hieros. Nazir, fol. 53. 1.
[n] Hilchot Sanhedrin, c. 17. 1.
[o] Ib. sect. 2. Misn. Maccot, c. 3. sect. 11.

shipwreck he suffered as when he went to Rome was some time after the writing of this epistle, and therefore cannot be one of these here referred to: *a night and a day I have been in the deep;* some understand this of a well, called *Bythos*, or *the deep*, which was near Lystra, where the apostle was hid for such a space of time after his deliverance there; but this, were it so, he would scarcely reckon among his very great hardships and sufferings: others of a prison at Cyzicum in Asia, which, because of its very great height, was called *the depth of the sea*, in which the apostle was imprisoned for such a time; but we nowhere read that he ever was at that place, or preached there, and much less was imprisoned there; and had he, it is not likely that he should particularly point out such a short imprisonment, but would have let it pass in the general account of being *in prisons* before-mentioned: but rather this is to be understood of the sea, often called the *deep* in Scripture, where by some accident he was cast, and was in it, as the Syriac version has it, דלא ספינתא, *where was no ship*, or without one, being shipwrecked; or being cast, or having fallen into the sea, he was swimming in it, or was preserved by a broken piece of the ship, or by some other means, or by the wonderful providence of God for so long a time; though as sailing in those times was chiefly by coasting, this phrase may only signify that the ship in which he was was drove from the coast into the sea, and lost sight of the land for the space of a day and night, and lay floating about in the deep, which was reckoned very dangerous. The word *νυχθήμερον*, *a night-day*, signifies a whole natural day, consisting of a night and a day; and is an Hebraism, and answers to ערב ובקר, *the evening and the morning*, which make a full day; see Gen. i. 5, 8, 13, 19, 23. Dan. viii. 14.

Ver. 26. *In journeying often*, &c.] Through several countries and kingdoms to preach the Gospel, as he did from Jerusalem round about to Illyricum: *in perils of waters;* by the floods being out, which made it very troublesome and dangerous travelling, especially to persons on foot, as was the case of our apostle: *in perils of robbers;* for though he had seldom much to lose, yet was in danger of being ill used, and of his life being taken away by such ruffians: *in perils by my own countrymen;* the Jews, who bore an implacable hatred to him, because of the doctrines of grace he preached, in opposition to the works of the law of Moses, whether moral or ceremonial; and who generally were concerned in stirring up the Gentiles against him wherever he came: *in perils by the Heathen;* the Gentiles, who were incensed against him for inveighing against their idols and idolatrous worship, and other wicked and enormous practices they were addicted to; particularly at Ephesus, by the means of Demetrius the shrine-maker, Acts xix. *in perils in the city;* in any and every city he came into; for bonds and affliction abode him everywhere, as at Jerusalem, Damascus, Antioch, Ephesus, Philippi, Thessalonica, &c. *in perils in the wilderness;* by robbers and wild beasts, through hunger and thirst, and by the sands in hurricanes and tempests; though this may be understood not strictly of desert places, but of the country in distinction from the city; see the note on Matt. iii. 1. where travelling is difficult and dangerous, and the people more rustic and uncivil: the phrase, בסכנת המדברות, *in perils of the wildernesses*, is a Rabbinical one [7]; as is also הסכנה בים, *peril in the sea* [8], next mentioned: *in perils in the sea;* not only by shipwreck, but through pirates, and the ill usage of mariners, want of provisions, &c. *in perils among false brethren;* who pretended to be Christians, but *judaized*, teaching the necessity of observing circumcision, and other ceremonies of the law, in order to salvation; these, as the apostle always warmly opposed, so they were sworn enemies to him, and ever sought to do him what mischief they could.

Ver. 27. *In weariness and painfulness*, &c.] Through long journeys and frequent preaching; or *in labour and trouble;* or in troublesome labour, for all labour is not so; as hunting, hawking, &c. though laborious, yet delightful; but the labours of the apostle were painful and troublesome to the flesh, though he had much inward spiritual delight and pleasure in them: *in watchings often;* being sometimes engaged at midnight, either in preaching, or praying, or singing psalms, and sometimes obliged to work early and late with his own hands to supply his necessities: *in hunger and thirst;* as when at sea, or in wilderness places, or where no notice was taken of him for preaching the Gospel; he doing that freely without asking the assistance of any, which in some places would have been prejudicial to his designs, and the spread of the Gospel: *in fastings often;* voluntary ones, which he engaged in, not as meritorious works, but to keep under his body, and as proper to attend the work of prayer at certain times: *in cold and nakedness;* when travelling in the winter season, and but poorly clothed to keep him from the inclemencies of the weather; and having no certain dwelling-place to retire unto and abide in, during any severe season there might be, and wanting the comforts of life to support him under such inconveniences.

Ver. 28. *Besides those things that are without*, &c.] Or *are omitted*, which he had passed by, and had not mentioned in the account and enumeration of things he had given; for otherwise the things he had taken notice of and instanced in, were things external; but besides them and many other things which would be too tedious to relate, *that which cometh upon me daily*, is not to be forgotten; meaning the prodigious deal of business which was every day upon his hands, through the continual coming of brethren to him, either for advice, or comfort, or instruction; and through the multiplicity of letters from divers parts, which he was obliged to give answers to; and the several duties of the day, as prayer, meditation, reading, praising, preaching, &c. and to sum up the whole, and which is explanative of the phrase, *the care of all the churches;* not of ten, or twenty, or some only; but of all of them, he being the apostle of the Gentiles, and was concerned in planting, and raising them, and preaching the Gospel to most of them; and who continually stood in need of his watch and care

[7] Sepher Cosri, fol. 296. 2.

[8] Sepher Cosri, fol. 297. 2.

over them, to provide ministers for some, to prevent schisms and heal divisions in others; to preserve others from errors and heresies, and warn them of the dangers to which they were exposed by false teachers; and to animate, strengthen, and support others under violent persecutions, lest their faith should fail, and they be tempted to desert the Gospel, and drop their profession of religion.

Ver. 29. *Who is weak, and I am not weak?* &c.] What church is so? or what particular believer is so? for he had not only the care of all the churches, but of all believers upon him; whoever was weak in the faith he was concerned for them, to instruct, establish, and strengthen them; and suited his discourses, reasonings, and language, to their capacity, that they might understand him, and take in right notions of things: or whoever was of a weak and scrupulous conscience about things indifferent, and fearful of using them lest they should sin in so doing, he was cautious of offending them, or doing any thing by which their consciences should be defiled, and their peace be broken: or whoever was afflicted, either in body or mind, he sympathized and bore a part with them: *who is offended, and I burn not?* whoever was stumbled and made to fall by any thing he said or did, or by the words and actions of others, it gave him sensible pain, it made him very uneasy; he was as one in a flame, all on fire, full of grief and trouble till the cause of the offence was removed, and the person offended made easy and restored; the word here used answers to the Hebrew word עגם, used in Job xxx. 25. where it is said, *was not my soul grieved for the poor?* which Mr. Broughton renders, *did not my soul burn for the poor?* Now by all this which the apostle did and suffered, by all actions and sufferings, care and sympathy, he fully appeared to be a true and faithful minister of Christ, and abundantly more than the false apostles, who could produce none of these things as testimonies in their favour.

Ver. 30. *If I must needs glory,* &c.] The apostle signifies that glorying was not agreeable to him; he was not fond of it, it was a subject he did not delight to dwell upon; what he had done was by force, and through necessity; he was compelled to it by the boasts of the false apostles: and since he must needs glory in order to stop their mouths, *I will glory,* says he, *of things which concern mine infirmities;* meaning not his sins, for these cause shame; but his afflictions and sufferings for Christ, under which he was supported, and from which he was delivered by the power of Christ; and that was the reason he chose to glory of them; for though they rendered him mean and despicable in the eyes of the world, yet his bearing them with so much patience, courage, and pleasure, and his many singular deliverances out of them, served greatly to illustrate the power and grace of Christ, and at the same time proved him to be a true and faithful minister of the Gospel; to whom so much honour was vouchsafed, as to suffer shame for the name of Christ, and to be so singularly marked out by him, as the object of his favour, love, and care.

Ver. 31. *The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,* &c.] These words are in the form of an oath, and are a solemn appeal to God, that knows all things, for the truth of the whole that he had declared in the foregoing verses, and of the remarkable deliverance related in the following. *God,* says he, who is the searcher of hearts, and an omniscient being, to whom all things are open and manifest, *knoweth that I lie not;* in any one single instance he had mentioned, nor in what he was about to declare; which because it was a fact done by a stratagem, and a good while ago, and which was not known to the Corinthians, and of which perhaps at that time he could not produce any witnesses; therefore calls God to testify the truth of it, whom he describes as *the God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ;* God is his *God* as Mediator, and head of the elect, to whom as to them he is a covenant-God; and as man, being his Creator, supporter, and the object of his faith, hope, love, and worship; and his *Father* as God, and the son of God, by supernatural generation, being the only-begotten of him, in a way ineffable and inexpressible: and *who is blessed for evermore;* in himself, and Son, and Spirit, and is the source of all happiness to his creatures.

Ver. 32. *In Damascus the governor under Aretas the king,* &c.] Aretas or Al-Hareth was a king of Arabia, of the family of the Gassanii, among whom were many of this name[r]; and who for some hundreds of years ruled over Syria, of which Damascus was the metropolis. The fourth king of that family was of this name, and perhaps is the person here meant; and after him there were four more of the same family so called; it was a name of Arabian kings in other families. The fifteenth king of the Yamanensians was of this name, and so was the *seventeeth* of the Hirensians[s], and the *third* of the kings of Cenda; in the times of Antiochus Epiphanes, there was an Aretas king of the Arabians, mentioned in 2 Maccab. v. 8[t]. Josephus[u] also makes mention of Aretas king of the Arabians, who seems to have been king of Arabia Petraea, since his royal seat was at Petra, to whom Hyrcanus fled by the advice of Antipater, the father of Herod the great; and there was also one of this name in the times of Herod himself, who succeeded Obodas[w]; yea, there was an Aretas king of Petraea, in the times of Herod the tetrarch, whose daughter Herod married, and put her away when he took Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, which occasioned a quarrel between him and Aretas, which issued in a battle, in which Herod was beaten[x]; and who is thought to be the same king which is here spoken of: the name Aretas or Al-Hareth, as Hillerus[y] observes, signifies *the lion;* and a lion with the eastern nations was a symbol of royalty and dominion; hence such names were given to persons of illustrious birth and power; so Ali, the son-in-law of Mahomet, was called by the Arabs and Persians the lion of God: now Syria, where Damascus was, and which is called by Pliny[z] Damascus of Syria, had been of long time

[r] Pocock. Specimen Hist. Arab. p. 76, 77, 78.
[s] Pocock. ib. p. 58, 70, 79.
[t] Vid. Joseph. Antiqu. l. 13. c. 13. sect. 3.
[u] Antiqu. l. 14. c. 1. sect. 4. de Bello Jud. l. 1. c. 6. sect. 2.

[w] Joseph. Antiqu. l. 16. c. 9. sect. 4. & c. 10. sect. 8, 9.
[x] Ib. Antiqu. l. 18. c. 6. sect. 1.
[y] Onomasticum Sacrum, p. 116, 748.
[z] Nat. Hist. l. 36. c. 8.

in the hands of the kings of Arabia; and [a] Josephus makes mention of Aretas, king of Cœle Syria, who was called to the government by those who had Damascus in their hands: very probably by Milesius, who was governor of the tower of Damascus, and commanded τῶν Δαμασκηνῶν πόλιν, *the city of the Damascenes*, as Josephus calls Damascus, just as it is here in the next clause; in which country of Cœle Syria, Ptolomy [b] also places Damascus; and Grotius has proved from Justin Martyr [c] and Tertullian [d], that Damascus formerly belonged to Arabia, though in their times it was reckoned to Syro Phœnicia: here the apostle preached to the confounding of the Jews that dwelt there, which provoked them to enter into a consultation to take away his life; and that he might not escape their hands, they moved to the then governor who was under the king, that the gates might be watched day and night; see Acts ix. 23, 24, 25. to which he agreed; and as the apostle here says, *kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison*, or set a guard about it; or as the Arabic version reads it, he *shut up the city*; and placed a watch at the gates of it night and day, or allowed the Jews to do so: *desirous to apprehend me*; in order to deliver him into their hands, who were now his sworn enemies for the Gospel's sake; willing to do them this favour to ingratiate himself into their affections; or perhaps it might be insinuated to him, that he was a seditious person.

Ver. 33. *And through a window in a basket was I let down, &c.*] The house in which he was, like Rahab's, was built upon the wall of the city, and as she let down the spies by a cord through the window, and as David was by Michal; so the apostle was let down by the brethren with cords, as Jeremiah was, Jer. xxxviii. 6. where the Septuagint use the same word as here, through a window; *which*, as the Arabic version reads it, *was in the wall*; or he was let down by the wall-side, *in a basket* or *net*; so σαργάνῃ, and סריגתא, the word which the Syriac version here uses, signify and design a basket made of withs, wrought together in the form of net-work; frequent mention is made in the Jewish writings [e] of סריגות החלונות, *the net-works and lattices of windows*; whether these were not taken off the window and put into a form like a basket, and in it the apostle let down by the brethren with the help of cords, may be inquired into: however, he *escaped his hands*; the governor's, and the Jews too who lay in wait for him. This deliverance he mentions with thankfulness to God, and as an instance of divine Providence in the preservation of him, for much usefulness to the church of Christ; the Vulgate Latin version reads, and *thus he escaped his hands*.

C H A P. XII.

THE apostle in this chapter proceeds upon the same subject, in vindicating himself against the false teachers, and giving proof of his apostleship; he takes notice of a very remarkable and unusual vision he was favoured with; makes mention of an uncommon temptation of Satan, how he was delivered from it, and the use it was of to him; excuses his boasting to the Corinthians; lays the blame of it upon them who obliged him to do it, though they had such undeniable proofs of his apostleship among them; signifies he intended to come and see them, and expresses his strong affection for them, and good will towards them; removes the calumnies of covetousness, guile, and craftiness; reproves them for their sins, and threatens them in case of impenitence. Though in some respects glorying was not so convenient, and quite disagreeable to the apostle himself, yet such were his circumstances, that it was become necessary for him to do it, and therefore goes on with it; and to his character, qualifications, labours, sufferings, and deliverances, adds the visions and revelations of the Lord he had been honoured with, ver. 1. and singles out a very particular one, which he describes by the time when, about fourteen years ago; by the person who saw it, himself, whom he speaks of in the third person, that there might be as little appearance of boasting as possible; by the place where it was seen, the third heaven, into which he was caught; by the form or manner of the vision, or the circumstance and condition in which he was when he saw it, of which he could give no account; as whether in or out of the body, ver. 2. which last circumstance is repeated to denote the certainty of it, and his ignorance as to this part of it; for the truth of which he appeals to God, ver. 3. and affirms again, that such an one as he had described was caught up to paradise; by which he explains what he meant by the third heaven, and further declares, that being there he heard words unutterable, ver. 4. Now though this vision was matter of glorying, yet since he was the person that was so highly honoured with it, he would not dwell any longer on it, but rather speak of his infirmities, as he afterwards does, ver. 5. yet if he had shewn a design of boasting, it would not have been acting a foolish part; however, he thought it best to forbear, lest it should lead any into too high an opinion of him, ver. 6. and indeed, these high enjoyments were apt to fill himself with pride and vanity, wherefore God, in his infinite wisdom, thought fit to take some methods to humble him; which leads him to give an account of a sore temptation that befell him, which was grievous to him, and in which he was buffetted by Satan; the end of which was to keep down his pride, and hide it from him, ver. 7. The use this was of to him, and how he behaved under it, and the request he made to the Lord to be freed from it, are declared in ver. 8. to which he received an answer, which was full and satisfactory, gave him pleasure, and determined him to glory in his infirmities, ver. 9. which he does in ver. 10. and gives an enumeration

[a] Antiqu. l. 13. c. 15. sect. 1, 2.
[b] Geograph. l. 5. c. 15.
[c] Dialog. cum Tryphone Jud. p. 305.
[d] Adv. Marcion. l. 3. c. 13.
[e] Misn. Oholot, c. 8. sect. 4. & Negaim, c. 13. sect. 3. T. Bab. Cholin, fol. 125. 2.

of them, and his reason for glorying in them: and whereas he knew he should be chargeable with folly, in glorying in other things as he had done, he blames the Corinthians for it, who had obliged him to it; for had they engaged as they should have done in the vindication and commendation of him, there would have been no need of his own; and they were furnished with matter and arguments enough for such a purpose, since it must have been a plain case to them that he was not inferior to the chief of the apostles, ver. 11. of which they had a full demonstration, partly by the signs, wonders, and mighty deeds which were done in the midst of them by him, ver. 12. and partly by the gifts of grace bestowed on them through his ministry, on account of which they did not come short of any other churches; unless it was in this, that they had the Gospel preached without charge unto them, ver. 13. the apostle goes on to acquaint them that he had a third time intended to come and see them, when he would be no more burdensome and chargeable to them than he had been before; have no regard to theirs but to them, acting the part of a father that lays up for his children, but takes nothing from them, ver. 14. and expresses his strong affection for them, even though they should shew but little to him, and his earnest desire to be serviceable to them, and the pleasure he should take therein, ver. 15. and whereas it was suggested by the false teachers, that though he did not take money of them in person, he had used some underhand crafty methods by the means of others to drain them of it, ver. 16. he replies and vindicates his innocence, by putting the question to them in general; whether he had made any gain by any persons he had sent to them, ver. 17. and particularly inasmuch as he had sent Titus and another brother, whether he had made any gain of them, and whether the apostle and he were not of the same spirit; and whether they did not take the same steps, ver. 18. and then observes, that all the pains that he took in the vindication of himself, was not so much on his own account as theirs, even for their edification, that that might not be hindered, for whom he had the most endeared affection: and for the truth of all this he appeals to God, ver. 19. and closes this chapter with observing the many evils which were among them, which he feared he should find among them, when he came, unrepented of; and which would be matter of grief and humiliation to him, and oblige him to use that severity among them which would not be agreeable to them, ver. 20, 21.

Ver. 1. *It is not expedient doubtless for me to glory, &c.*] Though it was lawful for him to glory, and was necessary in the present circumstances of things, in vindication of himself, and to preserve the Corinthians from being carried away with the insinuations of the false apostles; and so for the honour and interest of Christ and the Gospel; yet it was not expedient on some other accounts, or profitable and serviceable to himself; he might find that it tended to stir up pride, vanity, and elation of mind in him, and might be interpreted by others as proud boasting and vain glorying: wherefore he chose to drop it, and pass on to another subject; or rather though it was not expedient to proceed, yet, before he entirely quitted it, he thought it proper to say something of the extraordinary appearances of God unto him. Some copies, and the Vulgate Latin version, read, *if there was need of glorying, it is not indeed expedient;* the Syriac version, *there is need of glorying, but it is not expedient;* and the Arabic version, *neither have I need to glory, nor is it expedient for me: I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord:* such as the Lord had made to him, and not man; and which were not the fruit of his own fancy, or the delusions of Satan; but were from the Lord Jesus Christ, and for his glory. The apostle might very well speak of *visions,* or heavenly appearances, since he was favoured with many; his conversion was owing to a vision or appearance of Christ to him, whom he saw with his bodily eyes, and heard him speaking to him, and which he calls *the heavenly vision:* at another time when at Troas, a vision appeared to him in the night, and a man of Macedonia stood and prayed him to come over and help them; and when at Corinth the Lord spoke to him by a vision, and bid him not be afraid, but go on preaching the Gospel, because he had much people there to be brought in through his ministry: and as for revelations, besides what are ordinary and common to all believers, he had extraordinary ones; the Gospel and the scheme of it, the knowledge of the several particular doctrines of it, were not attained to by him in the common way, but he had them by the revelation of Jesus Christ; the several mysterious parts of it, particularly that of the calling of the Gentiles, to which might be added, the change that will be upon the living saints at Christ's second coming, were made known to him by revelation; and sometimes in this extraordinary way he was directed to go to such or such a place, as at a certain time he went up to Jerusalem by *revelation,* where he was to do or suffer many things for the sake of Christ: though he had no revelation of any thing that was different from, and much less contrary to the Gospel, and as it was preached by the other apostles; for there was an entire agreement between him and them in their ministry; see Gal. ii. 2, 7, 8. and these visions and revelations were for his instruction, direction, and encouragement in the ministration of the Gospel; and being of an extraordinary nature, were suitable to those extraordinary times, and not to be expected in an ordinary way, nor is there any need of them now; besides, these were visions and revelations of the Lord, and not the effects of enthusiasm, and a warm imagination, nor diabolical delusions, or the pretensions and cheats of designing men; and were for the confirmation and establishment of the Gospel, and not to countenance a new scheme, or introduce a new dispensation; wherefore all visions and revelations men pretend to, which are for such a purpose, are to be despised and rejected.

Ver. 2. *I knew a man in Christ about fourteen years ago, &c.*] Which is to be understood of himself, as appears from ver. 7. where he speaks in the first person; and the reason why he here speaks in the third, is to shew his modesty and humility, and how much he declined vain glory and popular applause; and whilst he is speaking of himself, studies as it were to conceal himself from being the person designed, and to draw off the mind of the reader from him to another person; though another cannot be intended, for it would not have been to his purpose, yea, quite beside it, when

he proposes to come to visions and revelations he had of the Lord, to have instanced in the rapture of another. Moreover, the full and certain knowledge he had of this man, of the place he was caught up to, and of the things he there heard, best agrees with him; as also his attesting, in such a solemn way, his ignorance of the manner of this rapture, whether in the body or out of the body, and which he repeats and refers to the knowledge of God, clearly shews he must mean himself; besides, it would otherwise have been no instance of any vision of his, nor would the rapture of another have at all affected his character, commendation, and praise, or given him any occasion of glorying as this did; though he did not choose to take it, as is clear by his saying that if he gloried of it he should not be a fool, yet forbore, lest others should entertain too high an opinion of him; and after all, he was in some danger of being elated with this vision along with others, that the following sore temptation was permitted, to prevent his being exalted with it above measure: and when he calls this person, meaning himself, a *man*, it is not to distinguish him from an angel, whose habitation is in the third heaven, and so no wonderful thing to be found there; or from any other creature; nor perhaps only to express his sex, a man, and not a woman, though the Syriac version uses the word גברא, peculiar to the masculine sex; but merely to design a person, and it is all one as if it had been said, I knew a person, or I knew one in Christ: and the phrase *in Christ*, is not to be connected with the word *know*, as if the sense was, that he called Christ to witness the truth of what he was about to say, and that what he should say was not with a view to his own glory, but to the glory and honour of Christ only; but it is to be connected with the word *man*, and denotes his being in Christ, and that either, as Dr. Hammond thinks, in a singular and extraordinary manner; as John is said to be *in the spirit*, Rev. i. 10. that is, in an ecstacy; and so here this man was in the spirit of Christ, and transported by him to see visions, and have revelations; or rather it intends a spiritual being in Christ, union to him, the effect of which is communion with him. The date of *fourteen years ago*, may refer either to the time when the apostle first had the knowledge of his being in Christ, which was at his conversion; he was in Christ from all eternity, being given to him, chosen in him, loved by him, set as a seal upon his heart, as well as engraven on the palms of his hands, and represented by him, and in him, in the everlasting covenant; and so in time, at his crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection, ascension, and session at the right hand of God; in consequence of all which, when the set time was come, he became a new creature, was converted and believed in Christ, and then he knew himself to be in him; he was in him secretly before, now openly; and this was about fourteen years before the writing of this epistle; the exact time of his conversion might well be known and remembered by him, it being in such an extraordinary manner: or else this date may refer to the time of his rapture, which some have thought was some time within the three days after his conversion, when he was without sight, and neither ate nor drank; some have thought it to be eight years after his conversion; but the most probable opinion is, that it was not at Damascus, but when he was come again to Jerusalem, and was praying in the temple, and was in a trance or ecstacy, Acts xxii. 17. though the difference there is among chronologers, and the uncertainty of their conjectures, both as to the time of the apostle's conversion, and the writing of this epistle, makes it very difficult to determine this point. They that make this rapture to be at the time of his conversion, seem to be furthest off of the truth of things; for whether his conversion be placed in the 34th year of Christ, as some, or in the 35th, as others, or in the 36th; and this epistle be thought to be written either in the 56th, or 58th, or 60th, the date of fourteen years will agree with neither; they indeed make things to agree together best, who place his conversion in the year 36, make this rapture to be eight years after, in the year 44, and this epistle to be written in the year 58. Dr. Lightfoot puts the conversion of the apostle in the year 34, the rapture of him into the third heaven, in the year 43, at the time of the famine in the reign of Claudius, Acts xi. 28. when he was in a trance at Jerusalem, Acts xxii. 17. and the writing of this epistle in the year 57. That great chronologer, Bishop Usher, places Paul's conversion in the year 35, his rapture in the year 46, and the writing of this epistle in the year 60. So that upon the whole it is hard to say when this rapture was; and it may be, it was at neither of the visions recorded in the Scripture, which the apostle had, but at some other time nowhere else made mention of: when, as he here says, *such an one was caught up to the third heaven*; the seat of the divine Majesty, and the residence of the holy angels; where the souls of departed saints go immediately upon their dissolution; and the bodies and souls of those who have been translated, caught up, and raised already, are; and where the glorified body of Christ is and will be, until his second coming. This is called the *third* heaven, in respect to the airy and starry heavens. The apostle refers to a distinction among the Jews of שמיא עילאי ושמיא מיצעאי ושמיא תתאי, *the supreme heaven, the middle heaven, and the lower heaven*[f]; and who also make a like division of worlds, and which they call עלם עליון ועולם האמצעי והעולם השפל, *the supreme world, and the middle world, and the lower world*[g]; and sometimes[h] the world of angels, the world of the orbs, and the world of them below; and accordingly the Cabalistic doctors talk of three worlds; עלמא תליתאה, *the third world*, they say[i], is the supreme world, hidden, treasured, and shut up, which none can know; as it is written, *eye hath not seen*, &c. and is the same with the apostle's *third heaven*. The state and condition in which he was during this rapture is expressed by the following words, put into a parenthesis, *whether in the body I cannot tell, or whether out of the body I cannot tell, God knoweth*: whether his soul remained in his body, and he was caught up soul and body into heaven, as Elijah was carried thither soul and body in a chariot with horses of fire; or whether his soul was out of his body, and he was disembodied for a time, as Philo

[f] Targum in 2 Chron. vi. 18.
[g] Tzeror Hammor, fol. 1. 4. & 3. 2, 3.
[h] Tzeror Hammor, fol. 83. 2.
[i] Zohar in Numb. fol. 60. 3.

the Jew [k] says that Moses was ἀσώματος, *without the body*, during his stay of forty days and as many nights in the mount; or whether this was not all in a visionary way, as John was *in the spirit* on the Lord's day, and Ezekiel was taken by a lock of his head, and lifted up by the spirit between earth and heaven, and brought *in the visions of God* to *Jerusalem*, cannot be said. The apostle did not know himself, and much less can any other be able to say how it was; it is best with him to refer and leave it to the omniscient God; one of the four persons the Jews say entered into paradise, who are hereafter mentioned in the note on ver. 4. is said to have his mind snatched away in a divine rapture [l]; that is, he was not himself, he knew not where he was, or whether in the body or out, as says the apostle.

Ver. 3. *And I knew such a man*, &c.] The same man, namely himself, is here designed, and the same rapture spoken of, and the condition he was in expressed in the same words; which repetition is made for the more strong affirmation of what he delivered, and to signify the marvelousness of this vision, and how surprising and unaccountable it was.

Ver. 4. *How that he was caught up into paradise*, &c.] Not the earthly paradise in which our first parents were; this was destroyed by the flood, and the place where it was not now to be known; and to what purpose the apostle should be carried thither cannot be guessed at; though some have thought that this is here meant: but not this, nor any place distinct from the *third* heaven, or place of the blessed, is meant; which is the sense of many of the ancients, who suppose the third heaven and paradise to be two distinct places, and that the apostle had two separate raptures. Clemens Alexandrinus [m], reads the words thus, *I knew a man in Christ caught up to the third heaven*, κἀκεῖθεν εἰς τὸν παράδεισον, *from thence to paradise*; and so Theophilact upon the place says, "from the third heaven "he was immediately called up into paradise;" and so Œcumenius, "he was caught up unto the third heaven, "and so again from thence into paradise;" and some modern writers have been inclined to think there were two raptures, and the rather inasmuch as the apostle is said to be caught *up to* the one, and caught *up into* the other, and makes use of the words *caught up* twice; or otherwise he would be guilty of a tautology, both in that and in repeating his ignorance of the manner of the rapture; to which is added, that he proposed to speak of *visions* and *revelations* in the plural number, ver. 1. and afterwards calls this vision an *abundance of revelations*, ver. 7. but as it was at the same time that he was caught up to the third heaven, and into paradise, there being one and the same date of fourteen years ago to both; and as, in the account of the one and the other, he was equally ignorant of the manner how he was caught up, whether in the body, or out of the body; and seeing that there is no account of what he saw and heard in the third heaven, but only what he heard in paradise, which is referred to be told in the after-account of this vision; and as the third heaven and paradise are one and the same place, it seems most reasonable to conclude, that not two raptures and two visions are here designed, but only one; and without any shew of a vain repetition, the apostle having begun the account of this vision, might reassume what he had said, in order to give a more plain and clear account of it; and especially as there were some things he had not yet mentioned, and the whole was not easy to be understood and taken in, and the manner of it even unknown to himself; and this he might do to raise the attention the more unto it, as being something wonderful and extraordinary; besides, if his design had been to have given an account of two raptures, he would have distinguished them in a numerical way; and would have told us that he was *twice* caught up, as well as he afterwards says that he besought the Lord *thrice*, at another time; and this would have been necessary to have prevented a mistake, of taking the one and the other for the same rapture, as is generally done; heaven is called paradise, because as the garden of Eden, which bears that name, was of God's planting, so is this made and prepared by him; as that was a delightful place, so is this; also because of Christ the tree of life, which is in the midst of it, besides an innumerable company of angels, and spirits of just men made perfect, the pure and undefiled inhabitants of it; and because of the river of divine love, of endless pleasures, the saints there are made to drink of. It was usual with the Jews to call heaven גן עדן, *the garden of Eden*, or paradise; and which they [n] sometimes speak of as upper and lower; the lower they suppose the souls of men are introduced into, immediately upon their dissolution; where they stay a while, and then go up to the upper paradise, the world of souls, where Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are. The Jews ought not to object to the apostle's being had into paradise before his death, for they tell us of several that entered there whilst alive; "nine (they say [o]) "נכנסו בחייהם בגן עדן, *entered in their life-time into* "*the garden of Eden*, or paradise; and these are they, "Enoch the son of Jared, and Elijah, and the Messiah, "and Eliezer the servant of Abraham, and Hiram king "of Tyre, and Ebed Melec the Ethiopian, and Jabez "the son of Rabbi Judah the prince, and Bethiah "the daughter of Pharaoh, and Sarah the daughter "of Asher; and there are some that say also [p], Rabbi "Joshua ben Levi;" and in another place [q], "four "נכנסו בפרדס, *entered into paradise*; and these are "they, Ben Azzai, and Ben Zoma, another, and R. "Akiba;" upon which is [r] added, "they entered into "paradise as it were by the hands of God, and they "did not ascend up above really, but it seemed to "them as if they ascended:" how far this may serve to explain and illustrate the apostle's case, I leave, with this observation more concerning another use of the word paradise with them; which sometimes signifies a considerable share of knowledge of mysterious things, relating to the nature of God, angels, &c. of which Maimonides having spoken, says [s], "these things the "former wise men called פרדס, *paradise*, as they

[k] De Somniis, p. 578.
[l] Cosri, p. 3. sect. 65. fol. 190. 1, 2.
[m] Strom. l. 5. p. 586.
[n] Nishma Chayim, par. 1. c. 10. fol. 25. 2. &c.
[o] Derech Eretz, fol. 19. 1. Zohar in Exod. fol. 102. 3.
[p] Ganz Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 21. 1, 2.
[q] T. Bab. Chagiga, fol. 14. 2.
[r] Tosephot, ib.
[s] Jesode Tora, c. 4. sect. 19, 20.

" say, *four entered into paradise*: and although they " were the greatest men of Israel, and exceeding wise " men, yet they had not all of them power to know " and comprehend all these things clearly; and I say, " that he is not fit to walk בפרדס, *in paradise*, but he " whose belly is filled with flesh and bread, and it is " bread and flesh to know what is forbidden, and what " is lawful, and the other precepts of a like nature;" and again [t], " a man that is filled with all these virtues " (meaning with wisdom, and understanding, and " government of the passions and appetites) is per- " fect in his body, as he that enters into paradise, " and inclines himself to these things which are great " and afar off:" once more [u], " the words of the tra- " dition are comprehended in the written law, and " the exposition of them in the oral law; and the " things which are called פרדס, *paradise*, are con- " tained in the Talmud;" this they [w] call פרדס החכמה, *the paradise of wisdom*: whether this sense and use of the word may be applied to the passage before us, and so be expressive of that large share of divine knowledge which was communicated in an extraordinary way to the apostle, may deserve some consideration: however, this is certain, that when he was caught up into paradise, he *heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter*: to instance in particular things, which he then either saw or heard, as some have done, is bold and daring; as that he saw the divine Being with the eyes of his understanding, the several angelic forms, thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers, and the glory and beauty of the souls of departed saints; and heard the harmonious music of each of these happy creatures; had a view of the book of life, and was shewn the order and method of divine predestination; was let into the mystery of the calling of the Gentiles, and the change that will be on living saints, and heard the whole account of the dispensation of things, in the church of Christ to the end of the world: the things were unspeakable, never yet related, and so not to be known: they were such things which the apostle himself, when out of the rapture, might have but very inadequate ideas of, and such as he was not able to put into proper words and language to be understood by others; and which as he heard them not from a mere man, but from the Lord, so no mere man was able to utter them, none but he of whom he had heard them: and besides, whatever conceptions the apostle might have of them himself, and how capable soever he was of expressing them; yet they were not fit and proper to be told in the present state of things, being no part of the counsel of God relating to man's salvation, the whole of which he faithfully declares; and yet were necessary to be heard by him, in order to establish his faith in the Gospel, to animate him in his ministry, and fortify his mind against all the afflictions, reproaches, and persecutions, he was to meet with for the sake of Christ. The phrase seems to be the same with אי אפשר לאמרו, *it is impossible to say it* [x]; and of such-like secret things in paradise, or the world of souls, the Jews say [y], that " they are hidden, and which אינם ראוים לעלות " בכתיבה, *are not fit to produce in writing*;" and so these were such as were not lawful to speak out, *γλωτταις ανθρωπιναις*, *with human tongues*, as Justin Martyr says [z]; they were not in such sense *unspeakable*, as not to be expressed by any; for they were expressed either by Christ himself, who was glorified in human nature, whom the apostle might now see and hear, or by some angel or angels, or they could not have been heard by the apostle as they were; but they were such as before had never been spoken to any mortal man, and so could never have been spoken by any; and though they had been spoken to a mortal man, yet they could not be spoke by him to others; for though when he heard them, his human soul, for that present time, might conceive and take in much of the nature and meaning of them, yet they were such as he could not express by words, and represent to others by speech after the vision was over, and especially at this distance: not that it was sinful to have done it, if he could have done it; or that the things themselves were of such a nature, that it would have been criminal to have rehearsed them; but rather that it was impossible to do it, at least fully, since they might greatly regard the glory of the divine Being, and the worship paid him by the heavenly inhabitants: or could it be done in any tolerable manner, it might not be altogether convenient and proper in the present state of things; since the worship of the upper world lying in praise without prayer, might not be so fit to be related, lest it should be imitated by saints on earth: and seeing what the apostle heard was ineffable, and not to be spoken by himself; no credit is to be given to those spurious things called the Revelation and Ascension of Saint Paul, in which the author or authors of them pretend to tell us what these things were.

Ver. 5. *Of such an one will I glory*, &c.] The apostle in great modesty seems to speak of some other person, and not himself, as caught up into the third heaven, when he yet means himself; and does as it were distinguish himself from himself; himself in paradise from himself on earth; his sense is, that though he might lawfully glory of such a person so highly exalted and favoured, yet since this was his own case, he chose to forbear, and say no more of it; *yet of myself I will not glory*: though he could, and might, and did glory in the Lord, who had done such great things for him; as that he was in Christ, and knew himself to be so, had been rapt up into heaven, and heard things unutterable; yet he would not glory of these things as from himself, as owing to any merit or worthiness of his, but as instances of mere favour, grace, and goodness: if he gloried of any thing of himself in his present state and condition, it should be of his weaknesses: *but in mine infirmities*: not his sinful ones, for these he mourned over, and was humbled before God and man under a sense of; but his many pressing difficulties of life, heavy reproaches, very great afflictions, and violent persecutions he endured for Christ's sake; see ver. 10.

Ver. 6. *For though I would desire to glory*, &c.] Had a mind to it, chose it, and was fond of it, thought fit

[t] Jesode Tora, c. 7. sect. 2.
[u] Ib. Talmud Tora, c. 1. sect. 12.
[w] Tzeror Hammor, fol. 95. 4.
[x] T. Bab. Megilla, fol. 21. 1.
[y] Nishmat Chayim, fol. 24. 1.
[z] Expositio fidei, p. 379.

to proceed in this way concerning this vision, or this with many others: *I shall not be a fool*; in reality; though he might seem and be thought to be so by others; he does indeed before call his glorying *folly*, and *speaking foolishly*; but he means only as it might be interpreted by others, for in fact it was not: the reason is, *for I will say the truth*; he said nothing but what was strictly true, in the account of himself in the preceding chapter, and appeals to God as his witness; nor any thing in the relation of this vision, but what was entirely agreeable to truth; and to speak truth, though it be of a man's self, when he is called to it, cannot be deemed folly: *but now I forbear*; he did not choose to go on, or say any more upon this head at this time; though he had many visions, and an abundance of revelations, yet he did not judge it proper to give a particular account of them: *lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth me to be, or that he heareth of me*: should take him to be more than human, as before this the Lycaonians at Lystra did; who supposed that he and Barnabas were gods come down in the likeness of men, and brought out their oxen and garlands to do sacrifice to them; and as, after this, the inhabitants of Melita, seeing the viper drop from his hand without any hurt to him, said he was a god; to prevent such extravagant notions of him, he forbore to say any more of his extraordinary visions and revelations; but chose rather that men should form their judgments of him by what they saw in him and heard from him, as a minister of the Gospel.

Ver. 7. *And lest I should be exalted above measure*, &c.] Over-much elated in his mind, and swelled with a vain conceit of himself: *through the abundance of the revelations*; for he had not only one or two, or a few, but an abundance of them; and which, as every thing does but grace, tended to lift up his mind, to stir up the pride of his heart, and to entertain too high and exalted thoughts of himself. Pride is naturally in every man's heart; converted persons are not without it; knowledge, gifts, and revelations are apt to puff up with spiritual pride, unless counterbalanced and overpoised by the grace of God. This great apostle was not out of danger by them, for he was not already perfect; wherefore to prevent an excess of pride and vanity in him on account of them, he says, *there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me*; many have been the thoughts and conjectures of men about what is here meant by the apostle. This ought to be allowed and taken for granted, that the *thorn in the flesh*, and *the messenger of Satan*, design one and the same thing; the former is a figurative expression, the latter a literal one, and explanative of the former. Some have thought that corporeal afflictions are here designed, which may be compared to *thorns*; see Hos. ii. 6. and which are not joyous, but grievous to the flesh, and come not by chance, but are by divine appointment, and are designed and made use of, to hide pride from men; and sometimes, by divine permission, Satan has an hand in inflicting them, as in the case of Job: whilst such a general sense is kept to, it is not to be despised, without entering into the particular bodily disorder with which the apostle was afflicted, as some do; some saying it was the cholic, others the gout, others a pain in the ear, and others the head-ach; which latter it is said he was much troubled with; but these are mere conjectures: others think that the corruptions of nature are intended which in regenerate persons are left, as the Canaanites were in the land, to be *thorns* in the eyes and sides of the Israelites, Josh. xxiii. 13. Judg. ii. 3. These, to be sure, were felt by the apostle, and were very grievous and humbling to him, and were no doubt sometimes stirred up by Satan, which made him complain bitterly, and groan earnestly; and it may be observed, to strengthen this sense, that it was usual with the Jews to call concupiscence, or the vitiosity of nature, Satan; for so they [a] often say, השטן הוא יצר הרע, *Satan, he is the evil imagination*, or corruption of nature; and particularly they call the lust of uncleanness by this name; and it is said [b] of a young man of Israel, being tempted by a young woman of Midian, through the counsel of Balaam, that בוער בו השטן, *Satan burned in him*, and he turned aside after her; and that the evil imagination is the old serpent; yea, they call this *the messenger of hell*, a phrase very much like what is here used. "R. Hona [c], as he was preaching "to the children of men to take warning, said unto "them, children, beware משליחא של גיהנם, *of the* "*messenger of hell*; but who is this? the evil imagi- "nation, or concupiscence, is that which is *the mes-* "*senger of hell*;" and this sense is agreeable, provided the particular corruption the apostle was harassed with is not pretended to, as is by some, who pitch upon the lust of uncleanness, and spare not to mention the person by name, one Tecla, who, they say, travelled with him, and was a snare to him; but this is to do injury to the character of so holy an apostle, and to represent him as exposing himself to the false apostles, against whom he was guarding: others think that a variety of afflictions, reproaches, and persecutions, for Christ's sake and the Gospel, are here meant, which were as pricking briers and grieving thorns to him; see Ezek. xxviii. 24. and which were given and ordered by divine appointment for his good; this sense, ver. 9, 10. lead unto, and seem to confirm: others are of opinion that the temptations of Satan are designed, which, as they are called *fiery darts*, which the archers of Satan, and his principalities and powers, shoot thick and fast at the saints, to their great annoyance; so may be here called, especially some very particular, eminent, and sore temptation, a *thorn in the flesh*, very pungent, and giving a great deal of pain and uneasiness; others suppose that some particular emissary of Satan, either some one of the false apostles and teachers, who greatly opposed him, as Alexander the copper-smith, who did him much harm; or such an one as Hymenæus or Philetus, that blasphemed and spoke evil of him; or some violent persecutor of him is intended. But, after all, I see not but that the devil

[a] T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 16. 1. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 6. 2. 3. 2. 3. 10. 4. 13. 3. 20. 2. 50. 3. 58. 3. 72. 4. 73. 2. 86. 1. 87. 2. 93. 1. 96. 1. 99. 4. 100. 4. 101. 42. 113. 1. & 133. 2. & 141. 3. & 149. 2. & 152. 3. Raya Mehimna in Zohar in Lev. fol. 7. 2.

[b] Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 20. fol. 229. 1.

[c] Midrash Hanneelam in Zohar in Gen. fol. 67. 4.

himself may be meant; for, as before observed, the phrase *a thorn in the flesh* is metaphorical, and the other, a *messenger of Satan*, is literal, and explains it; and the whole may be read thus, *there was given to me a thorn in the flesh*, namely, ἄγγελος Σατᾶν, *the angel Satan to buffet me*; so that Satan, who was once an angel of light, now of darkness, is the *thorn in the flesh*; and might be suffered to appear visibly to him from time to time, in a very terrible manner, and which was very grievous to be borne; he might by permission have great power over his body, as he had over Job's, to use it ill, to beat and buffet it; for this also may be taken literally: and he might likewise otherways greatly distress him by stirring up the corruptions of his heart; by following him with his satanical injections, suggestions, and temptations; by raising violent persecutions, and instigating many of his emissaries against him; and this sense is the rather to be chosen, because it includes all others that have any shew of truth. The Jews[d] sometimes make mention of the angel or messenger of Satan mocking at the righteous, and buffeting them; so God is by them said[e] to deliver Nebuchadnezzar למלאך השטן, *to a messenger of Satan*. This sore exercise befell the apostle for his good, to keep down the pride of his nature; *lest*, adds he again, *I should be exalted above measure;* for such ends and purposes does the Lord, in his infinite wisdom, deal with his people. The [f] Jews have a notion that this was one reason of God's tempting or trying Abraham with the sacrifice of his son, to depress that pride that was likely to arise in him because of his greatness. "This temptation (they say) was necessary at that "time, because above, the grandeur of Abraham is de- "clared how great it was before his enemies made "peace with him; and Abimelech, king of the Phi- "listines, and Phicol, the chief captain of his host, "were obliged to enter into a covenant with him, and "asked him to shew favour to them, and to the land "in which he sojourned; and perhaps hereby גבה לבו, "*his heart was lifted up*, in the ways of God; ורמו עיניו, "*and his eyes were lofty;* when he saw himself blessed "with riches, and with children, and with grandeur "and glory, as the glory of kings; wherefore God was "*willing to try him;* with a wall of iron, (this great "difficulty) to see if there was any dross left in him."

Ver. 8. *For this thing I besought the Lord thrice*, &c.] With respect to the thorn in the flesh, the messenger Satan, who gave him so much continual disturbance. This sent him to the throne of grace, to request of the Lord, *that it*, or rather, *he might depart from me;* this request greatly confirms the above sense, for it can hardly be thought the apostle would be so importunate about the removal of a common bodily affliction; and he knew that the corruption of his nature would remain with him as long as he was in the body; and as for afflictions, reproaches, and persecutions for the Gospel's sake, he was well apprized they would abide him wherever he went; but that so troublesome an adversary might depart, as it must be greatly desirable, so it was a very proper request: and it is made to a very proper person, to the *Lord* Jesus Christ; who in the days of his flesh had such power over the devils, as to dispossess them from the bodies of men by a word speaking, and held them in subjection, and in a panic fear of him; and when upon the cross, he spoiled principalities and powers, and in the latter day will bind Satan with a chain, and shut him up in the bottomless pit for a thousand years. This request was made *thrice*, not with any view to the three persons in the Godhead, Father, Son, and Spirit; nor to the three usual times of prayer in a day, morning, noon, and night; nor is any exact number of times intended; but the sense is, that he frequently besought the Lord on this account.

Ver. 9. *And he said unto me*, &c.] Either by what the Jews call בת קול, *Bath Kol*, a voice from heaven, an articulate audible one; or by some extraordinary revelation of the spirit of God; or by a divine impression upon his mind; whereby he was assured of what follows, *my grace is sufficient for thee;* the Lord always hears and answers his people sooner or later, in one form or another, though not always in the way and manner they desire; but yet in such a way as is most for his glory and their good: the apostle had not his request granted, that Satan might immediately depart from him, only he is assured of a sufficiency of grace to support him under the exercise, so long as it should last. There seems to be an allusion to the word שדי, *Shaddai*, an appellation of God, Gen. xvii. 1. and signifies, *which is sufficient:* for God is all-sufficient, and is a name that belongs to the Messiah. The angel whom God promised to the Israelites, to go before them in the wilderness, Exod. xxiii. 23. the Jews say [g] is *Metatron* (which is a corruption of the word *mediator*), whose name is as the name of his master. *Metatron* by gematry is *Shaddai, one that is sufficient:* however, certain it is, that the grace of Christ is alone sufficient for all his people, to all saving purposes, in all their times of need. It is alone sufficient, not to the exclusion of the grace of the Father or the Spirit; but in opposition and distinction to any thing else, that may be rightly or wrongly called grace; what men generally call common or sufficient grace, which, they say, is given to all men, is a mere chimera; no grace is sufficient but what is effectual, and that is only the grace of Christ: the light of nature is insufficient to any saving purpose; the Gospel, which is called grace, and is the means of grace, is insufficient of itself to salvation, without the powerful and efficacious grace of Christ going along with it; and so are gifts, whether ordinary or extraordinary: nothing short of the grace of Christ is sufficient grace; and this is sufficient for all the elect of God, Jews and Gentiles, Old and New Testament saints, the family in heaven and in earth, the people of God that are already called, and are to be called, and for the worst and vilest of sinners; and it is sufficient to all saving purposes, to the acceptance of their persons before God, to their justification in his sight, to their pardon and cleansing, to their regeneration and sanctification, to the supply of all their wants, and to their perseverance in grace unto glory; and it is suffi-

[d] R. Eliezer Kateo de Scientia Animæ, l. 10. apud Gaffarell. Cod. Cabal. Misc. pic. Mirandul. Index p. 22. ad calcem Wolf. Heb. Bibliothec.
[e] Shemot Rabba, sect. 20. fol. 102. 4.

[f] Teeror Hammor, fol. 22. 1.
[g] Jarchi in Exod. xxiii. 23. Sepher Raya Mehimna in Zohar in Numb. fol. 87. 1.

cient in all their times of need, in times of bodily affliction, of violent persecution, soul-desertion, Satan's temptations, and at the hour of death, and in the day of judgment. The reason given to support this answer, and to strengthen the apostle's faith in it, is, *for my strength is made perfect in weakness:* by the *strength* of Christ is meant, not his strength as the mighty God, but that communicative strength which he has, and is in him as Mediator, and which saints look to him for, and receive from him; this is *made perfect in* their *weakness*; not that their weakness can add perfection to his strength, for his strength is perfect in itself, not to say any thing of the contradiction such a sense carries in it; but the meaning is, that the strength of Christ is made to appear, is illustrated and shines forth in its perfection and glory, in supplying, supporting, and strengthening his people under all their weakness; and if they were not left to some weaknesses in themselves, his strength would not be so manifest; see Jam. ii. 22. The answer to the apostle's request, supported with this reason, was wonderfully satisfactory to him; wherefore he concludes, *most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities;* in the weaknesses which attended either his body or soul, through the buffetings of the angel Satan, rather than in his visions and revelations; or rather than insist upon his departure from him, he is content things should be as they were, since he had such a promise of a sufficiency of grace to bear him up, under and through whatever was the pleasure of God concerning him; and since the strength of Christ was made illustrious through his weakness, so that Satan was not able to make any advantage over him, he is willing to remain in the same posture and condition: *that the power of Christ*, says he, *may rest upon me*, or *tabernacle over me;* he considered himself as a poor weak feeble creature, and the power of Christ as a tabernacle over him, as the power of God is represented as a garrison about the believer, 1 Pet. i. 5. sheltering, preserving, and protecting him from the insults of Satan, in every form and shape; see Isa. iv. 6. where Christ is said to be a tabernacle, for a place of refuge, and for a covert.

Ver. 10. *Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, &c.*] Not in them simply considered, but as they were made use of to his advantage, for the exercise of his grace, and for his more abundant consolation; and especially as they tended to the glory of Christ, and made his grace, power, and strength the more conspicuous: by *infirmities* are meant all outward troubles, every thing that is mean and abject, distressing and afflicting, whether from Satan or the world; it seems to be a general term, which includes and is explained by the following particulars: *in reproaches;* of Satan, the accuser of the brethren, who sometimes reproachfully insinuates that they are hypocrites, and serve God and Christ with mercenary views and selfish ends; and of the men of the world, who traduce them as deceivers, treat them with opprobrious language, and load them with revilings and contumelies, endeavour to take away their characters, credit, and reputation; the faithful servants of Christ must go through bad report, and suffer shame for the name of Christ; but these reproaches with Moses are esteemed by them greater riches than the treasures of Egypt: *in necessities;* not of the soul, the better part, there being a sufficiency of grace in Christ to relieve all its wants; but of the body, the apostle was sometimes reduced to very necessitous circumstances, wanting the common necessaries of life, being hungry, thirsty, and naked, and yet cheerful: *in persecutions;* from place to place by the enemies of the Gospel, by whom he was severely handled by beating, scourging, and imprisonment; but his stripes were the marks of the Lord Jesus; his chains were his crown, and his prison a palace to him: *in distresses*, or *straits;* both as to body and mind, encompassed with such difficulties that he knew not what way to take, or course to steer: and all *for Christ's sake;* not for any real crime done by him, but for a profession of Christ, for preaching his Gospel, and for the glory of his name; and which made all these afflictions so delightful to him, having in the midst of them the love of God to comfort him, the power and strength of Christ to support him, and the grace of the Spirit to assist him, and the presence of all the three Persons with him; this he suggests to be the ground and reason of his delight and pleasure, in such otherwise disagreeable circumstances: *for when I am weak, then am I strong;* when he was attended with all the above-mentioned infirmities, when laden with reproaches, surrounded with necessities, followed with persecutions, and brought into the utmost straits and difficulties, and was most sensible of his weakness in himself to bear and go through all these things; then was he upheld by the divine arm, and strengthened by the power of Christ; so that he was not only able to sustain the conflict, but became more than a conqueror, and even to triumph in the midst of these adversities; he could and did readily take the advice in Joel iii. 10. and express himself in the same language there directed to, and to which he seems to refer, *let the weak say I am strong;* for he that is weak in himself, and sees himself to be so, is strong in Christ, and has a comfortable experience of renewed strength from him, as his day is. The Jews have a saying * somewhat like this, "the righteous even כשהן חלשים "מתחזקים, *when they are weak strengthen themselves;* "as it is said, Gen. xlviii. 2. and the wicked, though in "their strength, fall, according to Esther vii. 8."

Ver. 11. *I am become a fool in glorying, &c.*] This is either to be understood conditionally, if he had acted as a fool in commending himself, or was to be reckoned and called so by others, for glorying of himself, his visions and revelations; or as an ironical concession, allowing himself to be a fool for so doing, as he knew he should be traduced by his enemies; which concession he makes with a view to remove the blame from himself, and cast it upon the Corinthians: *ye have compelled me;* they were not only the occasion of his glorying, but they had forced him to it by their conduct; for he was obliged either to take this method for the vindication of his character, and preserve his future usefulness, or else to suffer the false apostles to triumph over him, to the great detriment of the Gospel, and of this church at Corinth particularly; whereas both might have been prevented, had they acted the part

* Baal Hatturim in Gen. xlviii. 2.

that became them: *for I ought to have been commended of you*: when the false apostles reproached him, and insinuated things among them to his disadvantage, they ought not only to have turned a deaf ear to them, and to have checked and reproved them, and so have put a stop to their calumnies; but they should have spoke in commendation of him, and have declared how faithfully he had preached the Gospel to them; how useful he had been to their souls, for conviction, conversion, edification, and comfort; how laborious and indefatigable he had been in his ministry; what success attended him, and what wonderful things were done by him in proof of his divine mission; all which they were conscious of, and could with the utmost safety have affirmed of him: *for in nothing*, says he, *am I behind the very chiefest apostles*; meaning either the false apostles, who set themselves upon an equality with the true ones, and above him; or rather the real apostles of Christ, and those that were of the greatest note among them, as Peter, James, and John; for though he was behind them in time, yet not in gifts, labour, and usefulness: but lest this should be thought to savour of vain boasting, he adds, *though I be nothing*; which may be considered either as a declaration of his own thoughts of himself, and an humble acknowledgment of his own nothingness; that he was nothing as a man, as an Hebrew, a Pharisee, with respect to his external privileges and righteousness, not more and better than others; and nothing as an apostle and a Christian of himself, but was wholly and entirely what he was by the grace of God; or as the judgment and opinion of the false apostles concerning him, who spoke of him, and treated him as a worthless man, of no account, and not to be regarded.

Ver. 12. *Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you*, &c.] Not only the doctrine which he preached, the power that attended it, and the success it met with among them, were clear signs and evident proofs of his being sent by Christ; not only they themselves, who were converted under his ministry, were testimonials and seals of his apostleship, but also the many other wonderful works done by him confirmed the same, and shewed him to be an apostle, and that he was not a whit behind, but equal to the chiefest of them: nor does he refer them to signs that were wrought by him, among others, and in other places, which were many; but to those which they themselves were witnesses of, and therefore might and ought to have spoken of them in defence of him; and in order to stop the mouths of the false apostles, a particular enumeration of these signs follows: *in all patience*; 'tis one sign, and what is here mentioned in the first place of an apostle and minister of Christ, that he patiently bears all injuries and indignities, reproaches, persecutions, and all manner of afflictions, for Christ's sake and the Gospel's; and this the apostle did; and had he not been sent by Christ, it is not reasonable to imagine that he would have exposed himself to so many evils and dangers; or would have bore with so much patience the ill usage of men, and particularly the unkindness and ingratitude he met with at Corinth; but he took all patiently, having their good and the glory of Christ at heart: *in signs and wonders, and mighty deeds*; meaning preternatural and miraculous performances; such as raising the dead, healing the sick, cleansing lepers, casting out devils, speaking with divers tongues, and the like, which were confirming evidences of apostleship: so נסין וגבורין, *wonders* and *powers*, or *mighty deeds*, are mentioned together by the Jews[1], as the same things.

Ver. 13. *For what is it wherein ye were inferior to other churches*, &c.] The apostle here suggests, and appeals to themselves for the truth of it, that in nothing they came short of other churches; that as he was not behind the very chiefest of the apostles, and so they had no reason to be ashamed of him and despise him; neither were they inferior in gifts, grace, and knowledge, to other churches, all which were through his ministry; wherefore they ought to have spoken well of him, and not to have taken the part of the false apostles against him; since all the honour and credit they were in as a church were owing to him as an instrument. The Gospel was first preached to them by an apostle; they were converted under the ministry of an apostle; they were planted and settled as a church by the means of an apostle; and in which respects no church could go beyond them, or boast of more; they had the same Gospel preached to them, and with as much power and purity as other churches; they had received the same spirit, the same graces, and the same gifts of the spirit, both ordinary and extraordinary; so that they came behind others in no gift whatever; see 1 Cor. i. 7. and had the same miraculous works done among them, as were in other places, for the confirmation of the Gospel. There was but one thing the apostle could think of, in which they differed from others, and which he mentions; *except it be that I myself was not burdensome to you?* because he freely preached the Gospel to them, took no wages of them, but chose rather to work with his own hands, and supply his necessities, than to be troublesome to them; in this, indeed, they differed from other churches, who liberally contributed to their ministers, and honourably maintained them: *forgive me this wrong*; not that the apostle seriously desired this, or thought that he had done them any real injury, and so acknowledges it; for if any wrong was done hereby, it was to himself, and not them; but it is an ironical way of speaking, and was a sharp rebuke to them, for their ignorance, ingratitude, and negligence.

Ver. 14. *Behold, the third time I am ready to come to you*, &c.] Not that he had been twice at Corinth, and was now about to come a third time; for as yet he had been but once there, when he first preached to them, was the means of their conversion, and settled them in a church-state; he had promised them to come a second time, but as yet was prevented; see 1 Cor. xvi. 5. 2 Cor. i. 15. and now a third time he had purposed it in his mind, and had prepared for it, and was just ready to come unto them; when he assures them he had not altered his mind, nor should he change his conduct, but steer the same course he had: *and I will not be burdensome to you*: he signifies he would preach

[1] Zohar in Exod. fol. 96. 2. & 97. 1.

the Gospel freely to them, and take nothing of them; and this he says lest they should think with themselves, that though he took no stipend of them before, yet when he came again he would: *for I seek not yours;* their money and substance, as did the false apostles: *but you;* them themselves, their spiritual good and welfare, the comfort, edification, instruction, and salvation of their immortal souls; like a good and faithful shepherd, who sought not the fleece, but the good of the flock; or rather like a loving tender father, that was affectionately concerned for the good of his children: *for the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children;* not but that children ought to take care of, and provide for their aged and indigent parents, and churches ought to maintain their faithful ministers; but the apostle argues from a common fact which nature and affection direct unto, and have formed into a sort of a law, that parents not only care for their children, bring them up, and provide for them food and raiment; but as they are blessed by Providence, lay up treasures for them for time to come, and not children for their parents; this is neither usual nor necessary, for however, as the case may be, children may be obliged to maintain their parents when grown old and in want, yet not to lay up substance for them for futurity; and by it the apostle suggests, that he was a spiritual father to these Corinthians, and they were his children; for whose spiritual welfare he had the highest concern, and whatever he did was out of no disrespect to them, but from the strongest affection for them.

Ver. 15. *And I will gladly spend,* &c.] Meaning all his time, talents, and strength, which God had bestowed upon him for their spiritual profit and advantage; yea, all that small pittance of worldly goods that he enjoyed: he not only determined to take nothing from them, but was willing to communicate his little substance to them, or spend it in their service; and not only so, but be spent for them: *and be spent for you,* or *for your souls;* for the good of them; his sense is, either that he was willing to have his whole substance expended, if it would be of any use to them; or his whole strength exhausted, in laborious preaching to them; or even his life to be laid down for them, was it necessary; which sense is favoured by the Syriac and Arabic versions; all which expressed his tender affection as a spiritual father for them: adding, *though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved;* though he loved them more than he did other churches, or than the false apostles loved them, and yet were loved by them less than he was by other churches; or by them, than the false apostles were; or rather the meaning is, that though he increased in his love, and in the expressions of it to them, and they grew colder and more indifferent to him, yet this should not hinder his warmest desires and most earnest endeavours after their spiritual and eternal welfare. This way of speaking strongly expresses his love to them, and tacitly implies the lukewarmness of theirs to him; and yet that it should be no discouragement to him to proceed in doing them all the service he was capable of.

Ver. 16. *But be it so, I did not burden you,* &c.] These words are not spoken by the apostle in his own person of himself, but in the person of his adversaries, and contain a concesion and an objection of theirs, *but be it so;* they granted that he had not burdened the Corinthians, that he had took nothing of them himself for preaching the Gospel; they owned that he had preached it freely; this was so clear a point, and so flagrant a case, that they could not deny it; yet they insinuated to the Corinthians, and objected to the apostle, that though he did not receive any thing from them with his own hands, yet he craftily and cunningly made use of others to drain their purses, and receive it for him; and which is suggested in the next clause: *nevertheless, being crafty, I caught you with guile;* so say the false apostles of me; for these are not the words of the apostle in his own person; nor to be understood of any spiritual craft, or lawful cunning and prudent artifices used by him, to allure and draw the Corinthians into a good liking and opinion of the Gospel and of his ministry, and so caught them, and was the happy means of their conversion; but they are spoken in the person of the false apostles, charging him with a wicked and criminal craftiness, by making use of other persons in a sly underhand way, to get this church's money, when he pretended to preach the Gospel freely; to which he answers in the next verse.

Ver. 17. *Did I make a gain of you,* &c.] He appeals to the Corinthians against such calumnies and false insinuations, whether ever he had circumvented them in such a manner, or had ever used such artful methods to pillage them; or whether ever he had discovered any covetous disposition towards any thing of theirs; or had employed any persons to draw out their substance from them, and get it for himself: he owns he had sent some persons to them on different errands, and asks if he had dealt fraudulently with them, *by any of them whom,* says he, *I have sent to you:* he desires them to name one single person of the many who came to them from him, that had received any money from them for him; or that they had any reason to believe he had employed for such purposes; and if they could not pitch on a single instance, they ought therefore to look upon this as a downright slander and calumny.

Ver. 18. *I desired Titus, and with him I sent a brother,* &c.] The apostle proceeds to mention one or two persons that he had sent unto them, and desires to know whether they could charge them with any such practices. He had desired, exhorted, and encouraged Titus to go unto them, and collect money from them; but not for either of themselves, but for the poor saints at Jerusalem; and he sent another brother along with him, who is by some supposed to be Luke, to be a companion of him, and an assistant to him; and who was a witness of what he did, and for what purpose he was sent, and how he behaved: *did Titus make a gain of you?* did he greedily desire your substance? did he shew an avaricious temper, or a covetous inclination after your money? did he by any methods extort it from you? say if Titus, or the brother with him, received any thing from you, either on their own, or my account? *walked we not in the same spirit?* in the same spirit of God, being directed and influenced by him; or in the same disposition of mind, being agreed and determined to preach the Gospel freely, and receive nothing for it: *walked we not in the*

same steps? took the same methods, lived the same course of life, working with their own hands to supply their wants, rather than be burdensome to others: the apostle suggests, that where are the same spirit, temper, disposition, and principles, there will be the same works and actions; and as for covetousness, it is neither agreeable to the spirit of God, nor to the spirit of a Christian.

Ver. 19. *Again, think you that we excuse ourselves to you?* &c.] The apostle would not have the Corinthians imagine, that by what he had said once and again in this epistle, he meant to excuse himself from coming to them, for he really and sincerely intended it; or that by this long defence of himself against the false apostles, he designed so much an apology for himself, or that he used any feigned words, or artful methods, to exculpate himself from any charge against him, particularly that of covetousness just mentioned; for he had no view to cover himself by studied apologies, and set orations, and evade any thing exhibited against him, and make himself look innocent when guilty; it was not with any such intention he had dwelt so long on this subject: *we speak before God in Christ;* in all sincerity and uprightness of soul, without colour, guile, or deceit, calling God and Christ to witness the truth of what was said; the apostle spoke all he did, as in the presence of the omniscient God; and as one in Christ, and a preacher of his Gospel, that would not deliver an untruth knowingly, for the whole world: *but we do all things, dearly beloved, for your edification;* it was not for himself so much, for his own credit, reputation, and glory, he did what he did; had this been the case, he would not have said the half part of what he had; but it was for their sake, out of love to them, that they might be built up and established in the faith of the Gospel, and not be carried away with the error of the wicked.

Ver. 20. *For I fear lest when I come,* &c.] This fear arose from his fatherly affection for them, and care of them: *I shall not find you such as I would;* truly penitent for former sins, thoroughly reformed in life and manners, zealous for God, Christ, and the Gospel, and hearty lovers of one another: *and that I shall be found unto you such as ye would not;* sharp in his reproofs and admonitions, severe in his corrections and censures, and awfully using the authority he had from Christ, to punish incorrigible offenders: *lest there be debates;* or *strifes,* or contentions among them, about words to no profit, or about their ministers, as before; one being for Paul, and another for Apollos, and another for Cephas: *envyings:* at each other's gifts, or *jealousies* of one another, and evil surmisings: *wraths;* breaking out into words and actions, which discover hatred of mind, a malignant spirit, quite contrary to that of the Gospel: *strifes;* law-suits before Heathen magistrates; contentions in the church who shall be greatest; or about lesser matters of religion, or things indifferent, vain, and trifling, and kept up merely for the sake of victory: *backbitings:* speaking evil of one another, detracting from, hurting, or taking away each other's character and good name: *whisperings;* secretly sowing discords among friends, and privately suggesting evil things of each other: *swellings;* with pride and conceit of themselves, because of their riches, learning, and eloquence, and looking with disdain upon others: *tumults;* at church-meetings, interrupting one another, going into parties, and making rents and schisms.

Ver. 21. *And lest when I come again,* &c.] Another thing which he feared would be the case when he came again to them, that he himself should be afflicted and distressed, seeing them in a disorderly and dissolute course of life, be obliged to punish them, which would be an humiliation and matter of grief to him: *my God will humble me;* instead of rejoicing in the fruit of his labours, that they were not in vain, he signifies that he should have great sorrow of heart; and whereas he had promised himself much pleasure and comfort in visiting them, it would be the reverse; and inasmuch as he had boasted of them to others, he should be ashamed: *and that I shall bewail many which have sinned already,* or *before;* not before conversion, but before the writing of this or the former epistle; for nothing was more grieving, and occasioned more sorrow and humiliation to the apostle, than the unbecoming walk of professors; and nothing more sensibly affects a faithful minister of the Gospel: *and have not repented of the uncleanness and fornication, and lasciviousness, which they have committed.* The city of Corinth was famous, or rather infamous, for unclean practices; as fornication, adultery, lasciviousness in words and deeds, and other unnatural lusts; *Corinthian whores* was a common proverb; nor was it proper for persons to go to Corinth, there were so many snares for lust and uncleanness; there were said to be above a thousand prostitutes in the temple of Venus there[k]; hence the very great impurities and wickedness, which many of the members of this church were guilty of, may be accounted for; some of them had repented, others not, which was the great concern of the apostle: and from hence we may learn, that gracious souls may be suffered to fall into great sins; and that when they are truly brought to repentance, they ought to be restored to communion with the church; but impenitent ones are to be cut off, and remain so, till brought to a due sense of their evils.

CHAP. XIII.

IN this chapter the apostle continues his resolution to come to the Corinthians, and to threaten with severity the incorrigible among them, giving the reasons of it; prays to God that they might so behave, that there might be no occasion for the exercise of it; and concludes the epistle with very useful exhortations, and hearty wishes of good things to them. He intimates to them again, that he intended this third time to

[k] Alex. ab Alex. Genial Dier. l. 4. c. 13. & 5. 15. & 6. 26.

come unto them, when he would not spare them, as they might expect he would not; partly because they had such repeated warnings, reproofs, and admonitions from him, ver. 1. and partly because many of them had sinned before, and were stubborn and obstinate, and had not repented, ver. 2. as also because they had tempted him, and demanded a proof of his power and authority, and of Christ speaking in him, ver. 3. and whereas this sprung from the outward appearance of the apostle, whose bodily presence was weak, he observes to them the instance of Christ himself in human nature, who was crucified through weakness, and yet lives by the power of God; and so he and his fellow-ministers were weak like Christ, and for his sake, and yet lived, and should live by the power of God; so that their outward appearance was no proof of their want of the power of Christ in them, ver. 4. besides, he directs them to themselves for a proof of it; who upon examination would find, that they were in the faith, and Christ was in them; which was owing to the ministry of the apostle, as a means and instrument; and so they had a proof in themselves of Christ's speaking in the apostle, and being mighty in, and towards them, or else they must be reprobate, injudicious, and disapproved persons, ver. 5. but whether they were such persons or no, he was confident that he would not be found such, but would appear to be in the faith, to have Christ in him, and to have power and authority from him, ver. 6. however, the apostle's hearty prayer for them was, that they might be kept from evil; and that they might do that which is good, and so be approved of God and men; and there be no occasion to use any severity with them, when he should come among them, ver. 7. otherwise he could do nothing against the truth, could not connive at error and sin, but must use the power and authority he had to crush every thing of that kind, and defend truth, ver. 8. and so far was he from glorying in his power, and priding himself with it, that it was a pleasure to him to have no occasion to make use of it, by which it might seem as if he was without it; and it rejoiced him, when they stood fast in the faith, and walked as became the Gospel, and so needed not the rod of reproof and correction: nay, he could even wish, that they were wholly perfect, and free from all blame, and every kind of charge, ver. 9. and the end he had in the writing in the manner he did, being absent from them, was, lest when he should come among them, he should be obliged to make use of his power he had from Christ for edification, and not destruction; to prevent which, he wrote and admonished them, in order to bring them to repentance, that so he might have no occasion to use severity and sharpness, ver. 10. and then he takes his farewell of them, by giving them some exhortations to harmony, unity, peace, and love among themselves, ver. 11, 12. gives the salutations of all the saints unto them, ver. 13. and then his own, with which he concludes the epistle, which is a wish of all the blessings of grace from all the three persons, Father, Son, and Spirit, ver. 14.

Ver. 1. *This is the third time I am coming to you, &c.*] Or *am ready to come to you*, as the Alexandrian copy reads, as in ch. xii. 14. Though he had been as yet but once at Corinth, and is to be reckoned and accounted for, either after this manner; he had been *once* with them when he first preached the Gospel to them, and was the means of their conversion, and laid the foundation of their church-state, of which there is some account in Acts xviii. he came to them a *second* time, by writing his first epistle, when he desired to be considered by them, as though he was present with them, ch. v. 3. and now a *third* time by this second epistle, in which he also speaks as if he was among them, see the following verse; or else in this way, he had been actually in person with them *one* time, and had been about to come in purpose and preparation a *second* time, but was prevented, and now was just ready a *third* time to set forward in his journey to them; see ch. xii. 14. and so the Syriac version reads it here, *this is the third time that I am ready to come to you*, and which our version also favours. The Alexandrian copy and some others, the Complutension edition, the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions, read, *behold, this third time*, &c. in order to raise and fix their attention to what he was saying, or about to say: *in the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established*: referring to Deut. xix. 15. which he applies much in the same manner Christ does in Matt. xviii. 16. and which it is probable he had in view: signifying hereby, that he proceeded in a judicial way, according to due form of law, and in such a manner as Christ had directed; and that they were to look upon his several comings in the sense now explained, to be as so many witnesses, whereby the several charges exhibited against them were fully attested and confirmed, so that things were now ripe for judgment, and for a final sentence to pass upon them.

Ver. 2. *I told you before, and foretel you as if I were present a second time, &c.*] He means, that he had in his former epistle faithfully told them of their evils, and admonished them for them; and now he sends to them a second time before his coming, and again admonishes them, as if he was upon the spot with them; so that they had, as before, three witnesses, also a first and second admonition: which, should they be without success, he must proceed further: *and being absent now, I write to them which heretofore have sinned*; before he wrote his first epistle, of which he had information, and had faithfully reproved and admonished them; see ch. xii. 21. *And to all other*; that might since be drawn into a compliance with sinful practices, through their example; or as the Arabic version renders it, *to the rest of the congregation*; who would be witnesses for him, and against them, that he had admonished them a first, and a second time: and by his present writing declares, *that if I come again*: for, not knowing what might fall out to prevent him, though he was bent upon coming, and ready for it, nor what was the will of God about it, he does not choose to be positive in the matter; and therefore writes conditionally, and with a guard, and no doubt with a submission to the divine will: *I will not spare*: this was the reason why as yet he had not been at Corinth, because he was willing to spare them; see ch. i. 23. being loth to come to severities, if gentler methods would take effect; but now having used all proper means, he is at a point, and determined not to spare, but to use his apostolical rod, or that power which the Lord had

given him in an extraordinary way, as an extraordinary officer, to punish incorrigible offenders, in such manner as the incestuous person, and Hymeneus and Philetus had been used by him.

Ver. 3. *Since ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me,* &c.] This is the reason why he was determined, that should he come among them, he would not spare them, because they called in question his apostleship, and demanded a proof of it; which, of all men, they had the least reason to do; for they themselves were the seals of his apostleship, and the signs of an apostle had been done among them; they queried whether he was an ambassador of Christ, and was sent by him, and in his name; whether the message he came with was from him, and whether the Gospel he preached was his voice; and particularly whether he had such a power to punish delinquents, as he threatened them with the exercise of; a strange infatuation of the false apostles this, since Christ, who sent him, was with him, and spoke in him, and by him: *which to you-ward,* says he, *is not weak, but is mighty in you:* the Gospel of Christ, at the first preaching of it to them by him, was the power of God unto salvation to them; and was attended with divers signs and wonders, and gifts of the Holy Ghost; and besides, they had instances of the power of Christ towards them in an awful way, in punishing sinners; as in the delivery of the incestuous person to Satan, which was done by his spirit being with them when assembled; and by smiting many of them with sickness, diseases, and infirmities, and with death itself, who had sinned, 1 Cor. v. 4, 5. and xi. 30. Wherefore, seeing after all these instances of the voice and power of Christ in him, they yet questioned his apostolical authority, and sought proof of it; and especially since this was not so much a tempting of him, as a tempting of Christ in him, he was resolved not to spare them.

Ver. 4. *For though he was crucified through weakness,* &c.] Of the human nature; for the nature which Christ assumed was in all things like to ours, excepting sin; it was subject to all sinless infirmities; it was mortal, passible, liable to sufferings, and death, and so he came to be crucified; though not against his will, or without his previous assent; as God, he was able to have prevented his crucifixion if he would; he gave an instance of his power over men, at the time of his apprehension, by striking them down to the ground; and told Pilate his judge at his trial, that he could have no power to crucify him, if it was not given him from above; and he shewed his superiority over devils when upon the cross, by spoiling principalities and powers; so that his crucifixion was not owing to want of power as God, but he became capable of it through his weakness as man: but *yet he lives by the power of God:* he was raised from the dead by a divine power; by his own power as God, as well as by his father's, and so was declared to be the son of God with power; and he lives at the right hand of God as man and Mediator, vested with all power in heaven and in earth; though, in the days of his flesh, he appeared so weak, mean, and despicable: now the apostle mentions this case of our Lord's, to deter the Corinthians from despising him, on account of his outward weakness and meanness; and from hence buoying themselves up, and in which they were encouraged by the false apostles, that he had not, and could not exercise the power he talked of; they had observed what a mean figure he made when he was among them; and whatever weight there might be in his letters, yet his bodily presence was weak, and his speech contemptible; wherefore he sets before them the instance of Christ, who though he appeared very weak in his state of humiliation, yet he now lives in power, to assist and strengthen his ministers, in every branch of their work; and suggests, that as it was with Christ, it was, and would be in some measure with him, and his fellow-ministers: *for we also are weak in him:* like him, and for his sake, they were subject to infirmities, reproaches, persecutions, and distresses; carried about daily the dying of the Lord Jesus; bore a very great resemblance to him in his state of humiliation; were very much as he was in this world, and bore much for his name's sake; the Alexandrian copy and the Syriac version read, *with him;* being crucified with him, and dead with him: *but we shall live with him by the power of God towards you:* which is not to be understood of being raised by Christ to an immortal life, and of living with him in glory; though this is a certain truth, that such who suffer with Christ, shall live and reign, and be glorified together with him; but of the life, power, and efficacy of the ministers of Christ, and of Christ in and with them, displayed in the lively ministration of the word and ordinances, in the vigorous discharge of all the branches of their office; not only in preaching, but in rebuking, admonishing, laying on of censures, and punishing criminals; and especially regards the powerful exertion and use of the apostolic rod; for this life is not only with Christ, or through Christ being in them, notwithstanding all their outward weakness, and by the power of God, which supports them under all, and enables them to perform their work, but is *towards you;* the Corinthians, to be exercised towards them, to be seen among them, and felt by them.

Ver. 5. *Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith,* &c.] These words are to be considered in connexion with ver. 3. for seeing they sought and demanded a proof of the voice and power of Christ in the apostle, he directs them to self-examination, to look within themselves, to try, prove, and recognise their own souls; where if things were right, they would find a proof of Christ's speaking in him, to them: he advises them to examine the state of their own souls, and see whether they were *in the faith:* either in the doctrine of faith, having a spiritual and experimental knowledge of it, true love and affection for it, an hearty belief of it, having felt the power of it upon their souls, and abode in it; whether, as the Syriac version reads it, בהימנותא קימין, *ye stand in the faith,* firm and stable; or in the grace of faith, either of miracles, or that which is connected with salvation; and which if they were in it, and had it, is attended with good works; operates by love to Christ and to his people; by which souls go out of themselves to Christ, live upon him, receive from him, and give him all the glory of salvation: and if this was their case, he desires to know how they came by their faith; and suggests, that their light in the doctrine of the Gospel, and their faith in Christ Jesus, as well as the miraculous gifts many of them were pos-

sessed of, were through his ministry as the means; and this was a full proof of Christ's speaking in him: *prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you;* by which he means, that if they took a survey of things in their own souls, it would appear that Christ was in them; not as he is in all the world, filling heaven and earth with his presence; or as he is in every rational creature, as the Creator and author of the light of nature; but in a special and spiritual manner, by his spirit and grace; the Father reveals him in his people, as the foundation of their hope of glory; he himself enters and takes possession of their hearts in conversion, communicates his grace, and manifests himself, and is formed there by his spirit; his graces are implanted, his image is instamped, his Spirit is put within them, and he himself dwells by faith: and this upon inquiry would be found to be the case of the Corinthians, *except*, says the apostle, *ye are reprobates;* meaning not that they were so, as such may stand opposed to the elect of God; for persons may as yet neither be in the faith, nor Christ in them, and yet both be hereafter, and so not be left of God, or consigned to destruction; but that if they were not in the doctrine of faith, then they were reprobate concerning it, or void of judgment in it: and if they had not the grace of faith, and Christ was not in them, then they were not genuine, but nominal professors, like *reprobate silver*, counterfeit coin; which when detected, would be *disapproved*, not only by God, but man, as this word also signifies, and so stands opposed to them that are *approved*, ver. 7. or if they did not make such an examination, probation, and recognition of themselves, they would be without probation: or as the Arabic version, *without experiment.* The apostle hereby brings them into this dilemma, either that if upon examination they were found to be in the faith, and Christ in them, which blessings they enjoyed through his ministry, then they did not want a proof of Christ speaking in him; but if these things did not appear in them, then they were persons of no judgment in spiritual things, were not real Christians, but insignificant and useless persons.

Ver. 6. *But I trust that ye shall know*, &c.] Whether they were reprobates or no, the apostle would not pretend to say; that he left to themselves, and of which they were capable of making judgment for themselves: however, he hoped and believed, that he and his fellow-apostles would give such proof of themselves, as that they should know certainly *that we*, says he, *are not reprobates;* men void of judgment in the doctrines of the Gospel, but have light, knowledge, and understanding in them; or useless and unprofitable in the ministry, but were the savour of life unto life to many; were ministers by whom others believed; were successful labourers in the Lord's vineyard, and builders in his house; and were made very useful for the conversion, comfort, and edification of many souls: or that they were not men disapproved either by God, or his people; since as they faithfully served Christ in the ministration of the Gospel, they were acceptable to God, and approved of men: or were not men without a proof of Christ speaking in them; they might assure themselves they would have too soon, for some of them, an evidence of that power and authority which Christ had lodged in them, to punish such as repented not of their evils.

Ver. 7. *Now I pray to God*, &c.] A strong mark of the apostle's affection for them. For though they used him so ill, he took every way and method to do them good; he not only wrote to them, sent the brethren to them, but put up his supplications at the throne of grace for them. The Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin, and Ethiopic versions, read, *we pray*, &c. And one of his petitions for them was, *that ye do no evil;* which, though impracticable and impossible, considering the situation of the people of God in this world, yet is desirable by every good man, both for himself and others; and was desired by the apostle, partly that their consciences might not be wounded, their souls grieved, their peace broke in upon, and their comforts lost; and partly that the name of God, and his cause and truths, might not be blasphemed; and chiefly that he might have no opportunity of exercising his apostolical rod for their correction: *not that we should appear approved.* This was a clear case that he sought their good, and not his own credit, and the exercise of power; if they committed evil, his faithfulness would be seen in reproving, rebuking, and exhorting them; and if they continued impenitent, his apostolical authority would be manifest in their punishment, so that he would appear approved, or with a proof of the power of Christ in him; but this he did not desire, but most earnestly wished there might be no occasion for any such evidence: *but that they should do that which is honest;* or *good*, both in the sight of God and men, that which is according to the will of God, springs from love, is done in faith, and with a view to the glory of God; and the apostle's praying, both that they might be kept from evil, and do that which is good, shews the impotence of man's free will, the necessity of the grace of God to abstain from sin, and perform good works; and this the apostle earnestly desired, *though*, says he, *we be as reprobates;* weak and infirm persons, incapable of giving any proof of the power of Christ, and appear as such, who have no marks of apostolical authority. The apostle chose rather to be looked upon as a poor, mean, and insignificant person, than that they should sin, and require the exercise of his chastising rod, whereby he would be seen to be what they called in question.

Ver. 8. *For we can do nothing against the truth*, &c.] The apostles had no power, nor could they, nor did they desire to exercise any against such who received the truth of the Gospel in the love of it; who continued in it, walked in it, and held it fast; who worshipped God in spirit and in truth, and who walked uprightly, and as became the truth; for as the law is not made for such persons, but the reverse, so the authority the apostles had received from Christ was not to be exercised upon such: but *for the truth;* for the sake of defending the truth against those that dropped, denied, and opposed it; and for the honour of it, by chastising, correcting, reproving, censuring, and punishing such, who either contradicted it, or caused it to be blasphemed and spoken evil of.

Ver. 9. *For we are glad when we are weak*, &c.] Appear to be so, look like persons disarmed of all power and authority; the apostles rejoiced when they had no occasion of exerting themselves, and of exercising that

high office, and extraordinary commission they had received of Christ Jesus: *and ye are strong;* stand fast in the doctrine of faith, and are lively and active in the exercise of the grace of faith; are strong in Christ, and in his grace, and in the power of his might, to withstand every temptation of Satan, every corruption of their own hearts, and to perform every duty aright. *And this also we wish, even your perfection:* or *restoration*, or jointing in again; a metaphor taken from the setting of bones that are dislocated and out of joint; for the church at Corinth was like a disjointed body, and the apostle's wish was, that their animosities might cease, their divisions be healed, their disorders rectified, and each member be in its proper place, behaving as became the Gospel of Christ; see 1 Cor. i. 10.

Ver. 10. *Therefore I write these things being absent,* &c.] Assuring them of his power and authority, expressing his concern for their welfare, earnestly desiring that they might be kept from evil, and perform good works; and that they might be in a more honourable, orderly, and comfortable situation, whilst he was absent from them, and before he came among them: *lest, being present, I should use sharpness:* meaning severe reproofs and censures, or rather the exercise of the apostolic rod: *according to the power the Lord hath given me, to edification, and not to destruction:* by striking persons dead, as Ananias and Sapphira were by Peter; or by delivering them up to Satan to have corporeal punishment inflicted on them, as were Hymeneus and Philetus, and the incestuous person by the Apostle Paul; which, though it was for the destruction of the flesh, yet for the salvation of their souls, and for the good, use, and edification of the rest of the society, that they might take warning thereby, and shun the evils which were the occasion of such severity.

Ver. 11. *Finally, brethren, farewell,* &c.] Or *rejoice*, with spiritual joy in Christ, their Saviour and Redeemer; in his person, in whom they were accepted; in his righteousness, by which they were justified; in his blood, by which they were washed and cleansed; and in his fulness, from which they were supplied; and particularly, that they had such a faithful monitor, such an hearty well-wisher of their souls' welfare, and who was so naturally and affectionately concerned for their good: *be perfect;* seek after perfection in knowledge, grace, and holiness, and in the performance of good works: or *be restored;* or jointed and knit together, as before; see ver. 9. let every difference subside, all breaches be made up, every member take and fill up his place, and all things be done decently and in order: *be of good comfort;* or *exhort* one another to the diligent discharge of duty, to love and good works; or comfort one another in all distresses, inward and outward, both by words and deeds, according to the ability God has given; or take comfort, be of good heart, don't refuse to be comforted either by God or men. *Be of one mind:* in religious sentiments, in the doctrines and principles of grace, and ordinances of the Gospel; for as there is but *one Lord* to be believed in, so there is, and ought to be, but *one* system of *faith* to be received, and *one baptism* to be administered in one and the same way, to one and the same sort of persons; which sameness of judgment, in faith and worship, is very necessary to church-communion, and the comfort of it: for how can two, and much less more, walk comfortably together, unless they are agreed in these things? *Live in peace:* both with them that are without, and them that are within, with all men, and with the members of the church; which to do, is to the credit of religion, the comfort of church-members, and the joy of Christ's ministers: *and the God of love and peace shall be with you:* he who is love itself, and has loved his people with an everlasting love, and who is the author and donor of spiritual and eternal peace, and who has called his people to peace, and expects and requires it among themselves, and all men, will grant to such his gracious presence; than which nothing can be more grateful and desirable.

Ver. 12. *Greet one another with an holy kiss.*] See the note on Rom. xvi. 16.

Ver. 13. *All the saints salute you.*] Being all interested in the same divine favour, redeemed by the same blood, and sanctified by the same grace, they have a common concern for each other's welfare; see the note on Rom. xvi. 16.

Ver. 14. *The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ,* &c.] Meaning either the love of Christ; see 2 Cor. viii. 9. which is the same with that of his father's, is as early, and of the same nature, being a love of complacency and delight; and which, as it is without beginning, will be without end. This is the ground and foundation of all he has done and underwent for his people; of his becoming their surety; of his incarnation, obedience, sufferings, and death in their room and stead; an interest in which, though they always have, yet they have not always an abiding sense of it with them, which is what the apostle here prays for: or else by the grace of Christ is meant the fulness of grace that is in him as Mediator; which is desired to be with the saints as the object of their trust and dependence; to be strong in, draw living water with joy out of, receive and derive daily from; not forsake it, and hew out broken cisterns, but continually apply to, and make use of it, as the fountain of gardens, the well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon; to be with them as a supply to their wants, to furnish them with every thing they stand in need of, and to enable them to do his will and work: or else the redeeming grace of Christ is particularly designed, and the intent of the petition is, that they might see their interest in it, and in all the branches of it; as that they were redeemed by his blood from sin, law, and wrath, had all their sins expiated and forgiven through his sacrifice, and were justified from all things by his righteousness. *And the love of God:* the father, as the Arabic version adds very justly, as to the sense, though 'tis not in the text; meaning the love of God to his people, which is eternal, from everlasting to everlasting, free and undeserved, special and peculiar, is dispensed in a sovereign way, is unchangeable, abides for ever, and is the source and spring of all the blessings both of grace and glory. Now when this is entreated to be with all the saints, it does not suppose that it is ever from them, or that it can be taken away from them; but whereas they may be without a comfortable sense of it, and a view of interest in it, the apostle prays, that in this respect it might be with them; that they

might be directed into it, have it shed abroad in their hearts, and they be rooted and grounded in it, and comprehend for themselves the height, and depth, and length, and breadth of it. *And the communion of the Holy Ghost*: either a larger communication of the gifts and graces of the spirit of God, called *the supply of the spirit*, Phil. i. 19. necessary to carry on the good work of grace, and perform it to the end; or else that communion and fellowship which the spirit of God leads the saints into with the father, by shedding abroad his love in their hearts, and with the son, by taking of the things of Christ, and shewing them to them; and also that nearness which the spirits of believers have with the spirit of God, when he witnesses to their spirits that they are the children of God, becomes the earnest of the inheritance in their hearts, and seals them up unto the day of redemption: all which is requested by the apostle, to *be*, says he, *with you all*; or *with your company*, or *congregation*, as the Arabic version reads it, with all the saints; for their interest in the love of the Father, in the grace of the Son, and in the favour of the Spirit, is the same, whatever different sense and apprehensions they may have thereof. This passage contains no inconsiderable proof of a trinity of persons in the Godhead, to whom distinct things are here ascribed, and of them asked, as equal objects of prayer and worship. *Amen* is added, by way of assent and confirmation, and as expressive of faith in the petitions, and of earnest desire to have them fulfilled.

According to the subscription at the end of this epistle, it was written by the apostle when he was at Philippi, a city of Macedonia, and transcribed by Titus and Lucas, and by them sent or carried to the Corinthians; which seems to be agreeable to what is suggested in the epistle itself, though these subscriptions are not to be depended upon. The Syriac version only mentions Luke; and some copies read, by Titus, Barnabas, and Luke.

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO

THE GALATIANS.

THE persons to whom this epistle is written were not such who made up a single church only, in some certain town or city, but were such of which several churches consisted, in a region or country called Galatia, as is evident from ch. i. 2. and the members of these churches seem to be chiefly, if not altogether Jews, since the apostle includes them with himself, as having been under the law, under tutors and governors, and in bondage under the elements of the world, and to whom the law had been a schoolmaster, though now they were no longer under it as such, ch. iii. 23, 24, 25. and iv. 1, 2, 3. or however, though some of them might have been originally Gentiles, yet, previous to their conversion, had become proselytes to the Jews, and now were returning to Judaism again, as appears from ch. iv. 8, 9, 10. When and from whence this epistle was written, is not very clear and manifest: some have thought, that it was written about the time of the writing of the epistle to the Romans, and upon a like occasion; but if it was written about that time, it could not be written from Rome, as the subscription to this epistle attests, since it is certain, that when the apostle wrote his epistle to the Romans, he had never, as yet, been at Rome. Beza is of opinion, that it was written from Antioch, between the return of Paul and Barnabas thither from their first journey, and the troubles which broke out in that church, Acts xi 28. But to this it is reasonably objected, that it is questionable whether there were so early any churches in Galatia at all; and if there were, it does not seem that the defection from the faith, complained of in this epistle, as yet had took place in any of the churches; for it was after this date that the troubles upon this head arose at Antioch, which seems to have been the first place, and the church there the first church the judaizing teachers practised at and upon. Some Latin exemplars testify that it was written from Ephesus; of which opinion was Erasmus; but as Dr. Lightfoot observes, the same reason is against this as the former, seeing the corruption that was got into this church was then but beginning, when the apostle was at Ephesus: it seems therefore most likely, that it was written from Rome, as the subscription in the Greek copies affirms; and which is strengthened by the Syriac and Arabic versions, seeing it seems to have been written after the apostle had made the collections, in several places, for the poor saints at Jerusalem, ch. ii. 10. and when the apostacy from the faith had got to a great pitch; nor is it any objection that there is no express mention made of his bonds in it, as there is in those epistles of his, which were written from Rome; since, when he wrote this, he might have been delivered from them, as some have thought he was after his first defence; and besides, he does take notice of the marks of the

Lord Jesus he bore in his body, ch. vi. 17. Dr. Lightfoot places the writing of this epistle in the year 59, and in the *fifth* of Nero; some place it in 55, and others in 58. That there were churches in Galatia very early, is certain from Acts xviii. 23. 1 Cor. xvi. 1. but by whom they were planted is not so evident; very likely by the apostle, since, it is certain, both from this epistle, that he was personally in this country, and preached the Gospel here, ch. iv. 13, 14, 15. and from Acts xvi. 6. and if he was not the instrument of the conversion of the first of them, which laid the foundation of a Gospel church-state, yet it is certain, that he was useful in strenthening the disciples and brethren throughout this country, Acts xviii. 23. But after his departure from them, the false teachers got among them, and insinuated, that he was no apostle, at least that he was inferior to Peter, James, and John, the ministers of the circumcision; and these seduced many of the members of the churches in this place, drawing them off from the evangelical doctrine of justification by the righteousness of Christ, persuading them that the observation of the ceremonial law, particularly circumcision, was necessary to their acceptance with God, and justification in his sight: wherefore the occasion and design of this epistle were to vindicate the character of the apostle as such; to establish the true doctrine of justification by faith, in opposition to the works of the law; to recover those who were carried away with the other doctrines; to exhort the saints to stand fast in the liberty of Christ, and to various other duties of religion; and to give a true description of the false teachers, and their views, that so they might beware of them, and of their principles.

CHAP. I.

THIS chapter contains the inscription of the epistle, the apostle's usual salutation of the persons he writes to, and the charge he brought against them for their fickleness and inconstancy, in shewing any manner of disposition towards a removal from the Gospel; the truth, certainty, and authority of the Gospel, and an account of himself, who was a preacher of it; of his life before conversion; of the nature and manner of his conversion; of his travels, labours, and usefulness afterwards. The inscription is in ver. 1, 2. in which the writer of the epistle is described by his name Paul, and by his office, an apostle; which office he had not of men, but of God, of the son of God, Jesus Christ, and of God the father, who is described by his power in raising Christ from the dead. The persons to whom the epistle is inscribed are the churches of Galatia, and those that joined the apostle in the salutation of them were the brethren that were with him. The salutation follows, ver. 3. in which mention being made of Christ, there is a declaration of a singular benefit by him, which contains the sum of the Gospel, as that he gave himself for the sins of his people, to deliver them from the present evil world, according to the will of God, ver. 4. upon which a doxology, or an ascription of glory is made, either to Christ, who gave himself, or to the father, according to whose will he did, or to both, ver. 5. After which the apostle proceeds to exhibit a charge of levity against the Galatians; and which he expresses in a way of admiration, that they should so soon be carried away from the doctrine of grace, to another doctrine the reverse of it, ver. 6. though he somewhat mitigates this reproof by laying the blame on the false teachers, who were troublers of them, and perverters of the Gospel of Christ; and corrects himself for calling their false doctrine by the name of another Gospel, ver. 7. and delivers out, and pronounces an anathema on all such, whether angels or men, that should preach any other Gospel than he had preached, and they had received, ver. 8, 9. The excellency of which Gospel is set forth, by the matter of it, being not human but divine, and by the manner of preaching it, with all simplicity and honesty, not seeking to please men, ver. 10. and from the efficient cause of it, it being denied to be after man, or received from, or taught by man, but is ascribed to the revelation of Christ Jesus, ver. 11, 12. And that the apostle had it not from men, he proves by the account of himself, and his conversation before conversion, as how that he had been a persecutor of the church of God, of those that professed the Christian religion and doctrine; wherefore he could not have the Gospel, as not from nature and education, so not from the chief priests, Scribes, and elders, who encouraged him to persecute, ver. 13. And this he further makes to appear by his great proficiency in the religion of the Jews, and his abundant zeal for the traditions of the fathers, which set him at the greatest distance from, and opposition to, the Gospel of Christ, ver. 14. And, on the other hand, that he received it of God, and by the revelation of Christ, he proves by the account he gives of his effectual calling and conversion; the source and spring of which was the sovereign will of God in divine predestination, and the moving cause of it, the free grace of God, ver. 15. The manner in which this was done was by a revelation of Christ in him; and the end of it was, that he might preach Christ to the Gentiles, which he immediately did, without consulting flesh and blood, ver. 16. And so it was a clear point that he could never receive the Gospel from the Jews before his conversion, he and they being enemies to it, and persecutors of it; so it was evident that he did not receive it after his conversion, even from Christian men, seeing he did not, upon his conversion, go directly to Jerusalem, and confer with the apostles there, who were the most likely persons to have taught him the Gospel; but instead of this he went into Arabia preaching the Gospel, and then came back to Damascus, where he was converted, ver. 17. And it was three years after his conversion, that he went to Jerusalem to visit Peter; and his stay with him was very short, no longer than fifteen days; and he was the only apostle he saw there, excepting James, the brother of Christ, ver. 18, 19. for the truth of all which he appeals to God the searcher of hearts, ver. 20. And

then goes on with the account of himself, and his travels: how that when he departed from Jerusalem, he did not go into any other parts of Judea, and visit the churches there, but went into the countries of Syria and Cilicia; and was not so much as known by face, or personally, by any of the churches, or members of the churches in Judea, ver. 20, 21. so that as it could not be thought by his short stay at Jerusalem, and the few apostles he saw there, that he received the Gospel he preached from them, so neither from any other ministers, or body of Christians in the land of Judea; for all they knew of him was by hearsay only, as that he who was formerly a persecutor of them, was now become a preacher of the Gospel he had sought to destroy, ver. 22, 23. wherefore it was a clear case he had not received the Gospel from them. Besides, as they had heard that he preached the Gospel of Christ, they glorified God for it, who had revealed it to him, and bestowed gifts upon him, fitting him for such service, ver. 24.

Ver. 1. *Paul an apostle, not of men, neither by man,* &c.] The writer of this epistle, Paul, puts his name to it, as to all his epistles, excepting that to the Hebrews, if that be his, being neither afraid nor ashamed to own what is herein contained. He asserts himself to be *an apostle*, which was the highest office in the church, to which he was immediately called by Christ, and confirmed in it by signs and wonders. This he chose to mention, because of the false teachers, who had insinuated he was no apostle, and not to be regarded; whereas he had received grace and apostleship from Christ, and was an apostle, *not of men*, as were the apostles or messengers of the sanhedrim [a]; see the note on 2 Cor. viii. 23. and as were the false apostles, who were sent out by men, who had no authority to send them forth: the apostle, as he did not take this honour to himself, did not thrust himself into this office, or run before he was sent; so he was not sent by men; he did not act upon human authority, or by an human commission: this is said in opposition to the false apostles, and to an unlawful investiture with the office of apostleship, and an usurpation of it, as well as to distinguish himself from the messengers and ambassadors of princes, who are sent with credentials by them to negotiate civil affairs for them in foreign courts, he being an ambassador of Christ; and from the messengers of churches, who were sometimes sent with assistance or advice to other churches: and he moreover says, *nor by man;* by a mere man, but by one that was more than a man; nor by a mortal man, but by Christ, as raised from the dead, immortal and glorious at God's right hand: or rather the sense is, he was not chosen into the office of apostleship by the suffrages of men, as Matthias was; or he was not ordained an apostle in the manner the ordinary ministers of the Gospel and pastors are, by the churches of Christ, so that as the former clause is opposed to an unlawful call of men, this is opposed to a lawful one; and shews him to be not an ordinary minister, but an extraordinary one, who was called to this office, not mediately by men, by any of the churches as common ministers a... *but by Jesus Christ:* immediately, without the intervention of men, as appears from Acts xxvi. 16, 17, 18. For what Ananias did upon his conversion was only putting his hands on him to recover his sight, and baptizing him; it was Christ that appeared to him personally, and made him a minister; and his separation with Barnabas, by the church, under the direction of the Holy Ghost, Acts xiii. 2, 4. was to some particular work and service to be done by them, and not to apostleship, and which was long after Paul was made an apostle by Christ. Jesus Christ being here opposed to *man*, does not suggest that he was not a man, really and truly, for he certainly was; he partook of the same flesh and blood with us, and was in all things made like unto us, sin excepted; but that he was not a mere man, he was truly God as well as man; for as the raising him from the dead, in the next clause, shews him to be a man, or he could not have died; so his being opposed to man, and set in equality with God the father, in this verse, and grace and peace being prayed for from him, as from the father, ver. 4. and the same glory ascribed to him as to the father, ver. 5. prove him to be truly and properly God. The apostle adds, *and God the father:* Christ and his father being of the same nature and essence, power and authority, as they are jointly concerned and work together in the affairs of nature and Providence, so in those of grace; and particularly in constituting and ordaining apostles, and setting them in the church. This serves the more to confirm the divine authority under which Paul acted as an apostle, being not only made so by Christ, but also by God the father, who is described as he, *who raised him from the dead;* which is observed, not so much to express the divine power of the father, or the glory of Christ, as raised from the dead, but to strengthen the validity of the apostle's character and commission as such; to whom it might have been objected, that he had not seen Christ in the flesh, nor familiarly conversed with him, as the rest of the apostles did: to which he was able to reply, that he was not called to be an apostle by Christ in his low and mean estate of humiliation, but by him after he was raised from the dead, and was set down at the right hand of God; who personally appeared to him in his glory, and was seen by him, and who made and appointed him his apostle, to bear his name before Gentiles, and kings, and the people of Israel; so that his call to apostleship was rather more grand and illustrious than that of any of the other apostles.

Ver. 2. *And all the brethren which are with me,* &c.] Meaning either the brethren of the church where he was when he wrote this epistle, who were children of the same father, regenerated by the same grace, belonged to the same family and household of God, and were heirs together of the grace of life; or else his fellow-ministers, who were assisting to him in his work, and were companions with him in his travels, and whom he sometimes mentions by name and joins with him in his epistles, as Sosthenes, Sylvanus, and Timothy; and the rather he takes notice of the brethren here, whoever are meant, to shew that they agreed with [illegible] doctrines of grace he defended [illegible] charges he [illegible] and in the reproofs and advice he [illegible] against this ch[illegible]

[a] Misn. Menachot, c. 10. [illegible] & Yoma, c. 1. sect. 5.

gave them; which he might suppose, and hope, would have the greater weight and influence upon them: *unto the churches of Galatia;* Galatia was a country in the lesser Asia, inhabited by the Gauls, who coming thither out of Europe, mixed with the Grecians; whence it was first called Gallo-Graecia, and afterwards Galatia; see the note on Acts xvi. 6. The metropolis of it, as Pliny[b] says, was formerly Gordium, and the chief towns or cities, according to him, were Ancyra, Tavium, and Pessinus; and in some, or all of these places, it is very probable, were the churches here mentioned; see the note on Acts xviii. 23. It seems there were more than one in this country; for the primitive churches were not national nor provincial, but congregational, consisting of persons called out of the world, and joined together in holy fellowship, and who walked in the commandments and ordinances of the Lord; and though these churches had many among them that were disorderly, and were swerving from the faith of the Gospel, yet were not unchurched, but honoured still with the name of churches, there being no perfection to be expected in this state of things; as not in particular persons, so not in congregated bodies and societies; though it is observed by some, that they are barely called churches, without any additional epithets, as churches of God, beloved of God, called to be saints, faithful and sanctified in Christ, which are bestowed on other churches; whereby the apostle is thought to shew his indignation and resentment at their principles and practices. For quickly after the Gospel was preached unto them, false teachers crept in among them, endeavouring to subvert it, by mixing it with the law, and joining Moses and Christ; and in which they very much succeeded; and is the reason of the apostle's writing this epistle.

Ver. 3. *Grace to be you,* &c.] After the inscription above, in which the writer of the epistle, and the persons joined to him, are described; and the churches to whom it is written, follows the salutation in these words, and which is common to all the epistles of this apostle; of the sense of which, see the note on Rom. i. 7. The Alexandrian copy reads, *from God our father,* and *the Lord Jesus Christ;* and the Ethiopic version reads, *our father.*

Ver. 4. *Who gave himself for our sins,* &c.] The antecedent to the relative *who,* is *our Lord Jesus Christ,* ver. 3. and the words are an illustration of the good will of God the father, and of the grace and love of Christ, in the gift of himself, for the sins of his people: he did not merely give, *sua, his own things,* what were his property, but, *se, himself;* not the world, and the fulness of it, gold, silver, and such like corruptible things; no, nor men for them, and people for their lives; nor angels, his creatures, and ministering spirits; but his own self, his life, his flesh, his blood, his body, and soul, his whole human nature, and this as in union with himself, a divine person, the eternal son of God. He gave himself freely, cheerfully, voluntarily, into the hands of men, justice, and death itself, as a sacrifice for *sin,* to expiate it, make reconciliation and atonement for it, which could not be done by the sacrifices of the legal dispensation; to procure the remission of it, which could not be had without shedding of blood; and utterly to take it away, finish it, and make an end of it, and abolish it, so as that it might never rise any more to the condemnation of his people: and this reached to *sins* of all sorts, not only original, but actual, and these of thought, word, and deed; and this oblation of himself upon the cross, was not for any sin of his own, who had none, nor for the sins of angels, of whom he was no Redeemer and Saviour, but *for our sins;* not the sins of the apostles, or of the Jews only, nor yet of all mankind, but of God's elect, called the friends of Christ, his sheep and church, for whom he gave himself; and his end in so doing was, *that he might deliver us from this present evil world;* by which is meant, either the Jewish world, or church-state, in which were a worldly sanctuary, and which were subject to ceremonies and traditions, called the elements and rudiments of the world; and who were possessed of worldly notions, and in expectation of a worldly kingdom to be set up by the Messiah; and both in principle and in practice were sadly degenerated, and were become very evil and wicked: or the present age and generation of men, whether of Jews or Gentiles, which was so corrupt, as the like was never known; or in general the present world, and the men of it, in distinction either from the world before the flood, as in 2 Pet. iii. 5, 6, 7. or rather from the new heavens and earth, which will be after the present ones, and wherein will dwell righteousness; or, in a word, from the world which is to come, as they are frequently opposed in Scripture: and which is said to be *evil,* not with respect to the matter, that being all very good, as created by God; but with respect to the men of it, who lie in wickedness, under the power of the wicked one, and of their own sins; and to the things which are in it, all which are the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. Now Christ gave himself a sacrifice for the sins of his people, that as in consequence of this they might be delivered and saved from the damning power, so from the governing power and influence of all that is evil in this present world; as from Satan, the god of it, who has usurped a power over it; from the lusts that are predominant in it; from the vain conversation of the men of it; from the general conflagration of it at the last day, and from the perdition of ungodly men, and their eternal destruction in hell: and all this is *according to the will of God, and our father.* It was by the determinate counsel and fore-knowledge of God that Christ was delivered up into the hands of wicked men, and put to death by them; it was his will of purpose and decree, to deliver him up into the hands of justice and death, and that he should give himself a sacrifice for sin; yea, it was his will of command, that he should lay down his life for his sheep, to which he was obedient; it was his pleasure, it was what was acceptable to him, was to his good liking, that he should die for the sins of his people; it was owing to the love of God, who is our father in Christ, and by adopting grace, and not to any worth or desert of ours, that Christ gave himself for us; as his own love, so his father's will, were what solely moved him to it.

[b] Nat. Hist. l. 5. c. 32.

Ver. 5. *To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.*] That is, either to Christ, who gave himself to expiate the sins of his people, on the account of which all honour and glory are due to him from them; or to God the father, according to whose will of purpose and command Christ gave himself, for which glory ought to be ascribed unto him; and it may well be thought, that both are taken into this doxology: the father is to be glorified, who of his everlasting love, and free favour, did in his eternal purposes and decrees in his counsel and covenant, so wisely frame and order things, that his own son should be given to be an offering for sin; and Christ is to be glorified, that he, of his free rich grace and love, agreed to give himself, and did give himself to be a ransom for his people, which has been testified in due time. This ascription of glory to both shews the greatness of the blessing, and the grateful sense which all interested in it ought to bear upon their minds continually, *for ever and ever*; or *to the ages of ages*, a Jewish phrase, the same with לעלמי עלמין *. To which the apostle adds his *Amen*, as joining with all the saints, above or below, in ascribing salvation, and the glory of it, to him that sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever.

Ver. 6. *I marvel that ye are so soon removed*, &c.] The apostle now enters on the subject-matter of this epistle, and opens the occasion and design of it, which were to reprove the Galatians for their instability in the Gospel; and, if possible, to reclaim them, who were removed, or removing from the simplicity of it; and which was very surprising to the apostle, who had entertained a good opinion of them, looked upon them as persons called by the grace of God, well established in the doctrines of the Gospel, and in no danger of being carried away with the error of the wicked: the person from whom he says they were removed is, *from him that called you into the grace of Christ*; by whom is meant, not the apostle himself, who had been an instrument in the calling of them to the knowledge of Christ, and the participation of his grace, and from whose Gospel, or the Gospel as preached by him, in its clearness and purity, they were now departing: but either Christ, and so the Syriac and Arabic versions read the words, *from Christ who called you by his own grace*; or rather God the father, and some copies read; *into*, or *by the grace of God*: to whom calling is most commonly ascribed in the sacred writings: and which is to be understood, not of a ministerial call, or a call to preach the Gospel of Christ; though there might be some in these churches who were called both internally and externally to that sacred office; nor of a mere outward call by the ministry: for though doubtless there might be some among them who were only so called, yet as much as they were under a profession of Christ, and nothing appearing to the contrary, they were all in a judgment of charity looked upon as effectually called by the grace of God; which calling is here meant: for they were called *into the grace of Christ*: some read it, *in*, or *by the grace of Christ*: referring it either to the moving cause of vocation, which is not the works and merits of men; but the free grace and favour of God in Christ; or to the efficient cause of it, which is not the power and will of man, but the efficacious grace of Christ, through the powerful operations of his spirit: but the words are well rendered, *into the grace of Christ*; that is, to the enjoyment of the fulness of grace which is in Christ; of all the blessings of grace he has in his hands; such as justification, peace, pardon, atonement, wisdom, strength, joy, comfort, and every supply of grace; and particularly fellowship with him, into which the saints are called, and than which nothing is more desirable: but the difficulty is, how such persons can be said to be removed from God, who has thus called them to partake of grace in Christ. They are not, nor can they be removed from the everlasting and unchangeable love of God to them in Christ, of which their calling is a fruit, effect, and evidence; nor from their covenant-interest in him, which is immovable and inviolable; nor from a state of justification, in which they openly are, who in effectual vocation have passed from death to life, and so shall never enter into condemnation; nor from the family and household of God, in which they are; no, nor from the grace of vocation with which they are called by God, and which has eternal salvation inseparably connected with it; but this must be understood doctrinally of their removal from the Gospel of Christ, though not of a total and final one. It is observed by some, that the word used is in the present tense, and shews that they were not gone off from the Gospel, but were upon going, so that the apostle had some hopes, yea, confidence of their being restored, ch. v. 10. And besides, though such as are truly called by grace can't be finally and totally deceived by false prophets and false teachers, yet they may be greatly unhinged by them, and may fall from some degree of steadfastness in the doctrine of faith, which was the case of these Galatians: but what increased the apostle's surprise, and aggravated their sin and weakness, was, that they were *so soon* removed from the simplicity of the Gospel; he having been with them but a few years before, and preached the Gospel to them, which was the means of their conversion, and of planting churches among them; at least he had lately paid them a visit, when he afresh strengthened them in the faith of the Gospel, Acts xviii. 23. Or this may regard that easiness of mind which appeared in them, who upon the first attack of them by the false teachers, were weakly and cowardly giving up their faith, and at once giving into the notions of these men, as soon as they were proposed unto them. That which they are said to be removed *unto* is *another Gospel*, different from that, and very unlike to what had been preached to them, and they had received; which had nothing of the grace of Christ, of the doctrines and blessings of grace that had, by which they were called; very different from the Gospel of Christ, and his apostles, insomuch that it did not deserve the name of a Gospel; and the apostle calls it so, not that he thought it to be one, but because it was in the opinion of others, and was so styled by the false apostles; wherefore, by way of concession, he so calls it, though he immediately corrects it,

* Zohar in Gen. fol. 72. 3.

Ver. 7. *Which is not another,* &c.] It is no Gospel, no joyful sound, no good news, and glad tidings; the doctrine which attributes justification to the works of the law, or mixes grace and works in the business of salvation, which was the doctrine of these false teachers, is no Gospel; not truly so, however it may be called; nor does it bring any solid peace and joy to distressed minds. There is but one pure Gospel of the grace of God, and Christ, and his apostles; there is not one and another; there is but *one faith,* one doctrine and scheme of faith; the Gospel is single and uniform, all of a piece, has no yea and nay, or contradiction in it; this trumpet gives no uncertain sound, nor any dreadful, but a joyful one: *but there be some that trouble you:* meaning the false apostles, whose names he does not think fit to mention, as being unworthy to be named, and to have their names transmitted to posterity. These troubled the churches with their doctrines and principles, by raising disputes and controversies among them, injecting doubts and scruples into their minds, which puzzled and confounded them, and made them uneasy, and which broke in upon that peace of soul which the Gospel brings and establishes; for no true solid peace is attained to, and enjoyed, but by the doctrine of justification by the righteousness of Christ, pardon by his blood, and atonement by his sacrifice, which the doctrine of justification by works, &c. tends to destroy. *And would pervert the Gospel of Christ:* which has Christ for its author, subject, and preacher; and particularly the doctrine of justification by his righteousness, which they sought to transvert, to throw into a different shape and form, to adulterate by mixing it with the works of the law, and so, if possible, destroy it: to this they shewed a good will, but were not able to effect, for the Gospel is an everlasting one; it is immovable, and so is that particular doctrine of it; it remains, and will remain in spite of opposition to it. Thus the apostle prudently lays the blame of the Galatians removing from the Gospel to another upon the false teachers, hoping he should be able to reclaim them by solid arguments, and gentle methods.

Ver. 8. *But though we, or an angel from heaven,* &c.] The apostle, in order to assert the more strongly the truth, purity, and perfection of the Gospel, as preached by him; and to deter persons from preaching another Gospel, and others from receiving it, supposes a case impossible; and, in such a case, denounces his anathemas. It was not possible, that he, or any of his fellow-apostles, who had been so clearly led and so fully established in the Gospel of Christ, and of which they had had such a powerful and comfortable experience in their souls, could ever preach one different from it; nor was it possible that a good angel, one that is in heaven, that always beholds the face of God there, is ever ready to do his will, as he never could be employed by God in publishing another, so he never would; and yet, was it possible for such a thing to be done by such men, or such an angel, he or they would deserve the curse of God and men; their having the highest names, or being of the highest character, and in the highest office and class of beings, would not screen them; and therefore how should the false apostles, and those who followed them, ever think to escape, since even these would not, should they *preach any other Gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you;* that is, not only any one that is contrary to it, but any one besides it; for such was the perfection of the Gospel, as preached by the apostle, who declared the whole counsel of God, and kept back nothing that was profitable to the churches, that no addition could, or might be made unto it: *let him be accursed,* or *anathema;* see 1 Cor. xvi. 22. which may respect F's excommunication out of the church, and his sentence of condemnation by Christ at the last day; and the sense be this, let him be ejected from the ministry of the word, degraded from his office, and cast out of the church; let him be no more a minister, nor a member of it; and let him be abhorred of men, and accursed of Christ; let him hear the awful sentence, *go ye accursed,* &c.

Ver. 9. *As we have said before, so say I now again,* &c.] Either when he first preached the Gospel among them; or rather referring to what he had just now said, which he repeats with some little alteration; as *if any,* men, or angels, be they of what name, figure, rank, or office whatever, *preach any other Gospel unto you, than that ye have received;* and as the apostle thought, readily, willingly, sincerely, and heartily, in the love of it; assenting to the truth, feeling the power of it, and openly professing it: *let him be accursed:* which he repeats, for the more solemn asseveration and confirmation of it; and to shew that this did not drop from his lips hastily and inadvertently; nor did it proceed from any irregular passions, or was spoken by him in heat, and in an angry mood, his mind being ruffled, disturbed, and discomposed; but was said by him in the most serious and solemn manner, upon the most thoughtful and mature consideration of the affair.

Ver. 10. *For do I now persuade men, or God?* &c.] To *persuade,* is to teach; see Acts xviii. 4. 2 Cor. v. 11. the sense of which, with respect to men, is easy, but, with regard to God, difficult; and indeed can't be applied to him, consistent with his divine perfections; and therefore something must be understood, and which may be supplied either thus, *do I now persuade,* you or others, that *men or God* are to be hearkened to? not men, but God; the apostle did not teach them to hearken either to himself, or any of the other apostles, Peter, James, and John, any further than as he and they preached the pure Gospel of Christ; but should they do otherwise, they were not to be attended to, but God, who spake by his son; or Christ, who is God as well as man; who is the great prophet in the church, a son in his own house, whose voice is to be hearkened to in all matters of doctrine, worship, and duty: or thus, *do I now persuade* you, to obey *men or God;* not men, but God; he did not teach them to regard the traditions of the elders, or to obey the commandments of men, but, on the contrary, the ordinances of Christ, who is the one Lord, and only master, whose orders are to be observed: or thus, *do I now persuade,* to trust in *men or God?* to believe in the one or the other; not in men, in the wisdom, strength, riches, and righteousness of men, but in the living God; in the grace of God, and in the blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ: or thus, *do I persuade* for the sake of *men, or God?* not for the sake of gaining honour, glory, and applause from men, as the Pharisees and false apostles did, but for the glory of God, the ho-

nour of Christ, and the good of immortal souls: or else not persons, but things are meant, by men and God; and the sense is, that the apostle taught and persuaded men to believe, not things human, but divine: he did not preach himself, or seek to set up his own power and authority over men; or set forth his eloquence, learning, parts, and abilities; or to gain either applause or riches to himself; he did not teach human wisdom, the vain philosophy of the Gentiles, and opposition of science, falsely so called; nor the traditions of the elders, nor the commandments of men; nor the power and purity of human nature, or the righteousness of man: but he delivered things divine; he persuaded to things concerning God, and the kingdom of God; see Acts xix. 8. he taught, that without the regenerating grace of the spirit of God, no man should see, and without the justifying righteousness of Christ, no man should enter into the kingdom of heaven, as his Lord had done before him; he preached the things concerning the grace and love of God, the person and offices of Christ, and the spirit's work of regeneration and sanctification: the word *now*, refers to all the time since his conversion, to the present: before his call by grace, he persuaded persons to hearken to men, to obey the traditions of the elders, to trust in their own righteousness for justification before God; but now he saw otherwise, and taught them to lay aside every thing that was human, and to believe in God, trust in Christ, and depend on his justifying righteousness; and this he did, without any regard to the favour and affection of men, as appears from what follows: *or do I seek to please men?* no, he neither pleased, nor sought to please them; neither in the matter of his ministry, which was the grace of God, salvation by a crucified Christ, and the things of the spirit of God; for these were very distasteful to, and accounted foolishness by the men of the world; nor in the manner of it, which was not with excellency of speech, or the enticing words of man's wisdom, with the flowers of rhetoric, but in a plain and simple style. There is indeed a pleasing of men, which is right, and which the apostle elsewhere recommends, and was in the practice of himself; see Rom. xv. 2. 1 Cor. x. 33. This proceeds from right principles, by proper ways and means, and to right ends, the glory of God, the good, profit, edification, and salvation of men; and there is a pleasing of men that is wrong, which is done by dropping, concealing, or corrupting the doctrines of the Gospel, to gain the affection and applause of men, and amass wealth to themselves, as the false apostles did, and who are here tacitly struck at; a practice the apostle could by no means come into, and assigns this reason for it: *for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ:* formerly he had studied to please men, when he held the clothes of those that stoned Stephen, made havoc of the church, haling men and women to prison; and went to the high-priest, and asked letters of him to go to Damascus, and persecute the followers of Christ, thereby currying favour with him; but now it was otherwise, and he suggests, that was this his present temper and conduct he should have continued a Pharisee still, and have never entered into the service of Christ; for to please men, and be a servant of Christ, are things inconsistent, incompatible, and impracticable; no man-pleaser can be a true faithful servant of Christ, or deserve the name of one: the apostle here refers to his office as an apostle of Christ, and minister of the Gospel, and not to his character as a private believer, in which sense every Christian is a servant of Christ; though to please men is even contrary to this; for no man can serve two masters, God and the world, Christ and men. The Septuagint version of Psal. liii. 5. is, *for God hath scattered the bones, ἀνθρωπαρέσκων, of men-pleasers,* to which agree the Syriac and Arabic versions.

Ver. 11. *But I certify you, brethren, &c.*] Though the Galatians had gone such lengths with their false teachers, yet the apostle still calls them *brethren;* as hoping well of them, that they were born of God, did belong to his family, and were heirs of the grace of life; and this he the rather makes use of, to shew his affection to them, and to engage their attention to the assurance he gives, of the divine original and authority of the Gospel preached by him; which though they formerly knew and believed, yet through the insinuations of the false apostles, were drawn into some doubts about it: wherefore he declares in the most solemn and affectionate manner, *that the Gospel which was preached of me, is not after man.* Their guides that were leading them wrong, did not presume to say, that the Gospel was after man, for they themselves pretended to preach the Gospel; but that the Gospel preached by the apostle had no other authority than human, or than his own to support it: wherefore he denies that it was *after man:* after the wisdom of man, an human invention and contrivance, a device and fiction of man's brain; nor was it after the mind of man, or agreeably to his carnal reason, it was disapproved of by him, and beyond his capacity to reach it; nor was it of his revealing, a discovery of his; flesh and blood, human nature, could never have revealed it; nor is it in the power of one man to make another a minister of the Gospel, or to give him or himself success in the ministration of it, but the whole is of God.

Ver. 12. *For I neither received it of man, &c.*] Not from Gamaliel, at whose feet he was brought up; he received the law from him, and knowledge in the Jews' religion, and in the traditions of the elders, but not a whit of the Gospel; on the contrary, he received prejudices against it from him, or was strengthened in them by him; no, nor from the apostles of Christ neither, whom he saw not, had no conversation with for some years, after he was a preacher of the Gospel, and therefore did not receive it at their hands; no, nor from Ananias, nor any other man: *neither was I taught it:* that is, by man; he did not learn it of men, as men learn law, physic, logic, rhetoric, natural philosophy, and other things at school: *but by the revelation of Jesus Christ:* meaning, not through Christ being revealed to him by the father, as in ver 16. though 'tis a sense not to be overlooked; but by Christ, the revealer of it to him; and regards either the time of his rapture into the third heaven, when he heard words not to be uttered; or rather since that is not so certain when it was, the time of his conversion, when Christ personally appeared unto him, and made him a minister of his Gospel; and immediately from himself, without the

interposition, or use of any man, or means, gave him such light into it, and such a furniture of mind for the preaching of it, that he directly, as soon as ever he was baptized, set about the ministration of it, to the admiration of the saints, and confusion of the enemies of Christ. These words furnish out another proof of the deity of Christ; for if the Gospel is not after man, nor received of, or taught by man, but by Christ, then Christ cannot be a mere man, or else being by him, it would be by man; and which also confirms the authority and validity of the Gospel, and carries in it a strong reason for the apostle's anathematizing all such as preach any other.

Ver. 13. *For ye have heard of my conversation in time past*, &c.] His manner and course of life, in his state of unregeneracy, how diametrically opposite his education and behaviour, his principles and practices, were to the Gospel; which shew that he had not received it, nor was he taught it of men. This they might have heard of, either from himself, when he first preached among them, who was very free to acknowledge his former sins and errors; or from the Jews, who were scattered abroad in the several countries; and it may be, from them, who were forced to fly to strange cities, and perhaps to some in Galatia, on account of his persecution: now his life and conversation, before his conversion, were spent *in the Jews' religion*: or *in Judaism*. He was born of Jewish parents, had a Jewish education, was brought up under a Jewish doctor, in all the peculiarities of the Jewish religion, and so could have received no hints, not in a notional way, of the truths of the Gospel; which he might have done, had he been born of Christian parents, and had had a Christian education: besides, he was brought up in the religion of the Jews, not as it was founded and established by God, but as it was corrupted by them; who had lost the true sense of the oracles of God committed to them, the true use of sacrifices, and the end of the law; had added to it a load of human traditions; placed all religion in bare doing, and taught that justification and salvation lay in the observance of the law of Moses, and the traditions of the elders: add to this, that he was brought up in the sect of the Jewish religion, Pharisaism, which was the straitest sect of it, and the most averse to Christ and his Gospel; so that he could never receive it, or have any disposition to it from hence; so far from it, that he appeals to the Galatians, as what they must have heard, *how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God*: which he now knew, and believed to be the church of God; though then he did not, but rather a synagogue of Satan; and this he mentions, as an aggravation of his sin, under a sense of which he was humbled all his days: when he is said to persecute it *beyond measure*, the meaning is not, as if there were any lawful measure, or due bounds of persecution, but that he persecuted the saints in a most violent and outrageous manner, beyond all others that were concerned with him: the church of God at Jerusalem is particularly designed, and the members of it, the disciples of Christ; whom he hated, and committed to prison, and breathed out threatenings and slaughter against, and destroyed: wherefore it follows, *and wasted it*: or *destroyed it*; as much as in him lay, he sought to do it, though he was not able to effect it entirely; he made havoc of it, dispersed its members, caused them to flee to strange cities, persecuted them to death, gave his voice against them to have them punished and put to death: such an aversion had he to the followers of Christ, and the Christian doctrine.

Ver. 14. *And profited in the Jews' religion*, &c.] Or *in Judaism*: and the more he did so, or was versed in, and wedded to their principles, the more violent a persecutor he was. He was under a very considerable master, Gamaliel, a Rabbi of great note among the Jews; and he himself a youth of uncommon natural abilities, so that his proficiency in Jewish learning was very great; even, as he says, *above many my equals in mine own nation*: not proselytes in other nations, but such as were natives of his own country: or were *in his own kindred*, his near relations, who were his cotemporaries, of the same age with him: and very modestly he says *many*, not *all*: *being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers*: he had a zeal, but not according to knowledge; and a greater degree of it than the rest of his countrymen; and that not so much for the written law delivered to his fathers, as for the oral law, the traditions and customs of his ancestors; which had been handed down, as they pretended, from one to another, and were now swelled to an almost infinite bulk; and mean the traditions of the elders, condemned by Christ, as making void the commandments of God: now his close attachment to, and eager zeal for these traditions, put him upon using more violent measures in persecuting the saints, and further off from the Gospel of Christ; and now from this account of himself 'tis a clear point, that during this period of his life he could never have received the Gospel from men, which is his view in giving it.

Ver. 15. *But when it pleased God*, &c.] Here begins his account of his conversion, and call to the ministry; all which he ascribes entirely to the sovereign good pleasure, and free grace of God: *who separated me from my mother's womb*. By his *mother* is meant, not in an improper and figurative sense, the Jewish church, or the old synagogue, the mother of all its members; the Jerusalem which then was, and was in bondage with her children; from which bondage, blindness, ignorance, superstition and bigotry, he was delivered, when called by grace: nor the church at Antioch, which is never called a mother church; and though he was by that church, with Barnabas, separated for the work of the ministry, yet not from it: but by his *mother*, without a figure is meant, his real natural mother, whose name is said to be Theocrita; and this separation from her womb is to be understood either of that distinction made of him in Providence, as soon as born; which not only took him, and safely brought him out of his mother's womb, but ever since took special care of him, and saved and preserved him to be called; for all the chosen vessels of salvation are distinguished from others, in a providential way; they are more under the special care of Providence than others are, even whilst in a state of unregeneracy; God's eye of Providence is upon them, his heart is towards them, he waits upon them to be gracious to them, and many are the remarkable appearances of Providence for them; see Psal. xxii. 9. 10. Or rather this designs divine predestination, which is a separation, a setting apart of per-

sons, for such and such purposes, as here of the apostle; and the eternity of it, it being very early done, from his mother's womb; whilst he was in it, before he was born, and had done either good or evil; from the beginning of time, from the foundation of the world, and before it, even from eternity: all which phrases express the same thing, and intend either his predestination to grace and glory, to holiness and happiness, to sanctification of the spirit, and belief of the truth, and to the obtaining the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ; or his predestination to apostleship, to the work of the ministry, to the Gospel of Christ, to which he was separated in eternity, and in time; reference seems to be had to Jer. i. 5. or indeed both, and his separation or predestination to both was owing to the sovereign will and good pleasure of God, as was also his after-call: *and called me by his grace:* which follows upon separation, as it does on predestination, in Rom. viii. 30. and is to be interpreted either of his call at conversion, by powerful and efficacious grace; when he was called out of Jewish darkness, blindness, and ignorance, into Gospel light and knowledge; out of the bondage of sin, Satan, the law, and traditions of the fathers, into the liberty of Christ; from conversation with the men of the world, among whom before he had it, into the fellowship of Father, Son, and Spirit, angels and saints; out of himself, and off of a dependence on his own righteousness, to trust in Christ: in a word, he was called into the grace of Christ here, into a participation of all the blessings of grace, and to eternal glory by him hereafter; which call was not of men, but of God, as the efficient cause of it; and by his grace, as the moving and procuring cause of it, and without the use of means, the word, which is the ordinary way in which God calls his people; so that 'tis plain his first light into the Gospel, was not of man, nor so much as by the means of man: or this call may respect his call to the ministry, which was at the same time he was effectually called by grace; and which also was not of man, nor of himself; he did not thrust himself into this work, but God called him; and that of his mere grace and good will, without any respect to any merits, deserts, or qualifications in him.

Ver. 16. *To reveal his son in me*, &c.] This clause stands in connexion with that in the preceding verse, *but when it pleased God;* the revelation of Christ in the apostle being the mere fruit and effect of God's will and pleasure: some versions read it *by me*, making the apostle to be the instrument and means, by whom God revealed his son Jesus Christ to others, which is a certain truth, but this is rather contained in the following clause: others read it *to me*, and which also is true; for Christ was revealed to him in the glory of his person, the fulness of his grace, the necessity, suitableness, and completeness of his salvation; not objectively in the Gospel, or merely notionally, speculatively in the theory of things, but spiritually, experimentally, and savingly; and which is better expressed, and nearer the original, by *in him;* for he had an internal discovery of him as God's salvation, and of his interest in him as such; Christ was formed in him, his spirit was put within him, his grace was implanted in him; he lived and dwelt in his heart by faith, as the son in his own house; he was made known unto him, as Christ in him the hope of glory: now the end of all this, of his separation from his mother's womb, of his call by the grace of God, and of the large revelation of Christ to him, and in him, was, *that*, says he, *I might preach him among the Heathen;* as he did: Christ was the subject of his ministry; the things respecting his person, as that he was very God, the son of God, God and man in one person; the things respecting his office, as that he is the only Mediator between God and man, the prophet of the church, the high-priest over the house of God, and King of saints; the doctrines of his grace, and which concern his obedience, sufferings, and death: as that peace and pardon are by his blood, justification by his righteousness, reconciliation and satisfaction by his sacrifice, and eternal life and complete salvation alone by him; all which is evangelizing, or preaching good news and glad tidings to sensible sinners: the persons to whom he was to preach these things, and did, were *the Heathen*, or Gentiles; he was a chosen vessel for this purpose; Christ, when he called him, sent him to them; the work he was to do, and did, lay chiefly among them; hence he is called an apostle, and teacher of them: *immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood;* which some understand of carnal reason, and that he did not stand reasoning and debating the matter with himself, whether it would be for his credit and reputation, for his worldly interest and advantage, to enter upon the ministry of the word; whether it would be advisable to expose himself, by so doing, to reproach and persecution; but immediately, as soon as he was called by grace, and Christ was revealed in him, he set about it: others, by *flesh and blood*, understand carnal men: and others his countrymen the Jews, and those of them that were his relations, his own flesh; but rather men in general are intended, any whatever, and especially the apostles; whom, he afterwards says, he had no conversation with, upon his first setting out in the ministry. It is usual with the Jews to call men, in distinction and opposition to God, בשר ודם, *flesh and blood*. Infinite almost are the examples that might be given thereof out of their writings. Compare with this Matt. xvi. 17. Eph. vi. 12. and the notes there.

Ver. 17. *Neither went I up to Jerusalem*, &c.] That is, immediately, as soon as he was converted, not till three years after, as follows; though by the account which Luke gives of him, Acts ix. 23, 26. and by that which the apostle gives of himself, Acts xxii. 17, 18. it looks as if he went to Jerusalem some little time after his conversion, and before the date here given: and therefore some have thought that he did go up to Jerusalem pretty quickly, when, praying in the temple, he fell into a trance, and was ordered to make haste from thence, and go far hence unto the Gentiles; and accordingly he made no stay, did not go to any of the apostles, and neither saw nor conversed with any of them, which is what he here says, *to them which were apostles before me.* The twelve, who were called, ordained, and sent forth as apostles before he was; for last of all Christ appeared to him, and was seen by him as one born out of due time: his meaning is, not that he was a successor of the apostle's, but that they

were instated in the office of apostleship before him; and this he mentions to shew that he did not receive the Gospel from men, no not from the apostles themselves; since, upon his conversion, he did not go up to Jerusalem to see any of them, and talk with them; nor did he stand in need of any instructions from them, being immediately furnished sufficiently by Christ himself; nor did his work lie at Jerusalem, nor so much among the Jews as among the Gentiles, and therefore to them he went: *but I went into Arabia.* This journey of the apostle is wholly omitted by Luke, nor should we have known any thing of it, had it not been for this account: how long he staid there, what he did, and what success he met with among the Arabs are no where related; no doubt but he preached the Gospel to them, and as his ministry everywhere was owned and blessed by God, it may be very reasonably thought it was here at his first setting out in it. The Arabic version reads it, *I went to Balcam,* which was a city in Syria; but without any foundation for it; for it was not Syria, but Arabia to which he went. There are three countries which bear the name of Arabia, and which are called to distinguish them from one another, Arabia Petræa, Arabia Deserta, and Arabia Felix; of which see the note on Acts ii. 11. It is very likely it was the former of these which the apostle went to, as being nearest to Syria, since from Damascus, the metropolis of Syria, he went thither; and Damascus itself was at this time under the government of an Arabian king, see 2 Cor. xi. 32. So Pliny frequently speaks of Arabia as near to Syria, Palestine, and Judea: in one place he says[l], Arabia divides Judea from Egypt; and elsewhere[m] observes, that Syria is distinguished by many names; for it is called Palestina, where it touches the Arabians, and Judea, and Cœle, and Phenice; and Peræa, or the country beyond Jordan, he says, is next to Arabia and Egypt; and on the east of the lake of Asphaltites he places Arabia, that belongs to the Nomades; so likewise Josephus[n] places Arabia at the east of Peræa, or the country beyond Jordan; and says[o] in another place, that Arabia borders on Judea, the metropolis of which was Petra, where Aretas the king had his royal palace: Jerom[p] likewise observes, that the river Jordan divides Judea and Arabia; so that this country into which the apostle went was not a great way off of Syria and Judea, whither he returned again after some time; which seems to be about the space of three years, by what follows in the next verse, and when he had done the work and will of God in those parts; where doubtless he was the instrument of converting souls, and planting churches, and here 'tis certain were churches in ages following: in the *third* century were churches in Arabia, mentioned along with the churches in Syria, by Eusebius[q]; in which age lived two famous Arabian bishops, Beryllus and Maximus; and the same historian[r] reports, that in the times of Dioclesian there were some wonderful martyrs in Arabia, who suffered the most cruel tortures and death, for the sake of Christ: and in the *fourth* century there were Arabian bishops in the Nicene council, and in other synods, as at Jerusalem and Sardica; and in the same century there were bishops of Arabia Petræa, at the synod in Antioch, whose names were Nicomachus and Cyrion: and also in the *fifth* century there were churches and bishops in the same country[s], not to trace them any further: *and returned again unto Damascus;* and then it was, that being increased in spiritual strength and knowledge, he proved that Jesus of Nazareth was the true Messiah, to the confusion of the Jews there; which drew upon him their resentment and indignation, so that they took counsel and lay in wait to kill him; but the disciples let him down through a window, by the wall of the city in a basket, and so he escaped them.

Ver. 18. *Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem,* &c.] Not three years after his return to Damascus, but after his conversion; and now it was that he moved to become a member of the church at Jerusalem; but they did not care to admit him, fearing that he was not a disciple, till such time that Barnabas took him, and brought him to the Apostles Peter and James, and related his conversion and his boldness in preaching the Gospel at Damascus: his view in going up to Jerusalem at this time was partly his own safety, being obliged to fly from Damascus, but chiefly *to see Peter.* The Alexandrian copy, and another, read *Cephas,* and so does the Ethiopic version, the same with Peter: not to see what sort of a man he was, but to pay him a Christian visit; to converse with him about spiritual things; to know how the work of God went on under him, as the minister of the circumcision; and to relate to him, what success he had met with as the minister of the uncircumcision; but not to receive the Gospel from him, or to be ordained a preacher of it by him; for he had been three years already in the work of the ministry, before he made him this visit; and besides, his stay with him was very short, nor could he have received much from him, in so short a time, in an ordinary way: *and abode with him fifteen days;* and even all this time was not wholly spent in conversation with him; for he was, during this time, coming in and going out at Jerusalem, where he preached boldly in the name of Christ, and disputed against the Grecians.

Ver. 19. *But other of the apostles saw I none,* &c.] This is observed to shew, that as he did not receive the Gospel from Peter, so neither from any of the other apostles, whom he did not so much as see, much less converse with; *save James the Lord's brother;* not James the son of Zebedee, the brother of John, whom Herod slew with the sword; but James the son of Alpheus, he who made the speech in the synod at Jerusalem, Acts xv. 13. was the writer of the epistle which bears his name, and was the brother of Joses, Simon, and Judas, who are called the brethren of Christ, Matt. xiii. 55. and that because they were the kinsmen and relations of Christ according to the flesh, it being usual with the Jews to call such brethren. The relation came

[l] Nat. Hist. l. 12. c. 21.
[m] Ib. l. 5. c. 12, 14, 16.
[n] De Bello Jud. l. 3. c. 3. sect. 3.
[o] Antiqu. l. 14. c. 1. sect. 4. & l. 4. c. 4. sect. 7.
[p] De locis Hebraicis, fol. 91. G.

[q] Eccl. Hist. l. 7. c. 5.
[r] Ib. l. 8. c. 12.
[s] Hist. Eccl. Magdeburgh. cent. 4. c. 9. p. 350, 390, 405, 425. cent. 5. c. 2. p. 2. c. 10. p. 552.

in and stood thus: this James was James the less, the son of Mary the wife of Cleophas, Mark xv. 40, 47. which Cleophas was the brother of Joseph, the husband of Mary the mother of our Lord, as Eusebius, from Hegesippus, relates; and so our Lord and this James were brothers' children, as was supposed: or else the wife of Cleophas the mother of James, was sister to Mary the mother of Christ, as she is called, John xix. 25. and so they were sisters' children, or own cousins; and thus Jerom [t], after much discourse on this subject, concludes that Mary the mother of James the less was the wife of Alpheus, (or Cleophas, which is the same,) and the sister of Mary the mother of the Lord, whom the Evangelist John surnames Mary of Cleophas; and persons in such a relation, and even uncles and nephews, were called brethren by the Jews; see Gen. xiii. 8. and xiii. 8. and xxix. 12, 15. Lev. x. 4. nor is James one of our Lord's disciples being called his brother, any contradiction to John vii. 5. as the Jew [u] affirms, where it is said, *neither did his brethren believe in him*: since they might not believe in him then, and yet believe in him afterwards: besides, Christ had brethren or relations according to the flesh, distinct from his disciples and apostles, and his brethren among them; see Matt. x. 1. and xii. 46, 49. such as were James, Judas, and Simon; nor does the Evangelist John say, that none of Christ's brethren believed in him, only that they that came to him and bid him go into Judea did not. Some have been of opinion that a third James, distinct from James the son of Zebedee and James the son of Alpheus, is here meant; who was not of the twelve apostles, and was surnamed James the *just*, and called the brother of Christ because of his faith, wisdom, and becoming conversation; but certain it is, that this James was of the number of the apostles, as appears from the exceptive clause, *other of the apostles saw I none, save James*, &c. and from his being put with Cephas and John, who were pillars and the chief among the apostles; and besides it was James the son of Alpheus, who was surnamed the *just*, and Oblias [w], and presided over the church at Jerusalem, and was a man of great esteem among the Jews; and is by [x] Josephus, as here, called the brother of Jesus.

Ver. 20. *Now the things which I write unto you*, &c.] Concerning his education, his religion, his principles and practices before conversion; concerning his call by the grace of God, the revelation of Christ in him, and his preaching of him among the Heathen; concerning his travels to several places for this purpose, and especially concerning his not receiving the Gospel from men, not from any of the apostles; and how that upon his conversion he did not go up to Jerusalem to any of them, to be taught and sent forth by them; and that it was not till three years after that he went thither to see Peter, with whom he stayed but fifteen days, and saw no other apostle, but James the Lord's brother. Now this being a matter of moment, and what he had been charged with by the false teachers, that the Gospel he preached he had received from men, in order to disqualify him [torn] him into contempt as an apostle, and which they had insinuated to the Galatians; he therefore not only wrote these things, but for the confirmation of them solemnly appeals to God the searcher of hearts for the truth of them; *behold, before God I lie not*: which is not only a strong asseveration, but a formal oath; it is swearing by the God of truth, calling him to be witness of the things that he had written; whence it is manifest that an oath upon proper occasions, where there is a necessity for it, and a good end to be answered by it, may be lawfully made.

Ver. 21. *Afterwards I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia.*] For having disputed against the Grecians at Jerusalem, and being too hard for them, it so irritated them, that they were going to murder him; which being known to the brethren there, they got him out of the way, and had him down to Cæsarea, and so to Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, where he was born; in which places and in the countries about he preached the Gospel of Christ; to Tarsus, Barnabas went for him seeking him, and finding him brought him to Antioch in Syria; and both in Syria and Cilicia he preached, no doubt with success, since we read of believing Gentiles and churches in those parts he afterwards visited; being sent along with others, with the letter and decrees of the synod at Jerusalem to them, and whom he confirmed; see Acts xv. 23, 41. and the notes there: in the Greek text these countries are called *climates*; a climate in geography is said [y] to be a part of the surface of the earth, bounded by two circles parallel to the equator, and of such a breadth as that the longest day in the parallel nearer the pole, exceeds the longest day in that next the equator, by some certain space, viz. half an hour.—The beginning of the climate is the parallel circle wherein the day is the shortest, the end of the climate is that wherein the day is the longest:—each climate only differs from its contiguous ones, in that the longest day in summer is longer or shorter by half an hour in the one place than in the other:—vulgarly the term *climate* is bestowed on any country or region differing from another, either in respect of the seasons, the quality of the soil, or even the manners of the inhabitants, without any regard to the length of the longest day; in which sense it seems to be used here, as also in Rom. xv. 23. 2 Cor. xi. 10. Of the country of Syria, see the note on Matt. iv. 24. Cilicia is a country of Asia Minor, now called Caramania; it had its name of Cilicia, as Herodotus says [z], from Cilix, the son of Agenor, a Phœnician: though Bochart [a] derives it from Challekim or Challukim, which signifies stones, it being a stony country; and so Herodotus [b] calls it *mountainous* Cilicia; it is said to have Pamphilia on the west, the tops of Mount Taurus on the north, Mount Amanus on the east, and the Cilician sea on the south; Jerom says [c], Cilicia is a province of Asia, which the river Cydnus cuts in the middle, and Mount Amanus, of which Solomon makes mention, separates it from Syria-Cœle.

[t] Advers. Helvidium, Tom. II. fol. 4. M.
[u] R. Isaac, Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 8. p. 469.
[w] Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. 2. c. 23. Hieron. Catalog. Script. Eccl. sect. 3. fol. 89.
[x] Antiqu. l. 20. c. 8. sect. 1.

[y] Chambers's Cyclopædia in the word *Climate*.
[z] L. 7. Polymnia, c. 91. Solinus, c. 51.
[a] Canaan, p. 376.
[b] L. 2. Euterpe, c. 34.
[c] De locis Hebraicis, fol. 95. M.

Ver. 22. *And w*... *by face*, &c.] Or *in person*. This is said to prevent what might be objected, that though the apostle had not received the Gospel he preached from any of the apostles at Jerusalem; yet he might have had it from the churches that were in the land of Judea, and from some of the principal men in them; but this was so far from being truth, that he was not so much as known *unto the churches of Judea which were in Christ*: for there was not only a famous church of believers in Christ at Jerusalem, the metropolis of the land, but there were several congregated churches in the several parts of that country: by Judea we are to understand that part of the land of Israel so called, which was distinct not only from Samaria, but from Galilee and Perea, or the country beyond Jordan; for according to the Jews [d], the land of Israel was divided into three parts, Judea, Perea, and Galilee.—— Judea again was divided into three parts, the hill-country, the plain, and the valley; and the plain of Lydda is as the plain of the south, and its mountainous part as the king's mountain; from Bethhoron to the sea is one province: and elsewhere [e] it is said, that the hill-country of Judea is the king's mountain, the plain of it is the plain of the south, and the valley is from Engedi to Jericho—from Bethoron to Emmaus is mountainous, from Emmaus to Lydda is a plain, and from Lydda to the sea a valley; from which may be collected where this country lay, and where were these churches here spoken of; the foundation of which might be laid in the conversion of some in these parts, through the ministry of the disciples of Christ, who were appointed witnesses of him not only in Jerusalem, but in all Judea and Samaria, Acts i. 8. and about the time of the Apostle Paul's conversion, and his being at Jerusalem, there were churches gathered in Judea, as distinct from Galilee and Samaria, Acts ix. 31. particularly at Cæsarea, Lydda, Saron, and Joppa. It is very likely that all the apostles, when they first set out to preach the Gospel after the ascension of Christ and the effusion of the Spirit, began in Judea; though some might make a very short stay, and others a longer. The Apostle and Evangelist Matthew is generally thought to have exercised his ministry chiefly in Judea, and to have continued there long: here he wrote his Gospel for the sake of the Jews that believed [f]; and that, as a very ancient writer says [g], when Peter and Paul preached at Rome, and founded the church there. Judas Thaddæus is also said [h] to go through Judea, Galilee, Samaria, Arabia, Syria, and Mesopotamia; and certain it is, that Philip, after he had baptized the eunuch, preached in all the cities from Azotus to Cæsarea, where he seems to have stayed awhile and preached, Acts viii. 40. and where afterwards was a Gospel church-state, of which see the note on Acts x. 48. and at Lydda and Saron, which were both in Judea, there were saints who were visited by the Apostle Peter, and others converted by him, about the time that our apostle here refers to; of the church at Lydda see the note on Acts ix. 32. at Joppa also, which was in the tribe of Dan, there were disciples at the same time, and very likely a church there; of which see the note on Acts ix. 38. and it may be observed that the Apostle Peter was the minister of the circumcision, he had the Gospel of the circumcision committed to him, and he continued with and preached much to the circumcised Jews; and so in all likelihood was the instrument of planting the churches in Judea here spoken of. These are said to be *in Christ*, as the church at Thessalonica, and that at Corinth are elsewhere said to be; because they professed to believe in Christ, were called by his name, and called upon his name; and though every individual member of them might not be in Christ, really united to him, and have communion with him; yet since they were all under a profession of him, they are considered as in him. The Arabic version reads it, *the churches of Judea which believe in Christ*: which though not a literal translation, gives the true sense of the passage, and distinguishes those churches from the synagogues or assemblies of the Jews which did not believe in Christ.

Ver. 23. *But they had heard only*, &c.] What they knew of the apostle was only by hearsay; they had never seen him, nor heard him preach, nor conversed with him, only had it reported to them; *that he which persecuted us in times past*; some few years ago, and not them personally, but such as were of the same faith with them, the church at Jerusalem and the members of it; which he made havoc of, committing men and women to prison, and causing others to fly to strange cities; *now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed*; all as in him lay he endeavoured to destroy it, though he could not entirely root it up; he destroyed many of the disciples that held it, and did all he could to discourage others from embracing and professing it; he made use of the strongest arguments he was master of to confute it, and of the secular arm to crush and extirpate it, but now was become a preacher of it: by *faith* is meant not so much the grace of faith, though to shew the nature, necessity, and usefulness of faith in Christ, and to direct and encourage sensible sinners, as he did the jailer, to believe in him, was a principal part of his ministry; but rather the doctrine of faith, which is always designed, when it is said, as here, to be preached or to be obeyed, stood fast in and contended for, or to be departed and erred from, to be made shipwreck of and denied. The Gospel is called the word of faith, the mystery of faith, the faith of the Gospel, common faith, most holy faith, the faith once delivered to the saints; it contains things to be believed; it proposes and directs to the great object of faith; and is the means of implanting and increasing that grace, and without which the ministry of it is of no use: it takes in all articles of faith, respecting the divine Being, the unity of God, the trinity of persons in the Godhead, the equal and proper deity of each person, their personal distinctions from each other, the attribution of all divine works, worship and honour to them; it relates to every thing concerning man, in his original creation, in his state of innocence and integrity; concerning the fall of Adam, the imputation of his sin to all his posterity, the

[d] Misn. Sheviith, c. 9. sect. 2.
[e] T. Hieros. Sheviith, fol. 38. 4.
[f] Hieron. Catalog. Script. Ecclesiast. sect. 4. fol. 90. A.
[g] Irenæus adv. Hæres. l. 3. c. 1.
[h] Hist. Eccles. Magdeburg. cent. 1. l. 2. c. 10. p. 449.

corruption of human nature, and the impotence of man to all that is spiritually good; it regards all the acts of grace of the Father, Son, and Spirit, in and towards any of the sons of men: it includes all the doctrines of it, as of the free, sovereign, everlasting, and unchangeable love of God; of eternal, personal, and irrespective election of some to grace and glory, by which both are secured; of the everlasting, absolute, unconditional, and sure covenant of grace; of particular redemption by Christ, proceeding on a full satisfaction to divine justice; of justification by the imputed righteousness of Christ; of reconciliation and pardon by his blood; of regeneration and sanctification by the Spirit; of the perseverance of the saints in faith and holiness, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal glory: now this faith, in the several momentous branches of it, the apostle preached, published, declared, spoke out openly and publicly; fully and completely, without dropping, concealing, or keeping back any thing; clearly and plainly, without using ambiguous phrases, or words of double meaning, with all faithfulness and integrity, boldness and constancy.

Ver. 24. *And they glorified God in me.*] Or *for me*: on his account; for the wonderful grace bestowed on him and wrought in him: for the surprising change that was made in him, that of a persecutor he should become a preacher, which they ascribed, as he himself did, to the abundant grace of God; they were greatly thankful and blessed God, who had given him such large gifts, and made him so greatly useful in the cause, and among the churches of Christ. And by observing this, how much the churches in Judea were affected with the grace of God vouchsafed to him, though they had never seen him nor heard him, he tacitly strikes at and rebukes the false teachers, and the Galatians that adhered to them, for their different treatment of him; to whom he was not only known by face, but had preached among them so fully, clearly, and powerfully, the Gospel of the grace of God.

CHAP. II.

In this chapter the apostle proceeds with the narrative of himself, and gives an account of another journey of his to Jerusalem, where he had a conversation with the chief of the apostles; in which they approved of his ministry, allowed of his commission, and took him into fellowship with them, but gave him no new instructions, nor added to his spiritual light and knowledge; from whence it appeared that the Gospel he preached was not after men, or received from men, as he had asserted in the preceding chapter; and he also gives an account of his meeting with Peter at Antioch, and how he reproved him for some judaizing practices; which leads him to assert the doctrine of justification by faith, in opposition to the works of the law; which is the grand point he had in view to establish in this epistle, and which he vindicates from the charge of licentiousness. He begins with an account of another journey of his to Jerusalem, the circumstances of which he relates, as the time when, fourteen years ago; the persons he took with him as his companions, Barnabas and Titus, ver. 1. what moved him to it, a revelation from God; and the business he did when come thither, he communicated the Gospel, and that not to any but to such that were of reputation, and not publicly but privately; his end was, that it might appear how successful he had been in his ministry, and had not laboured in vain, ver. 2. then follows a narrative of a particular event relating to Titus, who is described as one of his companions, and by his nation, a Greek; and who though an uncircumcised person, yet the apostles and elders at Jerusalem did not oblige him to be circumcised, which shewed that they were of the same mind with the apostle in this point, ver. 3. and the reason of it was because of the false teachers, that they might not give them any handle; who are described by their character, false brethren, by their private manner of getting in among the saints, and by their ends and views, which were to spy out their Christian liberty and bring them into bondage, ver. 4. to whom the apostle opposed himself, and would not give way for the least space of time; for this end, that the truth of the Gospel might continue with the Gentiles, ver. 5. and as for the apostles, though they were men of great character and reputation, nor would the apostle detract from it; yet they added nothing to him, he received nothing from them, ver. 6. but, on the other hand, partly because they saw that as the Gospel to be preached to the Jews was committed to Peter, so the same Gospel to be preached to the Gentiles was committed to Paul; and partly because of the same efficacy and success in the ministry of the one as in the ministry of the other; as also because they perceived what gifts of grace were bestowed on the apostle; they gave to him and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, as a token of their mutual agreement, and as being of the same society, ver. 7, 8, 9. nor did they give him and Barnabas any thing in charge, but only to remember the poor, to which he was forward enough of himself, ver. 10. after which follows an account of an opposition made by the apostle to Peter, which was done at Antioch, and to his face, and not without reason, ver. 11. for whereas he had some time before ate with the Gentiles, which was commendable in him, he afterwards declined conversation with them, moved to it by fear of the converted Jews, ver. 12. and such was the force of his example, that other Jews, who before did not scruple eating with the Gentiles, separated likewise, and even Barnabas himself, Paul's companion, ver. 13. wherefore seeing this was not walking according to the Gospel of Christ, and with that integrity and uprightness which became such persons, the apostle publicly reproved Peter, and expostulated with him; partly on account of his former conversation with the Gentiles, though he himself was a Jew, and therefore it was absurd and contradictory in him to oblige the Gentiles to live as the Jews did, ver. 14. and partly on account of the know-

ledge which he and Peter and others who were Jews, and not sinners of the Gentiles, had of the doctrine of justification; that it was not by the works of the law, but by faith in Christ; for to this end they had believed in Christ that they might be justified, not by the one, but by the other; which doctrine is confirmed by a passage referred to in Psal. cxliii. 2, ver. 15, 16. and whereas it might be objected that this doctrine of free justification opened a door to licentiousness, the apostle answers to it by an abhorrence of it, ver. 17. and by observing that this would build up what he had destroyed, ver. 18. [illegible], he argues the contrary from his being dead to the law, that he might live unto God, ver. 19. and from his crucifixion with Christ, and of the old man with his deeds; and from Christ's living in him, and his living by faith upon him, ver. [illegible] and for the further confirmation of the doctrine of justification being by faith, and not by works, he suggests, were it otherwise, both the grace of God would be frustrated and made void, and the death of Christ be in vain, ver. 21.

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